

LITERACY POLICY

Rationale

This policy reflects the school's values, philosophy and mission statement in relation to the teaching and learning of the English Language. It sets out a framework within which teaching and non-teaching staff can operate and it gives guidance on planning, teaching and assessment. The policy should be read in conjunction with the National Curriculum Guidelines and the Primary National Strategy. These set out in detail the rationale for teaching each area of the English Language curriculum and specify the skills that will be developed for all pupils.

This document has been prepared in consultation and discussion with all teaching staff at Garlinge Primary School and Nursery together with the Governing Body and LA advisors.

Aims

- To develop pupils' abilities to communicate effectively in speech and language.
- To develop pupils' understanding of spoken and written language so that they become enthusiastic, responsive and knowledgeable speakers, readers and writers.
- To develop pupils' listening skills, essential to communicating effectively in a range of situations.
- To help pupils understand how language enables them to experience and appreciate their world and the realms of the imagination through all media.
- To help pupils understand the part language plays in enabling them to express their ideas, feelings and experiences, and those of others.
- To help pupils understand the function and importance of Standard English.

Objectives

These objectives are derived from the aims and should inform planning, teaching and assessment:

To develop effective speaking and listening pupils should be taught to:

- Use, with increasing confidence, the vocabulary and grammar of Standard English.
- Formulate, clarify and express their ideas.
- Express themselves in a variety of situations using language which is appropriate to their needs and the intended audience.
- Listen, understand and respond appropriately to others.

To develop as effective readers, pupils should be taught to:

- Extend and develop as readers throughout their time in school.
- Read for purpose and pleasure so that they enjoy reading a variety of texts and become enthusiastic readers.
- Master their initial reading skills so that they become independent readers with the knowledge and experience of a wide range of reading strategies.
- Read a range of texts accurately, fluently and with understanding.
- Find out the information they need in order to research and answer the questions of others.
- Understand and respond to a wide range of books and media texts on paper and on screen.
- Understand the variety of written language, and the differences between fiction and non-fiction.
- Improve their abilities to read, analyse and evaluate a wide range of texts, including literature from other cultures and traditions.
- Develop higher order reading skills, enabling the use of inference and deduction.

To develop as effective writers, pupils should be taught to:

- Express themselves clearly and precisely for enjoyment.
- Use knowledge acquired from their range of reading texts to model their writing in the style of different authors and also in different genres.
- Demonstrate their understanding of how writing enables them to remember, communicate, organise and develop their ideas and information.
- Write for an increasing range of purposes, matching their language to the needs of the appropriate audience.
- Understand the appropriate use and purpose of an increasing range of written forms on paper and on screen.
- Develop ideas and communicate meaning to a reader, using a wide-ranging broad vocabulary and effective style.
- Write neatly with accurate spelling and expression.

Progression – Principles of Teaching, Learning and Progression

At Garlinge Primary School and Nursery we believe that every pupil is entitled to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that takes account of the requirements of the National Curriculum and other guidance documents. We ensure all staff have an awareness of equal opportunities. We believe that the fundamental functions of language as a means of expressing feelings, establishing contact with others and bringing about desired responses, are crucial in underpinning life skills and all aspects of the curriculum. We therefore believe that all aspects of language need to be developed in as many different ways as possible in order to help children achieve a confident, fluent and appropriate use of language.

Teaching and Learning at Garlinge Primary School and Nursery is based on the children's and classes individual needs. Pupil provision is related to attainment, not age. It is important to remember that the National Curriculum in English is broad so it is necessary to practise and apply aspects of English through cross-curricular links with other national curriculum subjects.

Teaching Methods and Organisation

Approaches to Speaking and Listening:

The four strands of Speaking and Listening; **Speaking, Listening and Responding, Group Discussion and Interaction**, and **Drama** permeate the whole curriculum. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise reading and writing standards. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life.

