



POLICY

Primary & Early Years English Curriculum Policy

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Assunnah Primary School

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Introduction

A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually (National Curriculum, 2014).

At Assunnah, pupils receive a stimulating and enriching experience in English, developing the skills necessary to master the English curriculum. Through high quality teaching, well planned and organised lessons, we ensure that the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum 2014 are met alongside its aims:

- to promote high standards of language and literacy
- equip pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language
- develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment

This policy details our teaching approaches to:

- Early Reading and Phonics
- Reading
- Writing
- Spelling
- Handwriting Aims:

Our pupils will learn to:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn
- become competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

The importance of early reading, our approach to teaching Phonics

At Assunnah and Early Years, Phonics is taught through the systematic acquisition of sounds using the synthetic Phonics programme, Ruth Miskin's 'Read Write Inc.'

Phonics is the method of teaching children to read by linking sounds (phonemes) and their symbols (graphemes). Phonics lessons begin during spring term in Nursery and following baseline assessments in Reception for those who join from other settings.

Children are introduced to 'single sounds' such as /p/, /o/ and practise recognising them, writing them and 'blending' them. 'Blending' is the ability to combine sounds together in order to create a word. Teaching staff ensure all phonemes are pronounced purely, without an additional 'uh' on the

end of each sound – known as 'schwa' - which can potentially confuse children when combining the sounds together into words, for example:

/p/ /o/ /t/ = pot

/puh/ /o/ /tuh/ = puhotuh



Phonics lessons continue throughout Reception and Year 1 when children are exposed to more complex phonemes such as 'ay' in 'stay' and 'ee' in 'see'. Pupils are taught that these sounds are called 'digraphs' because 'two letters represent one sound', or 'trigraphs' when 'three letters make one sound' such as /air/ in 'fair'. In order to help children, decode each word, dots (for single sounds) and dashes (for digraphs and trigraphs) are marked under words, for example

got

· · · /g/ /o/ /t/

fish

· · — /f/ /i/ /sh/

The 'Phonics Screening Check' is taken individually by all children in Year 1 and is designed to give feedback to teachers and parents on how each child is progressing in Phonics. Pupils are asked to read 20 real words and 20 pseudo words, known to the children as 'alien words', in order to ensure children are decoding the words instead of memorizing or guessing. 'Alien words' are introduced to children in Reception.

The Simple View of Reading theory underpins our approach to early reading according to which confident readers have the ability to:

- decode a word
- comprehend the meaning of each word they read

The absence of any of the above skills will result in a child having weak reading skills. Fielding ensures all children have explicit phonics lessons throughout their first three years at school, starting from Nursery in order to ensure they have enough time to become secure with their decoding skills. Phonics teaching is accompanied by Read Write Inc 'Grapheme, Phoneme, Correspondence' ditty books which are read in buddy-reading pairs and during Guided Reading with the teacher. These books correspond to the sound that is currently being learned. 'Read Write Inc Home books' are sent home to further consolidate the learned sound and increase pupils' success with reading. Gradually, pupils are exposed to a variety of texts which build their comprehension skills and their vocabulary throughout the curriculum. As a result of this, children become confident readers early on and shift from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn.'

Reading for Pleasure

It is an expectation that teachers are role-models for reading to their class. A class ageappropriate text which may be chosen from the recommended reading list is displayed and read to the children daily to support their development and love for reading for pleasure.(DEAR),drop everything and read. Teachers check and sign reading records weekly and encourage pupils to read a range of fiction and non-fiction books throughout the year. House points and class dojo are used in reading records when children have read every day in a week. Non-readers are followed up by comments

to parents in the reading record or in person and a letter from the head teacher is sent to parents of children who have not read every day in a week on more than one occasion.

Recommended Reading lists

Lists of 40 carefully selected books that will hopefully capture each child's imagination have been created for each year group in the school from Reception to Year 6. This list contains colour-bands and a description of the book so that parents and their child are able to choose their favourites according to their book-band level and personal interests. Some books have a 'Lexile rating' included, this measures the difficulty level of the text; a higher lexile rating indicates a more difficult text. Where the Lexile rating has AD included this means 'adult directed' and are books parents and children should share together.

Certificates are awarded as each child reads and shares books from this list; each child will need to record a brief response to a reading task in their reading record (such as a description of a character). A bronze certificate will be awarded once they have read 5 books from the list, a silver award will be awarded after 10 and a gold award will be awarded once they have read 15. A platinum award will be provided for pupils who read all 40 books. Two copies of each book will be available in each class book corner.

