

White Court School



English Policy

Revised March 2019

The Nature of Language

Language, specifically the interrelated skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing are central to a child's whole learning experience. It is a learning tool for life. At White Court School, we aim for all our children to become successful, assured and independent users of language. The teaching of English at White Court School is lively, engaging, and involves a carefully planned blend of approaches that directs children's learning. A learner centredness approach is embedded across the school, ensuring that the learning needs of pupils are entirely focussed on. Children are challenged to think and to work independently when appropriate. There is a balance between adult led and child initiated activity, which helps them to use and apply their English skills across the curriculum, in and out of the classroom with a focus on independence.

At White Court School, we ensure that expectations are high and progress is made by all children, whilst being sensitive to the rate at which each child learns. We feel it is important that strong links are present between spoken language, listening, reading and writing, as they are fundamental to a child's understanding of the English language.

Aims

Our aims in teaching English are:

- To build a positive attitude towards the acquisition of language skills
- To enable children to speak with confidence, clarity and fluency in a variety of situations
- To value an individual's own dialect
- To encourage children to become critical thinkers, by allowing them to make choices, with guidance, about the sort of texts they enjoy which will lead to them being more successful, independent readers
- To teach children to read a range of different texts, fiction and non-fiction, with fluency and understanding, using a range of strategies, including phonics
- To teach the skill of comprehension and higher order reading skills
- To provide opportunities to write for a range of purposes, allowing children to organise the style and content of what is being written to suit the purpose and audience
- To develop the skill of using grammar, punctuation and spelling appropriately and with confidence
- To teach children to write clearly and consistently, developing a joined, cursive handwriting style by the end of Year 2 **(See Appendix A)**
- For children to apply these skills consistently across the curriculum
- To encourage children to read for enjoyment
- Develop a positive mindset towards reading and writing
- To provide the children with the opportunity to make links between the skill of reading and writing confidently
- To ensure children develop the skills to become independent and successful readers, writers and speakers

Language Environment

Language development is fundamental to children's learning. It is one of the most important skills we teach. Our school and classrooms reflect our expectations and the English opportunities available to our children. They mirror the value we place upon English. This is achieved through well resourced writing area, role-play area (KS1), a listening/reading area and access in each class to a wide range of high quality reading material, including fiction and non-fiction texts.

A 'Writing Area' is present in classrooms which encourages and supports children in becoming confident, independent writers. We enable children to write in a variety of styles appropriate to the context and audience. Our writing areas will include some of the following:

- Spelling rules (according to pattern being learnt)
- Examples of editing/marking symbols
- Examples of Punctuation
- Key words in early reading
- An example of a good piece of writing of the current text type being studied, including the language and structural features of text with reasons why it is good
- A bank of examples of story openings, time conjunctions, verbs, adjectives, spelling strategies, metaphors, and similes
- A range of resources related to Talk for Writing and other Pie Corbett strategies
- Phonics/reading area appropriate to key stage
- Working Wall area to highlight the development of writing skills
- Common Exception words for Year group displayed

We all also have class stories that are read to the children regularly during story time that encourage the development of vocabulary and detailed understanding of the plot and characters. They are carefully selected to read for enjoyment and provide challenging opportunities. These feed into our English curriculum and our thematic, cross curricular approach to learning.

Planning

The Foundation Stage follows the EYFS Statutory Framework. Years 1-6 follow the National Curriculum 2014 for English. The curriculum is divided into four key areas: Spoken Language, Reading, Writing and Transcription.

There are four English sessions each week plus discrete GPS and Reading Comprehension. Where possible, text types are linked to topic areas in a cross curricular approach.

Spoken Language

Year groups use the English National Curriculum to support their planning. At White Court School this is broken down into, Speaking, Listening, Discussion and Drama. Speaking and Listening opportunities are developed through debates, parent events and achievements in celebration assemblies. Also opportunities to develop spoken language are utilised across the curriculum in other subject areas and in drama performances for parents.

Reading

Following the National Curriculum, Reading is divided into 'Word Reading' and 'Comprehension', at White Court School we further subdivide this into two more supplementary strands – 'Being a reader' and 'Being a researcher'.

We value the importance of Guided Reading, alongside individual reading at White Court. Communication with parents is enabled through the child's blue reading record book. Parents are invited to attend reading events in classes.

From Year 1, children complete the 'Salford Sentence Reading Test' at the start of each year, which gives the class teacher a good indication of both the reading age and comprehension age of each child. This helps the teacher to ensure the children are reading texts at the appropriate level whilst also enabling progress to be tracked.

Children follow a graded series of books based on the Individualised Reading Scheme when they begin reading (**Appendix C**), and older children choose, with adult guidance when needed, from

books of the appropriate level in the school library. Children progress as readers at different rates, and teachers use their professional judgement to decide the rate at which children move through the reading bands. An individual record is kept of each child's progression through the different stages of reading. Teachers keep a reading record which allows them to monitor individual children's progress closely.

