

**Alvaston Infant and Nursery School English Policy 2019-2021**

**Sept 2019-September 2021**

**This policy has been signed by the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors. A signed copy is stored in the School Office.**

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| **Review date** | **Version number** | **By whom** | **Summary of changes made** | **Date implemented** | **Date ratified** |
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**Rationale**

At Alvaston Infant and Nursery School we encourage every child to: ‘Be the best that they can be’. In order to fulfil this mission, we strive to build foundations to enable every child to become literate to prepare them individually for the next phase of their journey when they leave our school. The English teaching we provide should allow **all** children to fulfil their potential whilst giving them the necessary knowledge and skills to understand and use language in all its aspects. We aim to include and engage all of our children in high quality learning experiences to foster passions for life long reading while giving our children the confidence to communicate effectively in both speech and writing. Reading, especially, is a key component in unlocking success across the curriculum and it is therefore of paramount importance that we give all of our children the opportunity to succeed in this domain so that they can access other areas of the curriculum effectively.

We recognise that Literature plays a key role in developing pupils’ cultural, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual awareness. Subsequently, our children will be exposed to a wide range of high quality texts of different genres across the curriculum and beyond to ensure that these needs are met. We will strive to ensure that every child develops the confidence and competence to embrace literature in its many forms, regardless of gender, ethnicity, or social/economic background.

1. **Aims-**

* To extend and develop the knowledge of language children bring from home by providing a wide range of linguistic experiences.
* To develop every child’s understanding of the spoken word and their capacity to express themselves effectively in a variety of speaking and listening activities, matching style and response to purpose and audience.
* To be ambitious for all children and ensure that children who are falling behind their peers, have appropriate interventions in place to help them ‘catch up’ so they can read and comprehend age appropriate texts.
* To encourage all children to read widely and often, both for pleasure and information.
* To ensure that all pupils acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.
* To ensure that all pupils appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage.
* To ensure that all pupils write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.
* To meet the requirements of the National Curriculum 2014 and the EYFS Development Matters Documentation.
* To use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas.
* To use the Arts and a cross-curricular approach as a vehicle for engaging children and creating opportunities which will help to develop knowledge and skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing.
* To create an atmosphere of enjoyment and pleasure in which all children feel confident to express themselves in both spoken and written language.
* To monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and regularly assess the standards of teaching and learning across the school.

1. **Teaching and Learning**

The school believes that its teachers must work together to plan, deliver and moderate the teaching of English in order to ensure that expectations are high and that all children are able to achieve to the best of their ability. As a school, we create a climate for learning, and all of our staff ‘buy in’ to the notion that we all have the capacity to grow, learn and develop as teaching professionals. Subsequently, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is of high priority and we have a structured CPD programme in place for English in order to achieve consistently high standards across the school.

Children will usually be taught in differentiated ability groups within year groups, with opportunities for mixed ability learning. The main vehicle for our curriculum delivery will be through discrete English lessons, although a cross-curricular and holistic approach to teaching and learning is also at the heart of our practice. We value the Arts as a vehicle for engaging children and recognise how art, music, dance and drama can be used as powerful stimuli in order to initiate speaking, listening and writing opportunities across the curriculum in a meaningful purposeful context.

All teachers plan discrete sessions for the teaching of phonics and spelling, handwriting, punctuation and grammar with the opportunity for applying their knowledge and skills within the context of their learning whenever possible.

All classrooms will have an English Wall, where key vocabulary can be displayed and drawn upon and used in English and other curriculum contexts. This vocabulary will be generated from a variety of experiences, including shared reading activities, class discussions, library books and visits/ visitors to school.

1. **Early Years Foundation Stage**

We teach English in our Early Years Foundation Stage as an integral part of the topics covered. We relate the English aspects to the objectives set out in the Foundation Stage Profile and the Early Learning Goals. English is taught discretely and we follow the Development Matters document.

To give all children the best opportunities for effective development and learning in Communication, Language and Literacy, practitioners should ensure that they are:

* Providing opportunities for children to communicate thoughts, ideas and feelings and foster relationships with adults and each other.
* Incorporating opportunities for the development of communication, language and literacy in planned activities in each area of learning.
* Giving opportunities to share and enjoy a wide range of rhymes, music, songs, poetry, stories and non-fiction texts.
* Creating a language-rich environment as part of a communication friendly setting, which fosters the development of language and enables children to develop the skills necessary to communicate effectively with others.
* Providing opportunities for children to see adults reading and writing and for children to experiment with writing for themselves through making marks, personal writing symbols and conventional script.