To ensure children develop as effective **speakers and listeners** so that they can:

- formulate, clarify and express ideas
- express themselves using language which is appropriate to their needs and the audience
- listen, understand and respond appropriately to others
- use the vocabulary and grammar of Standard English
- provide as many opportunities as possible for children to experience speaking and listening within a variety of different groupings, in different situations, and for different purposes within a wide variety of curriculum areas to enable them to become confident articulate speakers and sympathetic discerning listeners

Approaches to Reading:

To ensure children develop as **readers** so that they can:

- use phonic knowledge to decode words, using Letters and Sounds guidance
- master initial reading skills to become independent in reading
- read a range of texts with understanding, fluency and accuracy
- research information they need to find in order to answer questions
- understand the variety of written language and the differences between fiction and non-fiction
- understand and respond to a range of texts
- improve their ability to analyse, evaluate and criticise texts
- become independent fluent readers with a range of strategies and skills and a knowledge of both the uses and enjoyment of reading through a wide variety of activities in many areas of the curriculum

Approaches to Writing:

To develop children as **writers** so that they can:

- express themselves clearly, precisely and for enjoyment
- demonstrate understanding of how writing enables them to remember, communicate, organise and develop their ideas and information
- write for different purposes matching language to the audience
- understand the appropriate use and purpose of different written forms
- write neatly in a cursive style with accurate spelling and expression
- become fluent independent writers, able to write appropriately for a wide variety of purpose and to keep the needs of the reader of their work in mind
- become independent spellers by using a variety of strategies and to help them become consistently more aware of the typical spelling patterns to be found in the English language. The Support for Spelling guidance will support this
- enable children to write with a fluent, quick and legible hand and to give them an awareness of the importance of presentation by using a whole school approach to handwriting (see Appendix 1)

Breadth and Balance

Teachers should have a clear idea of the knowledge and skills to be taught in the four areas of speaking, listening, reading and writing, which incorporate composition, handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar. It should be noted that these four language modes are inextricably interrelated and that a balance must be struck between them across Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

A range of genres and texts are selected to ensure that children get a balance drawn from a variety of sources enabling cross-curricular links.

Variety

The literacy session will ensure that children will be engaged in a variety of activities appropriate to their specific needs. Child initiated activities, story telling, talking about their own experiences and ideas, drama and improvisation provide a sound base at Foundation Stage and are developed throughout Key Stages 1 and 2.

Teaching and Learning styles incorporate direct instruction; group collaboration; paired work; practical activity; performance; individual research and investigation with other appropriate strategies all encouraging effective learning through language.

Such is the importance of language to effective learning that this variety will be encouraged across all subjects and aspects of the curriculum. A wide range of resources (big books; picture books; stories; sound and film clips; fairy tales; myths; legends; poetry; nursery rhymes; songs; non-fiction; magazines; comics; multicultural resources;) are used to help children discover and explore the rich variety of linguistic experience.

Relevance

Language is relevant to all aspects of learning. This relevance is enhanced by enabling children to explore and express their own experience (e.g. family, pets, favourite toys), explore appropriate texts (e.g. fairy tales, nursery rhymes, television programmes), and express their thoughts, feelings and responses to an increasing range of styles and forms.

Cross-Curricular Skills and Themes

Language pervades all aspects of our lives and culture. It is the driving force behind learning and across all aspects of the curriculum. The National Curriculum recognises the centrality of language by prefacing each subject's orders with the following statement:

"Use of Language: Pupils should be taught to express themselves clearly in both speech and writing and to develop their reading skills. They should be taught to use grammatically correct sentences in order to communicate effectively in written English".

As a school we recognise and identify the aspects of language and language use which occur and encourage effective learning across all studies, topics or subjects. Language makes a valuable contribution to cross-curricular elements in the development of key concepts, skills values and attitudes.

Planning

Although all, or most of, the component parts of the language curriculum are inherent in many other areas, specific activities will be timetabled daily.

Long Term Planning:

We will use the English National Curriculum, Primary Framework and other DfE documents as a basis for our long term planning in Speaking & Listening, Writing & Reading.

Medium Term Planning:

Teachers will use the Schemes of Work as a basis for the school termly planners. Departments and year group teachers will work closely to ensure the coverage of the Scheme of Work, recording them in their curriculum folders.

Short Term Planning:

Teachers will plan weekly in their departments and year groups, using the guidance provided.

