



## **English Policy**

*'Books give a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, and life to everything.'* -Plato

### **Aims**

At Coldfall Primary school, we believe that English is at the heart of our learning and teaching and essential to every area of the curriculum. It is through English that concepts are formed and we are able to make sense of the world and our place in it. We value the importance of speaking with eloquence and conviction; reading for pleasure and understanding, and writing with fluency and style.

We aim to:

- Develop confidence in speaking for a range of purposes e.g. debates, assemblies, performances, reading aloud and engaging in discussions.
- Foster a love of reading and books
- Deliver rich opportunities for writing based on quality core texts
- Provide children with cross curricular links so skills are transferable
- Ensure all children are supported in meeting the Early Learning Goals in the Early Years Foundation stage and End of Year Expectations for the National Curriculum 2014
- Assess children's progress both formatively and summatively to ensure they are making the best progress possible

### **Planning and Organisation**

Children have English lessons that have the main focus of writing, reading or speaking and listening (Oracy). This includes word, sentence and text level activities. Over one to two weeks, children will cover their weekly spelling words and rules, take part in speaking and listening activities, comprehension and reading based tasks and have an opportunity to plan and write creatively in the particular style of writing focussed on during that unit of work. Children must also have the opportunity to see teachers modelling high quality writing with accurate spellings, grammar and handwriting. Demonstration writing and shared editing (where teacher and class edit and improve a piece of work together) should be noted on plans. Each year group has an explicit set of end of year outcomes (Key Skills) which class teachers use as a guide to plan and assess from.

### **Speaking and Listening**

#### **Aims**

Good speaking and listening skills are fundamental to good learning, and play a large part in a child's progress. During their time at Coldfall Primary School, 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. We aim for children to be able to speak clearly, fluently and coherently, to be able to listen attentively with understanding, pleasure and empathy and contribute to group discussions effectively.

We achieve this by:

- Giving our children confidence in themselves as speakers and listeners by showing them that we value their conversations and opinions.
- Being aware that as adults, we model good Standard English in our day-to-day interactions with children and with other adults in our school.
- Expecting children to ask and answer questions in full sentences.
- Encouraging respect for the views of others by generating clear and concise 'discussion guidelines'.
- Helping children to articulate their ideas with the support of discussion stems, and provide purposes and audiences for talk within a range of formal and informal situations and in individual, partner, group and class contexts.
- By providing opportunities to perform to a larger audience, in assemblies and productions, where children's efforts and skills are acknowledged by staff, parents, carers, visitors and peers.
- By providing a range of experiences where children can work collaboratively and participate in opportunities to reflect on talk and explore real and imagined situations through role play, hot seating, debates, vocabulary enrichment, discussions and drama.
- Developing a wide vocabulary and language acquisition through the explicit teaching of new words. Vocabulary is displayed in the environment and used by the children to enhance their speaking and listening as well as their reading and writing. This new vocabulary is referred to regularly by the teacher during lessons and kept up to date.

## **Reading**

### **Aims**

Our aims are for all children at Coldfall to:

- Become fluent, confident and expressive readers.
- Read with enjoyment across a range of genres.
- Read for pleasure as well as for information.
- Read and respond to a wide range of different types of literature.
- Understand the layout and how to use different genres and text types.
- Understand and apply their knowledge of phonics and spelling patterns and use this to decode words with accuracy.
- Build their bank of sight words to enable fluent reading.
- Have an interest in words and their meanings, developing a rich and varied vocabulary.
- Understand and respond to literature drawn from a range of cultures and literary heritage.

The formal teaching of phonics begins in Reception, however, the pre-requisite skills needed for reading begin in Nursery. Sounds are introduced at a rate of one a day throughout the autumn and spring term. This provision is made during discrete sessions. We follow the Read Write Inc. synthetic phonics programme in Reception and KS1. These lessons comprise of learning different graphemes, focussing on oral and aural phonological skills, blending and segmenting, and sight vocabulary. During these sessions, children are also explicitly shown how to apply their developing skills to their writing by using handwriting sessions and the 'Get Writing' books in Y1

Phonics and key word knowledge is built upon in Year 1, and it is our expectation that all children pass the phonics-screening test at the end of that year. Sounds that are more complex are introduced and reinforced throughout Year 2.

Alongside the teaching of phonics, children are taught key words many of which are short, common words (red words), which appear frequently in all texts. Children have daily, rigorous opportunities to practise these key words discretely, and in the context of their learning. It is our expectation that all children can read and spell the key words for their year group.

Pupils have opportunities to undertake guided, shared and independent reading throughout the school. A diverse range of group reading books and staged reading schemes are available. We do not use any one published scheme to teach reading; instead, we believe that it is important to provide pupils with a selection of reading books and experiences from different genres, cultures and subject matter. Teachers read a variety of written material regularly with the children: fiction and non-fiction, stories, reports, diaries, poems etc. To ensure children are reading at the appropriate level, each class has banded books. The banding of books helps to determine the appropriate level of books the children are reading as part of our home reading system.

In the EYFS, and for part of the year in Year 1, children read with an adult weekly to build up their fluency, word recognition and language comprehension. Two books will be sent home each week for children to read with their parents/carers. One of these books is fully decodable ensuring children can reinforce and practise their phonics skills at home.

In Key Stage 1, guided reading takes place. During these sessions, the class teacher reads with differentiated ability groups of around six children at least once per week. The ultimate goal in guided reading is to help children learn how to use independent reading strategies successfully. Guided reading with more fluent readers, whilst continuing to develop reading strategies, places more emphasis on making meaning at increasingly complex levels. In Y2, in the Spring Term, most children begin developing specific reading skills in a whole class setting followed up by small group work. This helps with the transition for KS2. The remainder of the children are taught in smaller groups to address any gaps in phonological knowledge or word reading skills.