1. **Planning/Subject Coverage/Timetabling**

The English subject leader takes overall responsibility for ensuring effective planning and consistency of approaches by teachers, in accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum and the English National Curriculum.

We recognise that English is a core subject within the National Curriculum and ensure that there is an appropriate balance of reading, writing, speaking and listening activities. We strive to ensure that experiences are purposeful and cross-curricular opportunities are used to provide a meaningful context for learning.

Medium Term Planning is carried out by year group teams and adheres to the statutory documentation outlined above. In Key Stage One, units of work follow the Engage, Discover, Compose, Evaluate and Publish model to ensure that children are immersed in a wide range of speaking, listening, reading and writing activities. In EYFS, teachers will make appropriate adaptations of this model to plan teaching and learning activities appropriate to the children’s needs and to their level of development.

Short Term Planning will be discussed within teams and will be generated from the Medium Term Planning document. The format of the planning will be down to the discretion of the year group leads and must take into account the workload of the staff within the team.

For each unit of work, each year group will complete a Reading Spine, which outlines the key texts, films and range of media which will be used to teach the units of work effectively. Texts and media will be carefully considered in order to develop a rich and varied vocabulary and to ensure that appropriate background knowledge is acquired to access and enrich the curriculum provision offered

1. **Feedback and Marking and Assessment**

(Please also see the Feedback and Marking Policy and the Assessment Policy)

Marking is carried out in accordance with the school’s Feedback and Marking Policy. Assessment for Learning is central to this process.

Teachers carry out continuous assessments of children’s progress in all aspects of the English Curriculum. When possible, immediate feedback is delivered to all children through whole class, group and individual feedback to ensure that children know how to improve their work and they will be able to articulate this whilst being supported with their next steps.

Formal assessment points for reading and writing will take place in January and May, although initial benchmarking assessments will take place in the first half-term. Data will be collated and progress and attainment monitored by the SLT.

Statutory Assessments (for example, the Phonics Screening Check in Year 1 and Standard Assessment Tests and Teacher Assessment Framework in Year 2) follow the school’s assessment cycle.

The outcomes of these assessments are documented in the child’s records for his/her next class teacher. Results will also be formally reported to parents at Parents’ Evenings and as part of the January Progress Reports.

Targets in English form an integral part of our whole school target setting system. Staff quickly identify gaps in knowledge and skills and identify next steps for learning. Targets are shared with the children and parents as appropriate. Targets are regularly assessed and updated to drive forward children’s progress. All children have a personalised ‘Green for Growth’ Target Book and these are used to monitor the target setting process.

1. **Monitoring and Review**

As part of the subject monitoring process, the English Lead will look to identify a clear triangulation between the pupils, teacher and any additional evidence collected e.g. Book ‘Looks’. Subsequently, at the forefront of any subject monitoring (E.g. Lesson ‘Looks’, Learning Walks’), will be discussions with the pupils about their learning, alongside discussions with the teaching staff about what is being taught and why and how any particular lesson ‘fits’ into the sequence of learning. Monitoring of the subject will also be undertaken through the analysis of data and moderation within and across year groups and schools.

We acknowledge the need to regularly review our policies to take account of the new initiatives, changes in curriculum or developments in technology.

1. **Parents**

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping their children learn and progress within our school. The school believes that the active support and involvement of parents is crucial to children achieving their potential in all aspects of the English Curriculum. There is recognition that the nature of the school’s catchment is such that the school will need to reach out to some parents and offer further support to them in carrying out this role. We therefore plan a variety of English Workshops for parents to attend.

Parents are actively encouraged to read with their children, discuss their books with them and they use their diaries to communicate progress.

Parents receive a detailed annual report on their child’s progress in English and there are two formal Parents’ Evenings, where parents can discuss their child’s progress in English with the Class Teacher. Teachers will be in regular contact with any parents regarding their child’s progress in English if this is deemed necessary and will support the child to make expected levels of progress.