Foundation Stage:

English is taught within the Foundation Stage as part of the overall Foundation Stage Curriculum. Long term, medium term and short term planning is carried out in a very different way to that of Key Stage 1 and 2. The main assessment is taken from the Early Years Foundations Stage. Literacy skills are encouraged, supported and taught continuously through the timetabled day as well as specific planning within the Communication, Language and Literacy subject area. Uses of the role-play, auditory and kinaesthetic methods are all used to support the teaching and learning of English within the Foundation Stage.

In the Foundation Stage all children have the opportunity to explore, develop and reinforce English skills in all areas of the classroom but, in particular, in the role-play, book, writing and listening areas.

Monitoring

All planning documents will be reviewed and monitored by the Headteacher and Subject Leader. The subject leader will observe literacy lessons and English across the curriculum; Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

Differentiation and Additional Educational Needs

The development of children's language necessitates a variety of differentiated texts and approaches across the four language modes (speaking, listening, reading and writing). Careful planning will ensure that these resources and approaches are appropriately matched to individual pupils, including the more able and those children with particular learning needs, across year groups.

Differentiated learning is planned by class teachers to meet the needs of individuals and groups within the class. A variety of groupings are used to affect learning according to the nature of the task. Teaching assistants support learning according to plans provided in advance by the teacher to enable preparation for the lesson. Literacy Learning Intentions take account of IEP's. Learning is differentiated for EAL children according to their level of language acquisition; children are included within the class group - see EAL guidelines. Provision has also been made due to a recent rapid increase of EAL children within the school, in order for them to access the full curriculum as quickly as possible.

Intervention Programmes

At Garlinge Primary School and Nursery we offer intervention programmes to aid the learning of the children that may find some aspects more challenging. We have embraced Letters and Sounds across the school (see Appendix 2). In Year 3 the children have access to the Sir Kit programme. The children are able to work in ability groups within classes to allow for the more able to be challenged and the less able to have the relevant input and support as needed. Some children have the opportunity to have small group work with an Intervention teaching assistant. These groups are assessed regularly and the children involved can be changed regularly to ensure they are accessing work that is relevant to their ability.

Equal Opportunities

Children of all ethnic and cultural groups, races, genders and abilities, have equal access to the English Curriculum. Positive images in terms of all groups are promoted throughout the school, both in the use of language and in the provision of resources.

Resources

Funding for English will be included within the school budget plan for each financial year.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Opportunities for teacher assessment will be identified in planning documents, together with opportunities for any pupil self assessment.

Assessment in English is continuous, to inform planning and diagnose strengths and weaknesses. In speaking and listening this involves observing children using a variety of spoken language for different purposes. In reading, this involves formal and informal observation and close monitoring of children's developing use of strategies and responses to texts. Summative assessment is gained through a mid term reading paper (SATs style) and reading age testing. In writing, it involves effective marking which is positive, instructional and developmental. Feedback to children about their progress in English is through verbal comment, discussion and the marking of work. (See Marking and Assessment policies for further details) Three termly writing assessments will also help monitor the children's progress within writing.

We recognise that assessment is ongoing and can be carried out in a variety of ways, including discussion and written evidence.

The Marking Policy must be followed in conjunction with this policy. The importance of effective feedback is recognised as a key factor in promoting learning. Planning is annotated to reflect lesson assessments to inform subsequent short term plans. In speaking and listening children's use of spoken language for different purposes is assessed with verbal feedback provided. In reading, children are assessed in their developing use of strategies when they are heard to read and in their responses to reading texts during lessons. In writing, feedback is provided during the writing process; work is marked to highlight success and give improvement prompts directly linked to the Learning Intention. Children must respond to these prompts as soon as possible after the lesson, making the improvements identified, as highlighted in the marking policy.

Summative Assessment is through:

- NC Tests - Annually in May for Year 6
- Verbal and Non-Verbal reasoning in Term 6 for Year 3
- Verbal and Non-Verbal reasoning in Term 5 for Year 5
- Optional NC tests for Years 3, 4, and 5
- NC Tests/Teacher Assessment – Annually in May for Year 2.
- Phonics Screening – Term 6 for Year 1
- Salford Reading Test in October and March for all children.
- Teacher assessment (according to level descriptors) for all year groups
- Agreement trialling of children's writing within year groups and across key stages
- Whole school assessments will be carried out, whereby work can be levelled by all staff in line with level descriptors and samples used as guidance in a school portfolio every two terms.
- Pupil Progress Grids and meetings, three times a year.
- Assertive Mentoring assessments throughout the year for all year groups.

