





English Policy September 2020

Signed by Chair of RAP Committee during COVID-19	
Signed Acting Headteacher	
Date	September 2020
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Latchford St James CE Primary School

English Policy

At Latchford St James CE Primary School, we believe English teaches us how to communicate and understand the world around us; it gives children confidence and a way to express their emotions, opinions and ambitions. Our English curriculum, as a whole, is sequenced to develop the acquisition of knowledge and skills through an integrated programme of speaking and listening, reading and writing. Literacy is at the heart of children's learning and we believe that a quality English curriculum cultivates a pupil's love of reading, writing and discussion.

As literacy is central to children's intellectual, emotional and social development, it has an essential role across the curriculum at Latchford St James. We aim to develop a secure knowledge-base for pupils, which follows a clear pathway of progression as they advance through the primary curriculum. We consider a secure basis in English is crucial to a high-quality education and will give our children the tools they need to participate fully as members of society.

Aims

At Latchford St James, we strive for all our children to be literate. Our aims are embedded across our English lessons and the wider curriculum.

By the end of year 6, we aim for all children to be able to:

- communicate effectively and confidently in standard English
- listen to the spoken word thoughtfully, with understanding, enjoyment and respect
- feel safe to discuss, elaborate and clearly explain their ideas through dialogues, drama and debates
- read fluently and with understanding for pleasure and information
- develop powers of creativity and innovation in literacy
- write clearly and coherently – applying vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and spelling accurately and confidently for a range of contexts and audiences
- experience 'pride' in precise, well-presented written work
- speak expressively and confidently when addressing an audience

Teaching and Learning

Our curriculum closely follows the statutory requirements of the 2014 National Curriculum for English and the Communication, Language and Literacy section of the Early Years Foundation Stage (2014).

Pathways Literacy

Principally, teachers adapt the Literacy Company's Pathways Literacy programme which comprises their award-winning Pathways to Write (applied in Reception to Year 6) and more recently launched Pathways to Read (Year 2 to Year 6) schemes. Units aim to develop spoken language, vocabulary, reading and writing skills through a mastery approach and are based on high-quality, engaging texts to nurture the children's love of reading and writing.

Foundation Stage

At Latchford St James we believe that building children's positivity towards literacy from the earliest stage is fundamental to their learning. We provide many opportunities for talk with children about their experiences and feelings and strive to foster positive attitudes through play, stories, songs and rhymes. The children have daily phonics sessions - based on 'Letters and Sounds' - as well as opportunities for speaking and listening and reading and writing through a wide range of adult and child-led activities, unprompted teaching and enrichments through continuous provision. The role of adults in supporting children is vital to fostering their positive attitudes towards English and we strongly believe that parents are our partners in achieving this.

Key Stage One

In Key Stage 1 children are taught to learn to speak confidently and to listen to the opinions of others. We continue to build positive attitudes, encouraging reading and writing for enjoyment through the use of high-quality picture books and texts. The children start to develop independence and are encouraged to use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds. Children have daily writing lessons, based on Pathways to Write units, that include grammar and punctuation, to allow them to apply their learning in context. They also experience daily phonics sessions. Year 1 participate in small group guided reading sessions, daily. Year 2 transition to whole class guided reading, at least three times per week, based on Pathways to Read and other reading resources. Spelling and handwriting skills are taught discretely throughout school but are expected to be applied across all subjects.

Key Stage Two

In Key Stage 2, the Pathways Literacy programmes are, primarily, adapted to deliver daily English lessons that incorporate whole class guided reading, where the children read a wider range of texts fluently and expressively and are able to understand and explain deeper levels of meaning. Writing lessons include grammar and punctuation to enable the children to apply their learning in context. Children learn to adapt their spoken and written language to suit different genres of writing. They acquire an extensive library of vocabulary that they can apply effectively in extended pieces. English skills are developed across the curriculum including spelling and handwriting and high standards of literacy are expected in all subjects.

Home Learning

To support the children's learning journey, they receive English activities to complete at home. Across EYFS and Key Stage 1, parents are encouraged to read daily with their child and activities are set that consolidate phonics learning. In Key Stage 2, the children are encouraged to read for pleasure, at home, at least three times per week. In addition, they receive weekly spellings that they can practise using the Spelling Shed on-line learning resource. In upper Key Stage 2, the children may receive additional grammar and punctuation tasks.