1. **Our English Curriculum**

At Alvaston Infant and Nursery School, we recognise that effective English teaching involves the development of four key areas: **Spoken Language**, **Reading** (Word Reading and Comprehension), **Writing** (Transcription and Composition) and **Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation.** Each is closely interrelated with the next and therefore each aspect impacts directly onto the other domains.

1. **Spoken Language**

The National Curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils’ development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially, linguistically and physically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. Teachers should therefore ensure the continual development of pupils’ confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills.

At Alvaston Infant and Nursery School, we ensure that structured opportunities are planned for in order for ‘Exploratory Talk’ and ‘Presentational Talk’ to take place. For example, through drama, children might engage in role-play or hot seating activities, or in history, a debate might be initiated as to whether or not a Victorian child’s life was preferable to that of a child today. Teachers use The Oracy Framework Document (Voice 21 2019) to ensure that they plan and teach engaging lessons which provide pupils with opportunities to learn to talk but to also to use oracy to support the teaching of particular subject areas to deepen and enhance children’s knowledge and understanding.

All pupils should be enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Pupils should be able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role. They should have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances. Statutory requirements which underpin all aspects of spoken language across the six years of primary education form part of the National Curriculum. These are reflected and contextualised within the reading and writing domains which follow.

**Pupils should be taught to:**

* Listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers.
* Ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge.
* Use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary.
* Articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions.
* Give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings.
* Maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments.
* Use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas.
* Speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English.
* Participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play/improvisations and debates.
* Gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s).
* Consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others.
* Select and use appropriate registers for effective communication.

1. **Reading** – Word Reading & Comprehension

Reading unlocks doors to access other curriculum areas and is an essential life skill, which enables children to become successful in school and in their journey through life. At Alvaston Infant and Nursery School, we want our children to leave school with a genuine love of reading, having acquired the necessary skills and knowledge to read books and other texts with an appropriate level of competency. Reading is a habit and that habit needs to be grounded in what we do at school. Children need to see adults loving books, so staff at our school are encouraged to share their love of reading with the children as part of their daily interactions.

As part of this vision and to develop our ‘Reading Culture’, we have embedded a range of reading experiences into our day-to-day practice. For example, a ‘Bedtime Story Channel’ has been established, where children can listen to stories read by staff safely online at home. All classrooms have inviting reading areas where children can immerse themselves in the world of books and let their imaginations escape to new worlds and places. The school library is also a key resource in developing this love for reading and subsequently, **all** children are entitled to weekly library visits, where they can listen to stories, borrow books and discuss their reading with adults and their friends. Each class sets aside time each day to engage with a high-quality text, picture or film clip to uncover new vocabulary and themes, opening up discussions around the language and content explored through this different media. Although we value and promote the need for ‘story time’, we believe a more holistic overview is imperative in order to develop children’s knowledge and skills in reading in a broader context.

We recognise that children have an entitlement to access and engage with a wide range of texts, including fiction, non-fiction, picture and poetry books. Therefore, there is a wide range of texts to choose from in the library and in all classrooms. When planning units of work, each year group ensures that there is a balance of text genres used during the year to ensure that every child receives this entitlement. Teachers will carefully consider the texts used so that they offer ‘rich’ language and learning opportunities. The English Lead will closely monitor this through looking at Medium Term Planning Documents, ‘Book Looks’, ‘Lesson Looks’ and through discussions with staff and children.

We recognise that pupils need to develop competence in both word reading and comprehension (both listening and reading) if they are to become successful, fluent readers, drawing upon linguistic knowledge and knowledge of the world.

In order to achieve this aim, we believe that all children are entitled to a range of teaching and learning experiences which will encompass:

**Whole-Class Shared Reading:**

As part of the EDCEP (Engage, Discover, Compose, Edit and Publish) planning sequence, whole-class shared reading activities are planned for at the beginning of a unit of work, to enable pupils to engage with texts (E) and provide opportunities to discover (D) and explore texts in a meaningful context. Subsequently, this will have a positive impact upon children’s oral and written work as the unit progresses. In Key Stage 1, the Reading VIPERS (Vocabulary, Infer, Predict, Explain, Retrieve, Sequence) (The Literacy Shed) are used, as a way of exploring the different content domains found in the National Curriculum. This enables the children to identify ways to break down questions into key skills and to encourage a holistic view of reading, recognising the different components needed to fully engage with a text.