Guided Reading

At White Court we aim to conduct Guided Reading sessions across both Key Stages five times a week. During Guided Reading, the children work in groups on various activities. There are four or five groups in a class, each group at around the same level in their reading. The teacher/teaching assistant works on Guided Reading with each group once a week on a rotational basis. This is an opportunity for the teacher to give individual help and to assess each child's progress and needs. There is a mix of reading aloud and a discussion on the content of the text being read. Additionally, we analyse the language found within the text to enhance writing skills and broaden vocabulary. While the teacher is working with one group, the other groups are reading independently, working with a teaching assistant or an adult volunteer, completing focused tasks, or GPS related activities.

In KS1, children will be undertaking a range of activities such as working with words and sounds, listening and reading with an audio book, reading together, playing word games or making sentences.

In KS2, children will be reading aloud in their group, summarising a passage to the rest of the group, predicting what happens next, completing a character analysis, research reading or working on a focused grammar activity. While the children are reading and discussing, they are also analysing the texts and are encouraged to apply words and phrases in their own writing. The children read and study many children's classics. They look at a variety of poems of all kinds from different periods. British history is well represented in our texts as the children have access to a World War Two set of books, a Victorian set and good quality British authors are present throughout. Other cultures are represented by such texts as the Greek myths or traditional and modern stories from India and Africa.

Guided Reading in KS2 will be a two weekly rotation as follows:-

- During Week A, the teacher will work with a group each day on reading comprehension, variety of text types and question types
- During Week B, the teacher will work with each group and hear individual reading from each. They can then focus on the skill of reading aloud and decoding
- The LSA works with each group every week, reading their normal GR books - focusing on different question types
- KS2 should have children reading their GR books at least once in their own group on their timetable
- Other times they should be doing activities to improve and impact their learning
- Each Monday English lesson should be either a reading comp or GPS discreet lesson based on a Week A/Week B timetable
- Yr 2 and Yr 6 to have discreet GPS lessons on Monday and discreet reading comp lessons on Tuesdays
- Cool Vipers question types to be used
- 'Think aloud' approach to developing comprehension skills

Phonics

At White Court school we have a systematic approach to the teaching of phonics and recognise the vital importance of phonics in the development of early English Skills. We use a combination of 'Jolly Phonics' and Letters and Sounds. Children's phonic knowledge is assessed on entry to the Early Years/Foundation Stage and this is used to inform future planning, ensuring the children are taught systematically and teaching is differentiated according to phonic ability.

Phonic phases are carefully planned and sessions are interactive, multi-sensory and have a clear focus. Assessment is on-going. During the Spring term, Foundation Stage children are assessed and placed into one of four phonic phases. These groups are fluid and children are regularly assessed, throughout the phases, to ensure all are working at the appropriate phonic level. Discrete phonic sessions are taught four times a week during Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 2. By the end of the Foundation Stage year children will have been introduced to and be familiar with the forty four different phonemes. Children are encouraged to apply their phonic knowledge across all areas of the curriculum. The staff at White Court recognise the importance of communication throughout the Key Stage and the need to share and review the teaching of phonics at appropriate times. Training in phonics is given to *all* members of teaching and support staff and this is reviewed and updated when applicable.

At the end of Year 1, children complete the 'Statutory Phonic Screening Check' which analyses their phonic knowledge. If they do not reach the expected score they will receive additional support and will be retested at the end of Year 2.

Writing

Following the National Curriculum, Writing is divided into three strands, 'Transcription', 'Composition' and 'Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation'. At White Court School we further subdivide this into more supplementary strands. Transcription is divided into, 'Spelling' and 'Handwriting and Presentation'. Composition is further sub divided into, 'Planning', 'Composition', 'Evaluating', 'Grammar and Vocabulary' and 'Punctuation'.

Writing is planned for and delivered across the curriculum, to enable children to write for a range of purposes, organising the content and style of what is written to suit the purpose and audience. Emphasis is placed on children being taught the key features of different text types, including non-fiction and consistent approaches to planning children's writing are used across both Key Stages. This includes being a 'Talk for Writing' school where we highlight the importance of internalising different language patterns and different text structures, to give children confidence to independently apply this skills.

The children have the opportunity to study different genres throughout their time in each year group. Children are familiar with self/peer-assessing work using criteria they have set themselves and editing and improving work they have completed. At White Court we have a whole school approach to editing and use symbols that are familiar to the children as they are used throughout the school **(see appendix B)**.

Spelling

At White Court we use the Single Word Spelling Test (SWST), from Year 2 to assess children's current spelling level at the start of each year and to track progress of spelling ages across the school.

Children in Year 2 are taught spellings according to the results of their SWST and their Phonics Screening Check. A spelling homework task is set at the end of the week to ensure regular practise. In Key Stage 2, following a discrete teaching session of spelling/grammar, subsequent follow up session(s) with linked activities allow opportunities for the children to rehearse spelling rules and

apply them in given contexts. The children are tested weekly on the pattern they have learnt using a range of methods, including dictation. In Upper Key stage 2, vocabulary tasks are linked to look at the etymology and origin of certain spelling families.