Book Corners

Book Corners should be tidy and inviting and a space in which pupils want to spend time reading for pleasure. Books are organised according to text-type. This may be as simple as, 'Picture books,' 'Non-fiction,' 'Fiction,' 'Reference books' and 'Recommended Reads.' Two sets of recommended reading books are kept in each book corner and a sign-out sheet is provided and used by the teacher to ensure that they are kept track of and not lost where possible. Teachers also make space for their own recommended reads which may be books which they read as a child.

Teaching Vocabulary

Pupils encounter many texts daily that offer new, challenging words, but with little contextual support to independently understand those words. Independent word learning is vital, but sometimes pupils simply lack the requisite knowledge, so deliberate, explicit vocabulary teaching is required to support word learning. Woow words are collected and displayed in class to use in writing.



Select

Teachers preview the reading material for the lesson and determine how difficult it is to understand and which words are most important to understand the text or topic.

Explain

Once the teacher has selected the words to teach, they then move onto explaining the word by saying it carefully, writing the word, giving it a student friendly definition and providing multiple

meaningful examples. They then ask the pupils for their own examples and clarify multiple meanings or address misconceptions.

Explore

Teachers explore the etymology and common word parts to explore meaning, any common word families, interesting synonyms or antonyms for the word/s and how the word may be used differently in different contexts. Teachers and pupils also explore strategies to remember the word or concept, e.g mnemonics.

Consolidate

To deeply understand a word, we need to be repeatedly exposed to that word. Also, we need to allow for a little forgetting, before retrieving the word again, thereby strengthening how well we remember the word. Teachers may use some of the following ways to consolidate word knowledge over time: Test and learn, using the word in the world and research and record.

Guided Reading

Guided Reading is the method used to teach individual children to become fluent in reading and comprehension skills of inference and deduction. The guided reading is taught as a whole class. A best practice model for Guided Reading would be one in which teachers choose to focus upon texts that match the text/genre being studied in the current English unit plan.

Expectations

- Guided Reading sessions should take x3 times a week and should last about 30 minutes.
- The books used for Guided Reading sessions should be more challenging than the level that the children have for their reading book which they take home.
- The children's learning on in reading. They should follow VIPERS, vocabulary, infer, predict, explain, retrieve, sequence or summarise.
- Key Stage 1 and 2 should have a guided reading session and a follow up session, these should be consecutive, then three independent activities related to reading, with the focus planned and shared with children.
- In Key Stage 1 and 2 each child should have a Guided Reading Journal to record any

work carried out (pre reading, guided reading, follow up work, independent work).

- Vipers learning journeys are used in each Guided Reading journey
- Planning sheets should be completed for each group
- Any children who move groups should have their names updated on the class Guided Reading Group list.

Implementation

- All pupils will be grouped for guided reading on the basis of their reading ability.
- Reading observations and assessments will be used to inform these groupings.

- Groups should usually contain up to a maximum of 6 children.
- The learning objectives for each group will be identified.
- Texts will be selected to help deliver the learning focus which will also be at the appropriate book band for that particular group of children (at a level of approximately 90% accuracy).
- A guided reading lesson will follow a five part structure: book introduction, strategy check, independent reading, returning to the text and response to text.
- A vipers learning journey will be completed and followed for each reading sequence
- A teacher-led whole-class session may be used to introduce the new learning journey at the start of the sequence
- A guided reading timetable should be displayed in each classroom

Structure of a Guided Reading Session

All Guided reading sessions follow the structure set out below:

Book Introduction

- This provides the context for the reading. The teacher will activate children's prior knowledge and/or discuss the main themes of the text, including some prediction of the contents.

Strategy Check

- Just prior to independent reading the teacher guides the children to focus on and apply key strategies while reading independently.

Independent Reading

- Children will read independently while the teacher gives focused attention to support, monitor and assess individuals as they read (In EYFS and Key Stage 1, children will read aloud).

Returning to the Text

- The teacher asks questions, promotes discussion and interacts with the children to extend their thinking and develop their responses to the text.

Follow Up (developed as a separate session)

- An element of the text is used to teach a specific point related to current learning focus.

Timetabling of Rest of Class

Each class in Years 1-6 will have X 3 30 minutes Guided Reading slot in their timetable.