Shared Reading is an important practice, which can be used across the curriculum to help children develop their skills and knowledge, both in English and other subject areas, in a cross-curricular context. This practice should be evident in planning, through ‘Book Looks’ and through discussions with the children about their learning.

**Individual and Group Reading:**

We aim to have regular individual reading sessions outside of English lessons – a minimum of three times weekly in Year 2 and four times weekly in Year 1 and in Foundation Stage. Any child who has been identified as potentially not meeting end of year age-related expectations, will be placed on a daily reading programme and appropriate assessments will be carried out to identify gaps in their phonological awareness and / or reading skills with the intention of the child ‘catching up’ with their peers (see below).

The Reading Scheme at Alvaston Infant and Nursery School is composed of a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry books. All individual reading books are closely matched to the graphemes and phonemes which the children are learning. The children work their way through the stages, progressing to reading literature of their choice (checked for suitability by an adult where necessary). Adults who read with the children in school will make appropriate and meaningful comments in the children’s reading diaries. Comments might refer to specific phonological observations or targets, or particular VIPERS, relating to the content domains found in the National Curriculum.

Teachers will plan group guided reading sessions as and when appropriate, however, these are not strictly timetabled. Group guided reading sessions might be used as an intervention strategy, or as a means of focusing upon specific graphemes, content domains or reading skills.

**Assessment of Reading**

In EYFS, teachers will use the EYFS Development Matters document. They will also use the Ros Wilson – Big Reading objectives to give individual reading a clear and personalised focus. Next steps will be recorded in children’s reading diaries.

In KS1, Children will be assessed using PM Benchmarking once per term. Children will be tested on high frequency and common exception words, relevant to their age group, on a regular basis. Words that are unfamiliar will be sent home to learn. Children will also sit the statutory KS1 Reading Assessment, which will be formally reported to parents.

1. **Phonics**

The 2014 National Curriculum states that reading should be taught alongside spelling and that pupils should be shown how to segment spoken words into individual phonemes and then how to represent the phonemes by using the appropriate grapheme(s). At Alvaston Infant School, we use the systematic teaching of phonics to support children in learning to both read and write.

**The Implementation of Phonics at Alvaston Infant and Nursery School:**

Daily phonic sessions will be taught in EYFS and KS1, however, there is a cross curricular approach towards phonics and it will be evident across all curriculum areas. For example, use of word walls, making links to phonics in modelled writing, talking to children in sounds etc. In EYFS, as children enter the school, they will begin to learn phonics in phases. In KS1, teaching will be inline with the National Curriculum. Teaching will be pitched to the top 80% of the class and all children will learn the same grapheme/phoneme/rule. Word packs will be differentiated to stretch and challenge different ability groups. Children will always be taught how to read words before they can spell them. Common Exception Words and pseudo words will be integrated into daily phonic word packs, where appropriate. When the children are ready, they will be encouraged to move away from segmenting and blending. Phoneme charts will be accessible to all children in the classroom. These will be used and referred to, to support teaching in all areas of the curriculum. All children will have a home-school reading book, which will be matched to their phonetic ability. Children who need more support with their phonics will be given extra support and will read every day, where possible, with a teacher or support staff. They will also be placed on an individual or group phonics ‘Catch-Up’ programme. Common Exception Words and High Frequency Words will be taught by creating personalised word lists for children to learn, once per week, with a maximum of 5 words to learn at each time. Children may be given less words to learn, depending on their ability. Regular workshops will be held in order to give parents a deeper understanding of phonics and how their child will be taught. This will subsequently enable them to support their child at home with the teaching of early reading.

**Assessment of Phonics**

Phonic assessments will take place half termly in EYFS and Year 1 (and for children in Year 2 who require additional support). This assessment process has been designed by the school. Phonic Screening Checks are used to determine value added progress and may be used diagnostically to provide next steps in learning. Children who are below the top 80%, or those who appear to need extra support during class sessions, will be entitled to receive extra phonic tuition per week, delivered through intervention programmes. Phonic diaries may be used as an intervention tool by parents and teachers to reinforce phonic teaching.

Children who have passed the Phonics Screening Check but are identified as still needing extra support with spelling, will be given extra support through group teaching and interventions. Pupils who have failed the statutory Phonics Screening Check in Year 1 will receive additional 1:1 support throughout Year 2 in order to prepare them for the retake at the end of Year 2.

