Thomas Telford

Multi Academy Trust

English Policy

Redhill Primary Academy and Thomas Telford Primary Free School

Signed

S. Plant

Ms. Su Plant, Chair of Governors

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Intent

The National Curriculum forms the basis for our English teaching. There is a seamless progression in knowledge and skills from EYFS through to Key Stage 1 and on to Key Stage 2. EYFS is the bedrock for Key Stage 1. In addition, through our long term and medium planning, teachers create engaging and purposeful learning with meaningful cross-curricular links. Our intent is that no child will be left behind. Our school values are embedded through our English curriculum. Literacy and story time texts are mapped out in conjunction with selected PSHCE texts which embed our values of respect, friendship, responsibility, empathy, honesty and independence and equality. The curriculum reflects the diversity that we value.

Children will

- be proficient in the use of language and oracy, able to articulate their ideas clearly, expressing opinions and debating their views
- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- read widely and often, developing a genuine love of reading
- appreciate our rich and varied language heritage
- write clearly, accurately and imaginatively, adapting language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- develop a love of writing and express thoughts and ideas creatively though the written words
- re-read, edit and improve their writing
- confidently use the essential skills of grammar, punctuation and spelling

Implementation

Curriculum and progression

We ensure that our English teaching and learning provides purposeful opportunities for developing spoken language, reading and writing. We use quality texts and resources to motivate our children. All pupils receive a daily English lesson. We also ensure that reading and writing are embedded and developed through all subject areas.

Pedagogy

Our teaching ensures that pupils learn. We believe that every lesson is an English lesson and an opportunity to deepen learning. Reading is at the heart of all curriculum subjects, and we believe that every opportunity should be exploited to build stamina and provide independent learning opportunities through reading. We use modelling, guided teaching and scaffolds to exemplify expectations for reading, speaking and listening, composition, vocabulary, grammar and punctuation.

Phonics

We teach phonics with fidelity to a systematic synthetic phonics programme to ensure consistency in practice and delivery. Throughout the Early Years and KS1 we teach phonics daily. Emphasis is placed on the application of sounds through reading and writing.

- Phonics is taught daily at a brisk pace
- Teaching is extended beyond the dedicated time and is applied and reinforced throughout the day in other subjects
- Progress is assessed and monitored by continuous AFL strategies and through individual assessments
- Agreed half termly phonic expectations are tracked using the Phonics trackers assessment tool.

- Our intention is that all children will keep up with the programme. However, any children at risk of falling behind will be quickly identified and targeted for additional intervention to enable them to catch up quickly.
- Each session includes the essential - revisit and review, teach, practice, apply and assess
- The phonics screening test is taken by all Year 1 children in June each year, with those children in Year 2 not achieving the threshold, targeted for further precise intervention to ensure rapid progress to close the attainment gap
- All teachers and teaching assistants are well-trained and have a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics
- When applying phonics into reading, we use the Essential Letters and Sounds decodable books which are matched to the ELS phonics programme.

Reading

Our reading programme is tightly matched to our phonics teaching. In EYFS and KS1, children read daily in guided groups. Children read the Essential Letters and Sounds phonetically decodable texts until they have completed the end of phase 5 in the ELS programme and are applying their phonetic skills fluently when reading. This enables the children to use their knowledge of phonemes to decode words. The teaching of high frequency words or harder to read words at each stage of the phonics programme also supports the reading development. Children then progress to the book banded Oxford Reading Tree books band 11 to 16 from Year 2, or when reading phonetically decodable texts fluently, through to Key Stage 2. Children in Years 2, 3 and 4 have a book banded guided reading book which is read in school and taken home. This book is changed weekly. Children in Upper KS2 have an independent reading book which is a quality text approved by class teachers. When needed, book banded texts or decodable texts are still used in Upper KS2.

The provision of books is meticulously organised, from when the children start in the nursery through to the end of key stage 2. The children read a range of narrative and non-narrative books throughout school. Reading attainment is closely tracked through continuous assessment as well as summative assessment. The lowest 20% of readers are closely tracked through school with teachers and teaching assistants prioritising targeted intervention for these children to ensure they make accelerated progress.

Our reading progression document sets clear expectations in terms of decoding, building fluency and comprehension for all year groups. As the children develop their ability to decode phonetically, the comprehension of text increases in importance with guided sessions focused on inference and deduction, developing a wider vocabulary and broadening the knowledge of authors, genres and themes.