- Guided group working with the teacher
- Follow up Task – This should be based on the focus of the guided group, giving the children time to apply what they learn
- Pre-reading group – Children to read the book that they will read the next day with the teacher. They will write down any words that they do not understand to be discussed the following day and/or complete another relevant pre-reading activity.
- Reading Comprehension/Phonics group (Year 1)– Children to read a text and answer questions relating to it (Years 2-6) or complete a Phonics activity (Year 1) such as sorting words into real and alien words.
- Reading for Pleasure – Children to sit in the book corner and read books that interest them. They may bring in books from home to read or read their library books. I-pads can also be given to the children to access online books.

Specific ground rules should be agreed and understood that enable adults leading guided sessions to do so without interruption. Quiet, calm and focused class-rooms are most conducive to quality Guided Reading.

Guided Reading books are to be used by all pupils from Year 1 to 6 in recording book reviews, comprehension tasks or follow up work to a guided reading session.

Teachers working with less fluent readers may choose to have a 'word reading' focus. If this is the case then each child in the group will be required to read some of the text aloud. This will enable the teacher to work on decoding skills. However, this must not be the sole focus of the lesson and the children should also work on a comprehension skill.

For fluent readers, the focus of a Guided Reading session should be firmly upon challenging questions generated from the teacher plus opportunities for reflective independent study of a text.

D.E.A.R

D.E.A.R. stands for "Drop Everything and Read," To encourage reading, the last 10 minutes of the day, teachers put all distractions aside and read to the class a book of their choice.

Library use

Each class from Years 1 to 6 have a dedicated weekly library timetable session within a break time or lunchtime which they are strongly encouraged to use. Year 6 librarians are trained to monitor and support the children during these sessions in terms of choosing appropriate books and with their reading skills. Copies of the year group recommended reading list books are available in these libraries.

Assessment in Reading

All teachers in Years 1 to 6 use the PM Benchmarking scheme to assess pupils' fluency, accuracy, retelling and comprehension skills. The short books and assessments are linked to reading book band colours so successful completion of an assessment at a certain level means that the child will be moved up to the next appropriate colour band of books. Children are expected to choose and read books from this colour band at home and make a record of this in their reading record daily. It is a school expectation that children read for at least 20 minutes a day. In addition to this, teachers assess pupils' reading and comprehension skills twice yearly using NFER assessments.

Teaching Writing

All teachers plan using an agreed planning format. Each lesson includes:

- a starter (vocabulary/grammar/spelling or punctuation)
- a main activity, with key elements appropriately modelled by the teacher and an effective plenary consolidating learning.

Teaching follows the Assunnah Primary School

Teaching sequences last between 1 and 3 weeks. There are explicit vocabulary, grammar and punctuation foci in each sequence which pupils practise and apply in their writing. The expectation is that they will then use these skills in their extended piece of writing at the end of the teaching sequence. At the start of the sequence the pupils will be provided with an opportunity to attempt to write in the style which is about to be learnt to identify key gaps (cold write). The children use a

'class feedback' sheet to support their own self-assessment of their cold-write. Next, they will identify the main features of this piece of writing using the WAGOLL and will be explicitly taught how to write in that particular style. Towards the end of the teaching sequence, the pupils will plan and draft their piece of writing, self-assess it using the rubrics, edit their work in green pen and rewrite it with improvements. An example of a teaching sequence can be seen below.



The skill of editing should be explicitly taught by the teacher in each sequence.

English Working walls

English working walls are in continuous use throughout individual lessons and across weeks focusing on a particular sequence of work. On the wall, the following is displayed:

- the learning journey
- the book that is being read and upon which the writing is based
- the skills which are being taught

- a good example of the piece of writing that is expected (WAGOLL- what a good one looks like).
- Key vocabulary

Teaching Spelling

Children in Year 2 and KS2 are taught spellings using the Read Write Inc. spelling scheme which follows on from the Phonics scheme. 12 spelling words are uploaded onto the year group page of the school's website each week, 6 of which, correspond to the spelling pattern being learned in class. 3 FLCC Challenge words and 3 common misconception words (which don't follow a pattern) are also included. Spelling lessons take place and include the following activities: speed spell, spelling zone, dots and dashes, rapid recap, words to log and learn, word changers, four in a row, team teach, jumping red words and dictation. A spelling display is used in each classroom and spellings are changed weekly. Friday's dictation is completed at the back of English books and the 12 words are marked by the children in green pen. Any words which are spelt incorrectly are written out three times.