1. **Writing** – transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing)

**See separate Handwriting Policy**

Writing is one of the primary forms of communication. It allows thoughts to be clarified, emotions to be expressed, opinions to be stated and experiences and explanations to be shared. It is also one of the more difficult aspects of the English language as its many conventions are difficult to follow and master. However, given the right environment and stimulus, it is an aspect of English that can give enormous pleasure. We aim to enable our pupils to consider themselves as ‘writers’, to encourage confidence and the motivation to want to write and to have sufficient control over the mechanics of writing to allow for skilful development of the writing process. We aim to offer a whole language approach so that pupils can learn to express clarity of thought and be able to manage language appropriately. We set high expectations of all our pupils and give writing a high profile in all its forms and across all curriculum areas.

In Key Stage 1, teachers will follow the EDCEP model when planning units of work in English. All writing activities will need an identified audience, clear purpose and should cover all aspects of the EDCEP process. This process enables pupils to discover the links between the skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening, drama and role play. It provides opportunity for children to engage with and deconstruct texts before orally composing and then writing their own, thus using the knowledge and skills gained in the reading and oral stages to inform their writing. During the ‘Discover’ phase, pupils will practise punctuation and grammar conventions, which can then be applied during the ‘Composing’ phase of the sequence. Teachers will refer to the statutory appendix for Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation in the National Curriculum in order to plan for these opportunities. All of these skills need to be considered when planning and assessing work.

In EYFS, **some** elements of the EDCEP process will be taken into account as **appropriate** when planning teaching and learning opportunities in English. However, the sequence will not be rigidly adhered to.

A range of resources will be used to support pupils and enable them to become independent writers. For example, phonics mats readily available, word walls displaying key vocabulary and dictionaries available for older pupils to check their spelling.

**Whole-Class Shared Writing:**

Writing at Alvaston Infant and Nursery School is developed through shared writing, which provides an opportunity for teachers to demonstrate and model writing, including the thought processes that are required. Teachers should make explicit references to genre features and word and sentence level work as appropriate.

**Guided Writing and Independent Writing:**

Children are given the opportunity to work as part of a small group to complete a piece of writing with the support and guidance of their teacher and peers. The group work together to begin a piece of writing and then continue independently whilst the teacher moves around the group and supports with individual needs as they arise. It is important that guided writing sessions are used with the range of abilities represented across the classroom and are planned carefully according to children’s targets to promote progression in writing skills for all children.

Children should be given the opportunity for a range of independent writing activities which clearly link to whole class writing objectives. Children should be given the opportunity to self-assess and peer-assess writing, based on a rubric linked to the learning objective/year group objectives and developed by the class as part of the teaching sequence leading up to creating an extended piece of writing. When possible, immediate feedback should be given to children so they can process the information and act upon it. Time to feedback and mark alongside pupils should also be be built into future lessons to allow children to go through their work with an adult, learning from their misconceptions and setting targets for future pieces of writing.

**Assessment of Writing**

The school has devised its own assessment criteria grids for writing, which will be used across the school to assess progress and attainment in writing. The assessment grids will be used as both a formative assessment and summative assessment tool. Teachers will record assessment levels in the first half-term (benchmark), January and May.

1. **Cross-Curricular Opportunities and the ‘Arts’**

As a school, we use our rich and bespoke curriculum as an engaging stimulus for initiating speaking and listening, reading and writing opportunities. As an ‘Artsmark’ School, we value the Arts, such as drama, art, dance, music and creative writing as vehicles to create stimulating and enriching opportunities for children to develop the skills needed to make them confident speakers, readers and writers. For example, a piece of artwork, as part of an artist study, might be used to inspire children to write creatively, a music video might be analysed as a shared reading activity to develop inference and prediction skills, or a dance performance might be studied in order to develop an understanding of character or plot in a story. All these valuable opportunities are significant in giving our children an appreciation of the Arts whilst developing their knowledge and skills in English, which will ultimately allow them the cultural capital to succeed in life and reach their potential.

1. **Monitoring and Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed formally every two years by the English Coordinator, in consultation with the staff and Headteacher. However, the policy will be amended in accordance with any developments or changes at appropriate intervals when necessary.