In KS2, we use quality whole class texts, as evidence has shown that this approach to the teaching of reading supports the development of children's comprehension skills, fluency and stamina. Teachers ensure that the text chosen is appropriate to the ability of the class and provides children with a range of questions to develop all areas of their comprehension skills. The long-term overview of whole class reading and guided reading texts ensures progression and coverage. Higher order questions extend the more able, with additional support or differentiated texts and questions provided for children who are not yet ready to access the whole class text. There are daily guided reading sessions with an increased focus on building fluency, stamina and comprehension skills. The reading progression document, which sets clear expectations in terms of decoding, building fluency and comprehension, is used to inform planning.

All children should read widely for pleasure and for information across all areas of the curriculum. Reading is interwoven through all subject areas. We encourage reading for pleasure by promoting

acclaimed authors, sharing quality literature in story time and ensuring that book corners are stimulating with good quality texts. Reading is at the heart of all curriculum subjects and we believe that every opportunity should be exploited to build stamina and provide independent learning opportunities through reading. Our expectations for reading at home are ambitious, with all children encouraged to read daily and for increased periods of time as they progress through school.

- **Writing**

We believe that children should be given the opportunity to embed their writing skills and deepen their learning. Because of this, particularly in the early years and KS1, the children work on a smaller range of genres but apply their learning across other curriculum areas. There is an emphasis on precision in all areas of writing: planning, composition, grammar, spelling, handwriting and re-drafting. Through modelled writing and guided writing sessions focusing on children's precise next steps, children secure their knowledge of age-appropriate skills as outlined in the programmes of study for the national curriculum. We expect children to be able to master a range of writing styles confidently, effectively and accurately. Those children who are not on track to achieve the expected standard have precise and targeted intervention to accelerate and embed their learning. We believe that every lesson is an English lesson and an opportunity to deepen learning.
All classrooms are learning resources with quality texts, engaging book corners, tabletop resources and working walls to support the learning process.

<u>The teaching sequence:</u>
The core of the writing curriculum is focusing on learning key skills and the text provides the vehicle for the learning.

Key elements that need to be completed for the children to understand text and become good writers are:

- Reading, comparing and evaluating a range of texts
- Identifying and commenting on the structural and language features of the genre
- Text annotation/analysis
- Practising of key skills related to the text type
- Planning an extended write
- Extended writing
- Peer/self-assessment along the journey
- Redrafting and improving

Teachers will use modelling, guided writing, scaffolds and different levels of support to ensure successful acquisition of skills and knowledge for all children.

- **Spelling, punctuation and grammar**

We follow the programmes of study for each year group as outlined in the National Curriculum 2014, supported by the SSP programme. In the Early Years and Key Stage One, spelling is closely matched to phonics teaching with daily sessions providing the children with the opportunity to practise and apply phonemes taught. Additional discrete spelling sessions are taught at Key Stage One to provide the opportunity to teach the spelling curriculum meeting National Curriculum expectations. From Year 1, children are given weekly spelling tests based on words taken from phonics and discrete spelling lessons.
In Key Stage 2, there are weekly discrete spelling lessons which are embedded through retrieval practice and written application. In addition to this, spelling, grammar and punctuation are taught daily through short starter activities and then developed and applied through the writing process.

- **Handwriting**

We follow the programmes of study for each year group as outlined in the National Curriculum 2014, supported by the Nelson handwriting scheme. There are daily, discrete handwriting sessions throughout the primary phase, with teachers demonstrating the formation of the letters and correct joins. In addition, in all writing activities, handwriting is reinforced for children to apply the skills taught in discrete lessons.

In Reception, in the first 2-3 weeks, we have handwriting sessions alongside phonics and maths where we introduce some of the curves, repeated curves, lines and zig zags. We always have large and fine motor activities out for example, chalks, sand and paint brushes to practise mark making lines. We introduce the rhymes and formation heavily within phonics sessions and when drawing club begins, if we are labelling, we continue to model a tripod grip, starting positions and children are taught to sit correctly at a table.

In Autumn 2, when the children have more phase 2 phonics knowledge, we move to teaching handwriting in letter families. There is a continued focus on holding a pencil comfortably with a tripod grip moving to correctly beginning to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place. We work in guided groups supporting starting points, grip, writing on a line and appropriate size and control. We model handwriting to the children rather than get them to copy from the books. We put letters into their books with red marks for starting points and arrows to support them with copying.