Spelling Assessment

The children in KS1 and KS2 complete a spelling assessment of 100 words each term. These are a mixture of words which contain the taught spelling patterns and common misconception words. The assessment includes a combination of National Curriculum words (from National Curriculum word lists for each year group) and words which contain the taught spelling patterns. The assessment scores are recorded and progress is tracked throughout the year in each class and year group. Teachers upload the scores onto Bromcom.

Teaching Handwriting Aims:

As a school our aims in teaching handwriting are that the pupils will:

- Experience coherence and continuity in learning and teaching across the school
- Develop a recognition and appreciation of pattern and line
- Understand the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning clearly
- Take pride in the presentation of their work and therefore study handwriting with a sense of enjoyment and achievement.
- Be supported in developing correct spelling quickly through the teaching of cursive writing
- Be able to write quickly to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes.
- Use their skills with confidence in real life situations.
- Develop a fluent, cursive handwriting style by Year 3

Pupils at Assunnah Primary are taught how to write using a pre-cursive style in Year 1, leading onto a joined cursive style in Years 2 onwards. Pupils write using pencils up to Year 3 where they then aim to be awarded their 'pen licence' for having a neat, joined style. Teachers use videos and resources from the following website to support development in their handwriting lessons: <https://www.letterjoin.co.uk/>

Progression of Skills EYFS:

- Use a pencil, and hold it effectively to form recognisable pre-cursive letters [with 'kicks'/'flicks'], most of which are correctly formed Year One:
- Write all pre-cursive letters, correctly formed and orientated, using a comfortable and efficient pencil grip
- Write with spaces between words accurately
- Children who are ready to start joining their letters in a cursive style may begin to do so in the Summer term.

Year Two: □ Children to start learning how to join their writing in the school's cursive style

- Write legibly, using upper and lower-case letters appropriately and correct spacing within and between words

KS2

- Children to write in the school's cursive style, making sure all letters are correctly formed and orientated.
- Children will start to write in pen in Year 3 as soon as their writing is neatly joined

Lesson Structure

All children should receive:

- 1 Teacher led handwriting lesson of 30 – 40min
- 2 follow-up handwriting sessions of 20min. These will be carried out independently by the children. In EYFS, it can be in the form of sheets on the English table or the opportunity to trace the letters in sand etc. In Year 1 onwards, children can do these as a soft start activity, one of the groups in guided reading or any other opportunities that the class teacher has.

Basic structure of a handwriting session:

- Motor skills warm up
- Posture and grip check
- Handwriting pattern
- Teacher modelling
- Children practising independently with teacher model, then from memory

Sessions should be fun, varied and multi-sensory: write letters in the air, on backs or on hands etc.

Assessment in English:

To develop learning, pupils will be continuously assessed using a variety of strategies including: observation, questioning and marking in accordance with our school marking and feedback policy. This is used to inform future planning and to identify children for intervention and support. Each pupil will have targets set and checked regularly. We judge the impact of our teaching of English by:

- end of Key Stage assessments,
- termly NFER assessments

- book and planning scrutiny,
- lesson evaluations of the teaching of Writing and Reading □ pupil interviews, □ learning walks.

Marking follows the guidance set out in the marking and feedback policy. It:

- celebrates success made within a piece of work or a lesson using SOLO symbols and verbs
- is purposeful and contributes to children's learning and progress through the inclusion of a developmental point or next step comment,
- corrects spellings of words which follow a spelling pattern that has been previously taught, high-frequency words and words that are on the ARE (age-related expectation) word list,
- includes time to reflect on learning and respond to next step comments as promptly as possible after a lesson,
- may include self-assessment, peer-assessment and verbal feedback.

Monitoring and evaluation:

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and of quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the Leadership Team, subject leader and governors. The subject leader for English will monitor this curriculum area through monitoring pupils' books, talking to pupils and observing classroom practice through learning walks. In addition, the work of the subject leader involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, mentoring the Phonics Lead and informing teachers about current developments in the subject.

The Governing Body

The teaching and Learning Governor will monitor the implementation of the English policy through its Pupil and Achievement committee receiving regular reports on the curriculum from the subject leader. Link governor visits will also include Reading, Phonics, Writing and Spelling lessons as part of their visit.