Formative assessment is through:

- Daily marking of the children's work
- Discussion with the children
- Listening to the children
- Circle time activities
- Individual reading sessions
- Guided reading sessions
- Evaluation of plans and lessons.

Cross-Curricular Literacy Opportunities

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. They will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through literacy lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

ICT

ICT should be used to aid and support teaching and learning wherever possible. This may be in the classroom or ICT suite. Children should be actively engaged in developing their English skills through their own use of ICT.

Health and Safety

Guidelines in the Health and Safety Policy will apply with regard to the use of ICT, all school based activities and out of school activities relating to English.

The Role of the Subject Leader

The subject leader will be responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in literacy through:

- Taking the lead in policy development and the production of schemes of work
- Auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD
- Purchasing and organising resources
- Keeping up to date with developments in English and disseminating information to colleagues as appropriate
- Monitoring the delivery of the English Curriculum and advising the Headteacher on any action needed
- Monitoring and evaluating pupil progress and the quality of the learning environment

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement in children's language development is encouraged. As part of the school's commitment to extending learning opportunities, parents are asked to hear their child read at home each evening and keep a record this in the Home Reading Diary. Parents are asked to help in the learning of weekly spellings and other language homework set. Progress, assessment information and learning targets are shared with parents/ carers at termly consultation meetings to ensure they are fully informed and able to work in partnership in the interest of their child.

Conclusion

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

Teaching and Learning Policy
Assessment
Marking policy
Additional Educational Needs Policy
ICT Policy
Equal Opportunities Policy
Health and Safety Policy

Review

This policy will be reviewed as appropriate in response to local or national initiatives, evaluation of monitoring procedures and as detailed in the school improvement plan.

Regular reports are made to the governors on the progress of English provision.

Appendix 1

Handwriting Guidance

At Garlinge School we use the cursive handwriting font for all written work. This is where all letters start and finish on the line. There are stages we promote and encourage to enable good legible handwriting to develop.

During Nursery and terms one and two in Reception the children will work on muscle development by carrying out large movements, such as squirty bottles, hitting targets, chalk drawing on the playground, big pens on big pieces of paper, write dance etc.

Teachers will model cursive handwriting to the children. Initially the letters will be taught and modelled individually and this will carry on until the children are forming the letters correctly and thus ready to join them together. The teachers will teach handwriting modelling patterns and how to join them correctly, when the individual child is ready to do so.

Once the children are joining letters correctly and using cursive script (ideally by the end of Year Two) the teachers will consolidate and reinforce presentation of handwriting by practising joins and correct formation.

Appendix 2

Letters and Sounds Guidance

Phase	Phonic Knowledge and Skills
<i>Phase One</i> (Nursery/Reception)	Activities are divided into seven aspects, including environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body sounds, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds and finally oral blending and segmenting.
<i>Phase Two</i> (Reception) up to 6 weeks	Learning 19 letters of the alphabet and one sound for each. Blending sounds together to make words. Segmenting words into their separate sounds. Beginning to read simple captions.
<i>Phase Three</i> (Reception) up to 12 weeks	The remaining 7 letters of the alphabet, one sound for each. Graphemes such as ch, oo, th representing the remaining phonemes not covered by single letters. Reading captions, sentences and questions. On completion of this phase, children will have learnt the "simple code", i.e. one grapheme for each phoneme in the English language.
<i>Phase Four</i> (Reception) 4 to 6 weeks	No new grapheme-phoneme correspondences are taught in this phase. Children learn to blend and segment longer words with adjacent consonants, e.g. swim, clap, jump.
<i>Phase Five</i> (Throughout Year 1)	Now we move on to the "complex code". Children learn more graphemes for the phonemes which they already know, plus different ways of pronouncing the graphemes they already know.
<i>Phase Six</i> (Throughout Year 2 and beyond)	Working on spelling, including prefixes and suffixes, doubling and dropping letters etc.