In Key Stage 2, in order to build on the reading practices that have taken place in the EYFS and KS1, children participate in a whole class reading approach called Destination Reader. Destination Reader blends a range of learning behaviours and reading strategies which, brought together, allow children to explore and understand texts independently, at a deeper level. The texts chosen for Destination Reader come from our Coldfall Reading Spine, and are closely linked with our Golden Threads and curriculum.

In order to develop a love of reading there are opportunities for children to read a wide variety of texts independently. In addition to this, all classes have a class novel that is shared at the end of each school day, this is a free choice book either chosen by the class teacher or recommended by a child.

## **Home Reading**

For children to become fluent readers, we expect children to read at home every day. The time children spend reading each day varies for each phase e.g.

Reception and Key Stage 1: 10-15 minutes

Years 3 and 4: 20 minutes

Years 5 and 6: 30-40 minutes

Families are expected to listen to their children read and ask questions to develop comprehension.

## **Writing**

### **Aims**

Our aims are for all children at Coldfall to:

- See themselves as writers, from the earliest stage, who have ideas that they will want to communicate, building on writing skills they have acquired and their knowledge of print from their environment.
- Provide experiences where the children can acquire confidence and a positive attitude to writing.
- Develop and sustain writing skills by providing opportunities for children to write for a range of purposes and audiences.
- Use guided writing sessions to model writing skills, teaching children how to compose, amend and revise their writing.
- Teach children to become critical readers of their own writing by using self-evaluation and checking their work independently for sense, accuracy and meaning.
- Teach grammar and punctuation in the context of children's own writing, as well as through discrete lessons.
- Teach children to develop their ability to organise and present imaginative and/or factual writing and poetry in different ways.
- Teach children to develop writing stamina to meet and exceed end of year expectations.
- Teach strategies for spelling to enable children to become confident and competent spellers

To develop writing at Coldfall, we use a range of strategies including: Talk for Writing, Alan Peat Sentences that have been assigned to each year group, shared and modelled writing, high quality exemplars, and in the EYFS and KS1 we use Writing Breakthrough.

## **Spelling**

## **Aims**

For all children:

- to spell confidently most of the words they are likely to use in their own writing (Reception: 1st 45 words, Y1: First 100 words, Y2: Next 200 words, Y3/4 word list, Y5/6 word list)
- to learn how to spell common exception words
- to be able to make sensible attempts to spell words which they have not seen before
- To be able to use a dictionary effectively to aid their spelling.

## **Teaching Spelling**

Teachers use a variety of methods in their teaching of spelling. These include:

- Focusing on key words
- Study of rhyme
- Investigating word families
- Teaching phonics
- Learning weekly words either following a pattern or from own writing, and followed up with a spelling test or dictation

Spelling is taught through activities and investigations. We use the Spelling Shed scheme for spellings which is based on the National Curriculum. Year groups have standalone spelling lessons and build opportunities to recap the spelling pattern or rule throughout the week. Children have a login for the online platform, where they can practise their spellings. The First 100 High Frequency and Next 200 High Frequency words are also taught. Good spelling and good handwriting are taught in partnership. Children practise clusters or strings of letters that belong to the English writing system. Independence is also encouraged through the regular use of dictionaries.

## **Marking Spellings in written work**

When reviewing a child's work, the recommended number of spelling corrections is two or three. The correct spelling is written and highlighted for children to refer to, correct, and practice.

## **Handwriting**

### **Aims**

We aim for our pupils to develop a neat, legible, speedy handwriting style using continuous cursive letters that leads to producing letters and words automatically in independent writing.

By the end of Year 6, pupils will understand the importance of neat presentation and the need for different letterforms (cursive, printed or capital letters) to help communicate meaning clearly. Our teachers are encouraged to use neat, joined-up continuous cursive writing for all handwriting tasks including report writing, marking and comments.

### **Handwriting frequency**

Handwriting is a cross-curricular task and will be taken into consideration during all lessons. Formal teaching of handwriting is to be carried out regularly and systematically to ensure Key Stage targets are met.

### **Assessment**

Formative assessment is carried out on a daily basis through questioning and discussion. Extended writing is reviewed by the class teacher and feedback is given in a whole class feedback session. Children are given specific, targeted feedback to improve their writing, which is followed up by both pupil and teacher. Once termly, children will carry out a Reading test, and an independent piece of writing, which is used alongside other pieces of work to form a summative judgement.

### **Writing**

In Reception, children's progress towards the Early Learning Goal for 'Writing' is assessed termly using age bands. In KS1 and KS2, children's writing is tracked termly and assessed using either the governments TAF documents or Focus Education's 'Judging Years 1,3,4 and 5s Writing' document. These guides both consist of statements, which set out the end of year expectations for each year group. These documents support teachers in making judgments on standards in writing and whether a child is working towards the expected standard, at the expected standard, or working at a greater depth standard within their year group. Occasionally, children may be assessed using statements from lower or higher year groups.

### **Reading**

In Reception, children's progress towards the Early Learning Goal for 'Reading' is assessed termly using age bands. In KS1 and KS2, children complete a PiRA reading comprehension assessment each term. At the end of the year, these assessments are combined with formative teacher assessments to judge whether a child is working towards (W), working at Expected (E) or above (A) within their year group. Occasionally, children may be assessed using tests from lower year groups. Children in years 1 to 6 will receive a standardised score from the reading test, with a score of 100 representing the average.

### **Handwriting**

Children's handwriting is assessed on an ongoing basis through the marking of children's work and during handwriting sessions.