Assessment

Children's progress in reading, phonics and spelling, punctuation and grammar is tracked through regular summative and formative assessments (including NFER, Phonics Assessment, Reading Plus and PM benchmarking). Writing is teacher assessed against year group expectations; this is supported using the Oxford Primary Writing Assessment tool, in addition to the Teacher Assessment Frameworks for Year 2 and Year 6. Writing is moderated internally, and externally within a cluster of schools.

English teaching and learning is monitored on a half-termly basis through learning walks, pupil observations, discussions around work within school books, data analysis, reading with children and through progress meetings.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

All children receive quality first literacy teaching on a daily basis and activities are differentiated accordingly. In addition, where pupils are considered to require targeted support, to enable them to work towards age appropriate objectives, intervention programmes are implemented to improve their attainment. Pupils that are more able will be challenged within lessons.

All children will be provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

Appendix 1: Spoken language and drama

At Latchford St James, we want to inspire children to be confident in the art of speaking and listening and the use of discussion to communicate and further their learning. To develop their skills and enjoyment in speaking and listening, interaction and drama is embedded throughout our curriculum.

Each unit, in the Pathways Literacy programme for reading and writing, includes opportunities to engage the children in communication through discussion, drama, reading and writing strategies and self/peer assessment. Teaching strategies such as talk partners, ensure that speaking and listening remains an essential part of teaching and learning.

The wider curriculum provides many opportunities to enhance speaking and listening skills. Activities such as class presentations, debates, performance poetry, assemblies, school ambassador roles and school productions all contribute to the development of confident speakers and listeners.

Appendix 2: Reading

We value reading as a key life skill and are dedicated to enabling our pupils to become lifelong readers. Children initially learn to enjoy reading and books through a structured programme of phonics teaching. Phonics is taught daily throughout EYFS and KS1. Children are taught how to segment and blend letters and develop other strategies to help them to read new words. We adapt the Pathways to Read programme, supported with other reading resources, to develop the children's skills to read a range of fiction and non-fiction material fluently, critically and with understanding. They reflect on the meanings of texts and evaluate their effectiveness. In KS2, we build children's confidence with more challenging texts and focus on understanding reading material at a deeper level – inferring meaning when answers are not always obvious.

For further information, see our Reading Policy.

Appendix 3: Phonics and Spellings

At Latchford St James, the systematic teaching of phonics is a high priority, throughout foundation stage and key stage one, to ensure all children become confident and enthusiastic readers and writers. We use, the Department of Education approved, 'Letters and Sounds' document, supported with Jolly Phonics actions which allows our phonics teaching and learning to be progressive from Nursery to Year 2. Year 2 to Year 6 are taught a variety of strategies to learn specific spelling patterns, using Spelling Shed's scheme of work, which are then applied in their writing across the curriculum. The children are also provided with opportunities to practise and apply high frequency and common exception words for their year group.

For further information, see our Phonics and Spelling Policy.

Appendix 4: Writing

We aim to inspire and develop our pupils' love of writing through a quality English curriculum. Furthermore, we recognise the importance of nurturing a culture where the children take pride in their writing, can write clearly and accurately and adapt their language and style for a range of contexts. When the children first come to school, they learn to experiment with writing. Then we use a programme of phonics, combined with the teaching of common words, to enable our learners to write independently. As they progress, they learn to punctuate and improve their handwriting. Through our Pathways to Write programme, children are taught to master the skills of writing by focusing on particular techniques throughout a unit of work. As they become more confident, they are taught to write in different contexts, for different purposes and to apply language rules and traditions for effect.

For further information, see our handwriting policy.

Appendix 5: Handwriting

Children with good handwriting enjoy high self-esteem and are often highly motivated and successful across a broad range of subjects. Therefore, it is our collective aim to each play our part in enabling our children to develop a legible, cursive style of handwriting. It is our ambition that when children leave our school, it will be with a neat, fast and adaptable handwriting proficiency that they can be proud of. The children are taught the Nelson Handwriting style (with a few minor adjustments) in upbeat, ambitious handwriting lessons lasting just fifteen to twenty minutes. Excellent handwriting is insisted upon in all subjects, nurturing qualities like perseverance, pride and precision. Handwriting success is noted, celebrated and shared.

For further information, see our handwriting policy.