Phase 1

Phase One of Letters and Sounds concentrates on developing children's speaking and listening skills and lays the foundations for the phonic work which starts in Phase 2. The emphasis during Phase 1 is to get children attuned to the sounds around them and ready to begin developing oral blending and segmenting skills.

Phase 1 is divided into seven aspects. Each aspect contains three strands: Tuning in to sounds (auditory discrimination), Listening and remembering sounds (auditory memory and sequencing) and Talking about sounds (developing vocabulary and language comprehension).

It is intended that each of the first six aspects should be dipped into, rather than going through them in any order, with a balance of activities. Aspect 7 will usually come later, when children have had plenty of opportunity to develop their sound discrimination skills.

Aspect 1 - General sound discrimination - environmental

The aim of this aspect is to raise children's awareness of the sounds around them and to develop their listening skills. Activities suggested in the guidance include going on a listening walk, drumming on different items outside and comparing the sounds, playing a sounds lotto game and making shakers.

Aspect 2 - General sound discrimination - instrumental sounds

This aspect aims to develop children's awareness of sounds made by various instruments and noise makers. Activities include comparing and matching sound makers, playing instruments alongside a story and making loud and quiet sounds.

Aspect 3 - General sound discrimination - body percussion

The aim of this aspect is to develop children's awareness of sounds and rhythms. Activities include singing songs and action rhymes, listening to music and developing a sounds vocabulary.

Aspect 4 - Rhythm and rhyme

This aspect aims to develop children's appreciation and experiences of rhythm and rhyme in speech. Activities include rhyming stories, rhyming bingo, clapping out the syllables in words and odd one out.

Aspect 5 - Alliteration

The focus is on initial sounds of words, with activities including I-Spy type games and matching objects which begin with the same sound.

Aspect 6 - Voice sounds

The aim is to distinguish between different vocal sounds and to begin oral blending and segmenting. Activities include Metal Mike, where children feed pictures of objects into a toy robot's mouth and the teacher sounds out the name of the object in a robot voice - /c/-/u/-/p/ cup, with the children joining in.

Aspect 7 - Oral blending and segmenting

In this aspect, the main aim is to develop oral blending and segmenting skills.

To practice oral blending, the teacher could say some sounds, such as /c/-/u/-/p/ and see whether the children can pick out a cup from a group of objects. For segmenting practice, the teacher could hold up an object such as a sock and ask the children which sounds they can hear in the word sock.

The activities introduced in Phase 1 are intended to continue throughout the following phases, as lots of practice is needed before children will become confident in their phonic knowledge and skills.

Phase 2

In Phase 2, letters and their sounds are introduced one at a time. A set of letters is taught each week, in the following sequence:

Set 1: s, a, t, p

Set 2: i, n, m, d

Set 3: g, o, c, k

Set 4: ck, e, u, r

Set 5: h, b, f, ff, l, ll, ss

As soon as each set of letters is introduced, children will be encouraged to use their knowledge of the letter sounds to blend and sound out words. For example, They will learn to blend the sounds s-a-t to make the word **sat**. They will also start learning to segment words. For example, they might be asked to find the letter sounds that make the word **tap** from a small selection of magnetic letters.

Phase 2 Set 1 Letters and Words

In Set 1, the first four letters are introduced and seven words can be used for segmenting and blending (high frequency words are shown in *italics*):

s, a, t, p *at, a, sat, pat, tap, sap, as*

Phase 2 Set 2 Letters and Words

Set 2 includes four new letters. As each new letter is learnt, children will be able to sound out several new words, as follows:

i *it, is, sit, sat, pit, tip, pip, sip*

n *an, in, nip, pan, pin, tin, tan, nap*

m *am, man, mat, map, Pam, Tim, Sam*

d *dad, and, sad, dim, dip, din, did, Sid*

Phase 2 Set 3 Letters and Words

Set 3 introduces four new letters, with 28 new decodable words suggested, including four high frequency words, shown in *italics* below:

g *tag, gag, gig, gap, nag, sag, gas, pig, dig*

o *got, on, not, pot, top, dog, pop, God, Mog*

c *can, cot, cop, cap, cat, cod*

k *kid, kit, Kim, Ken*

Phase 2 Set 4 Letters and Words

Set 4 introduces four new graphemes, with 36 new decodable words suggested. For the first time, some of the suggested words contain two syllables, such as pocket, sunset etc., which some young children might find too difficult at this stage. Personally, I would leave these out if they cause problems. At this stage, it is more important for children to experience success at sounding out short words. Their ability to decode longer words will improve as their short-term memory develops.