In Year 1, there is a continued focus on sitting correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and forming lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place, exit lines, forming capital letters form digits 0–9, understanding which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these. The teacher models the letter formation on the Active board and children write into their wide line books. Teachers continue to use the language from the rhymes in phonics but we also use the language of handwriting- baseline, waistline, ascender, descender. The teacher writes letters into books for children to copy accurately if needed. We work through letter families from the start, ensuring correct starting points, that all letters have clear exit lines and working on size and spacing. This is a daily session. There is focused intervention for children at risk of falling behind expectations.

Year 2- the children should correctly form all lower-case letter correctly with exit strokes. Formation of capitals and digits 0-9 using the correct size and orientation should be secured. There should be consistent spacing between words. Children begin to use diagonal and horizontal strokes to join letters. Joined handwriting should not be taught until pupils can form these unjoined letters (print forms) correctly and consistently. Once they can join letters to write words, continue to practise handwriting discretely to develop automaticity.

Year 3- children use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined.

Year 4 - Increase consistency, legibility and quality of handwriting.

Year 5 - write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by: choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding, as part of their personal style, whether or not to join specific letters. They choose the writing implement that is best suited for a task (e.g. quick notes, letters).

Year 6 develop a legible personal handwriting style and adapt their handwriting to match a particular purpose.

Left-handed pupils need specific demonstration and adjustments, including by making sure they:

• have space to write

• sit to the left of any right-handed pupil to prevent their arms colliding

• slant their paper to the right

• use softer pencils that require less pressure

• grip the pencil at a slightly higher point so they can see around their fingers

• do not hold the pencil too tightly or press down too hard

Assessment

Assessment informs next steps and ensures that any areas of weakness are tackled swiftly. We use AFL to ensure that teaching and learning is precise enabling children to meet age-related expectations.

In daily phonics sessions AFL is continuous and vigorous with children quickly identified if in danger of falling behind with swift intervention put in place. Children are assessed using the half termly phonic assessment from the ELS programme. The phonics tracker and agreed expectations enable all teachers to know how children are progressing and supports the quick identification of children who are falling behind.

Children not on track and the lowest 20% through school, are tracked specifically on our whole school tracking document. Teachers deliver precise intervention to these children during guided teaching and assembly times.

Statutory Assessment tests are completed at the end of KS2 along with the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check. In Year 6, teachers use the teacher assessment framework to assess the children's writing and as the basis for teacher assessment judgements. Standardised assessments tests produced by NFER are used termly in other year groups to support judgements in reading, spelling and grammar.

All children complete 2-3 pieces of independent writing per half term to secure an assessment judgement. Teachers use assessment grids in the back of the children's books to assess writing against age-related expectations. Assessment judgements are moderated by teams, across year groups and in cluster meetings between schools.

Culture

We are passionate about igniting our children's natural enthusiasm to read, developing children as lifelong learners who read for pleasure as well as to learn. Our investment in quality texts, book corners, our ambitious targets for reading at home and curriculum time ensures that children become wide and fluent readers. Their command of language is developed through systematically increasing their vocabulary store while providing opportunities to discuss ideas, justify opinions, ask questions and use discussion and debate for a clear purpose. Curriculum visits are planned with thought, enabling children to experience visits to the theatre or meet real authors to raise aspirations, inspire and stimulate lifelong learning.

Impact

By the end of Key Stage 2 children will:

- meet the expected standards in spoken language, reading and writing at least in line with the end of KS2 expectations
- be secondary ready and attain well in all areas of the English curriculum
- be confident in the art of speaking and listening, confidently using Standard English
- be fluent readers with a genuine love of reading
- be able to talk about books that they enjoy with enthusiasm and knowledge
- have the stamina and skills to write at length, with accurate spelling and punctuation
- meet expectations in grammar, spelling and punctuation which leads to automaticity when writing, freeing up cognitive load
- be able to write extended pieces of work including narratives, explanations, descriptions, comparisons, summaries and evaluations
- have a wide vocabulary and be adventurous with vocabulary choices within their writing

The impact of teaching and learning is measured by:

- summative data from Statutory Assessment Tests
- lesson observations, book scrutiny, learning walks and pupil voice
- moderating pupils' work in phases and clusters across schools
- tracking pupils, analysing assessments and identifying precise, targeted steps to ensure progress through pupil progress meetings.