Handwriting

We have a consistent approach to handwriting and letter formation across the whole school. Children are taught a cursive style of writing, from Foundation Stage, in groups according to their 'formation family'. This facilitates the acquisition of joining skills which children need to be secure in by the end of Year 2. These skills are regularly practised in each Year group.

Assessment

We assess children's learning on a day to day basis, using a variety of different strategies:

- End of year expectation document for each Year group - Interim assessments for each year group used half termly (**Appendix D**).
- Vulnerable groups identified, analysed and supported.
- Gender difference identified, analysed and supported.
- Continuous writing development piece for each child displayed and updated regularly on a class writing wall.
- Formative assessments annotated on plans.
- Target Tracker is updated termly and children's progress is assessed against the new Programmes of Study for English.
- Target Tracker also suggests aspirational targets for each child that are analysed and discussed in teams. These are adapted according to the teacher's knowledge of the individual.
- Continual formal assessments, Key Stage 1 'Statutory Phonic Screening' check (Year 1), Key Stage Two statutory SATs (Year 6), baseline assessment on school entry in the Foundation Stage.
- Cross school moderation with local cluster schools
- Work is moderated within and between Year group teams using a range of different documentation.
- Targets are set across the Year group, in each class and with individual children.
- Teachers share with children next step targets to further improve their work through oral or written feedback, when their work is marked in both English and in cross-curricular subjects.
- The children's individual Reading Record Books are used to communicate with Parents about how they can support their child's reading at home.
- Salford Sentence Reading test
- Single Word Spelling test (SWST)
- Pupil progress meetings are held termly with SLT.

Refer to the Assessment policy, Phonics Document and Appendices.

Computing

Computing is used whenever appropriate to enhance the acquisition of English and key board skills across the curriculum. This is achieved through the use of Interactive Whiteboards, Notebus, PowerPoint, Purple Mash and e-mail and the internet, as well as audio equipment digital and video cameras (Flip-cameras, easi-speak, recordable postcards, microphones, visualisers and Easi-ears (KS1)).

Classroom Management

Children work in class, small focus groups with the Teacher or LSA, individually or in pairs depending on the focus of the task. In Key Stage One, children work in Phonic Phase groups according to the development of their phonic knowledge.

Examples of ongoing and completed work are displayed and annotated to identify the key language and structural features for children to see/use. Drama is important and incorporated throughout the school, whether through the use of role play areas (Key Stage 1) or in lessons (Key Stage 1 & 2). As we are a 'Talk for Writing School', Drama is a key element in the delivery of the English Programmes of Study and encourages to children to explore a text through the use of role-play and characterisation.

In each year group, staff work closely together as a team to support and help the children develop their learning, according to their individual needs. In each lesson, the LSA's role is carefully planned and discussed in weekly team meetings.

Equal Opportunities

We aim to ensure that our children attain their full potential regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender, social grouping or age. Whilst monitoring children's progress on Target Tracker, we highlight and annotate how these identified groups are performing. Refer to the White Court School's Equality Scheme Policy.

School Library

We provide a well-stocked library full of current and challenging reading material to enhance the children's reading ability and love of books. The library stock is monitored and regularly updated. Our library provides children with additional resources to support and complement the academic aspects of school life, in addition to English and topic loan books from the School Library Service. We also use a range of multimedia resources (computers, encyclopaedias) to support the children's learning. It encourages reading for pleasure, of both fiction and non-fiction books. Children across the whole school are encouraged to share in the responsibility for keeping the library area tidy: we also train children from Year 6 specifically as Library Monitors.

Special Needs

We recognise that children have diverse and different language needs and respect these throughout the school. We allow all children to access the curriculum through quality first teaching with additional focussed support used where required. We encourage children of all abilities to gain confidence in using language in contexts that are meaningful to them.

Children's progress is carefully monitored to ensure that suitably differentiated work is given to individuals and groups. Identified children benefit from extra support in either small group or individual sessions. The children follow intervention programmes which are closely monitored by the SENCO.

See SEN policy for Assessments available and intervention programme

Able, Gifted and Talented (AG&T)

As a school we recognise the importance of creating opportunities for more able children to deepen their understanding of the programmes of study for their year group (see G&T policy). This is implemented through quality first teaching and then focussed activities that will deepen their understanding and provide a breadth to their learning.

Evaluation

The Curriculum Co-ordinators for Language will review the Language Policy annually as part of their Management Role.

The Role of the Co-ordinator

The English coordinator(s) will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating English throughout the school. Please refer to White Court School's Teaching and Learning Guidance for further information.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The governing body, in partnership with the Headteacher and English Subject Leaders, determine the school policy for English. The Headteacher and English Subject Leaders are responsible for working with staff to devise, monitor, evaluate and review procedures for English.

Review

This policy will be reviewed as part of the policy review cycle. It will also be monitored for its effect on pupils with protected characteristics.

Policy ratified at the Full Governing Body Meeting Spring Term 2019

Policy due for review Spring Term 2020.

Appendix	Name of Document
A	White Court Style Handwriting Style
B	White Court Editing Symbols
C	Cliff Moon Colour Bands
D	End of Year Expectation document (year group interims)