At this point, two "tricky words" (not fully decodable at this stage) are taught: **the** and **to**.

ck kick, sock, sack, dock, pick, sick, pack, ticket, pocket

e get, pet, ten, net, pen, peg, met, men, neck

u up, mum, run, mug, cup, sun, tuck, mud, sunset

r rim, rip, ram, rat, rag, rug, rot, rocket, carrot

Phase 2 Set 5 Letters and Words

Set 5 introduces seven graphemes (three of which are doubled letters), with 69 new decodable words suggested.

New "tricky" words: **no**, **go** and **I**.

h had, him, his, hot, hut, hop, hum, hit, hat, has, hack, hug

b but, big, back, bet, bad, bag, bed, bud, beg, bug, bun, bus, Ben, bat, bit, bucket, beckon, rabbit

f, ff of, if, off, fit, fin, fun, fig, fog, puff, huff, cuff, fan, fat

l, ll lap, let, leg, lot, lit, bell, fill, doll, tell, sell, Bill, Nell, dull, laptop

ss ass, less, hiss, mass, mess, boss, fuss, hiss, pass, kiss, Tess, fusspot

Phase 3

By the time they reach Phase 3, children will already be able to blend and segment words containing the 19 letters taught in Phase 2.

Over the twelve weeks which Phase 3 is expected to last, twenty-five new graphemes are introduced (one at a time).

Set 6: j, v, w, x

Set 7: y, z, zz, qu

Consonant digraphs: ch, sh, th, ng

Vowel digraphs: ai, ee, igh, oa, oo, ar, or, ur, ow, oi, ear, air, ure, er

During Phase 3, children will also learn the letter names using an alphabet song, although they will continue to use the sounds when decoding words.

Tricky words

During Phase 3, the following tricky words (which can't yet be decoded) are introduced:

- he
- she
- we
- me
- be
- was
- you
- they
- all
- are
- my
- her

Phase 4

When children start Phase Four of the Letters and Sounds phonics programme, they will know a grapheme for each of the 42 phonemes. They will be able to blend phonemes to read CVC (consonant-vowel-consonant) words and segment in order to spell them.

Children will also have begun reading straightforward two-syllable words and simple captions, as well as reading and spelling some tricky words.

In Phase 4, no new graphemes are introduced. The main aim of this phase is to consolidate the children's knowledge and to help them learn to read and spell words which have adjacent consonants, such as trap, string and milk.

Tricky words

During Phase 4, the following tricky words (which can't yet be decoded) are introduced:

- said
- have
- like
- so
- do
- some
- come
- were
- there
- little
- one
- when
- out
- what

Phase 5

Children entering Phase Five will already be able to read and spell words with adjacent consonants, such as trap, string and flask. They will also be able to read and spell some polysyllabic words.

In Phase Five, children will learn more graphemes and phonemes. For example, they already know ai as in rain, but now they will be introduced to ay as in day and a-e as in make.

Alternative pronunciations for graphemes will also be introduced, e.g. ea in tea, head and break.

With practice, speed at recognising and blending graphemes will improve. Word and spelling knowledge will be worked on extensively.

Tricky words

During Phase 5, the following tricky words (which can't yet be decoded) are introduced:

- oh
- their
- people
- Mr
- Mrs
- looked
- called
- asked
- could

Phase 6

At the start of Phase Six of Letters and Sounds, children will have already learnt the most frequently occurring grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) in the English language. They will be able to read many familiar words automatically. When they come across unfamiliar words they will in many cases be able to decode them quickly and quietly using their well-developed sounding and blending skills. With more complex unfamiliar words they will often be able to decode them by sounding them out.

At this stage children should be able to spell words phonemically although not always correctly. In Phase Six the main aim is for children to become more fluent readers and more accurate spellers.