

# Sibsey Free Primary School



## English Policy May 2023

Approved by: Headteacher

Date: May 2023

Next review due by: May 2025



## **POLICY FOR ENGLISH (Includes Handwriting Policy)**

Curriculum Area: Communication, Language and Literacy

Member of staff responsible: Elaine Crozier (English Co-ordinator)

Responsible Governor: Cristina Holmes

(See also the attached Handwriting and Presentation Scheme)

### **1. MISSION STATEMENTS**

#### **Whole school**

Our mission is for our children to leave us with strong, happy memories and a range of experiences that they will treasure throughout their lives. To help prepare our children for their next stage of learning, we aim to equip them with the skills they need to be resilient, confident, independent, tolerant, emotionally aware and highly literate individuals. We strongly value the importance of outdoor learning to support this journey. We encourage and embrace opportunities for our children to experience the unique opportunities of living and working in a rural community, whilst also preparing them for the contrasts of life in the wider community and beyond.

#### **Curriculum intent**

At Sibsey, we are dedicated to encouraging all children to be passionate about reading and writing. We are determined that ALL children will become highly competent readers and writers by the end of their time with us. It is our intention to immerse pupils in the wonders of quality texts to instil a love for reading, a passion for discovery and a confidence to explore their imagination.

During their time at Sibsey, all children will be exposed to a high-quality education in English. This will not only 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.

### **2. AIMS OF ENGLISH**

We aim to:

- a) develop the knowledge, understanding and ability of our pupils, to their full potential, within an integrated programme of Speaking & Listening, Reading & Writing.
- b) promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word.
- c) develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.
- d) give children opportunities to interrelate the requirements of English within a broad and balanced approach to the teaching of English across the curriculum, with opportunities in other subject areas to consolidate and reinforce taught English skills.

We aim to help children to:

- a) read easily, fluently and with good understanding;
- b) develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information;
- c) acquire a wide vocabulary in order to help them to articulate their thinking and responses;
- d) develop an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language;
- e) write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences;
- f) use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas;
- g) become competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate;
- h) develop their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.



### 3. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum English Document (2013) and in the Communication and Language and Literacy sections of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2012).

The English programme of study (2014) is based on 4 areas:

- Spoken language
- Reading
- Writing
- Spelling, grammar, punctuation and glossary

The National Curriculum is divided into 3 Key stages: Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2), Lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4) and Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 and 6). By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study.

The National curriculum 2014, gives detailed guidance of what should be taught at each Key stage under the following headings:

- Spoken language
- Reading - Word reading
  - Comprehension
- Writing - Transcription
  - Spelling
  - Handwriting and presentation
  - Composition
- Grammar

**In the Early Years Foundation Stage** children are given opportunities to:

- speak and listen and represent ideas in their activities;
- use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum;
- become immersed in an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication.

**At Key Stage One** children should learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They should begin to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They should use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds. Children are given opportunities to speak and listen throughout all subject areas.

**At Key Stage Two** children should learn to modify the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They should explore the use of language in a variety of texts and learn how the structure of language works.

### 4. THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNING BODY

Regular reports are made to the Governors on the progress of English provision via our English Governor, Cristina Holmes.

The English Governor is in regular contact with the English Subject Leader and makes regular visits to the school to facilitate the report-making process and ensure this policy is understood and followed.

This policy will be reviewed biennially or in the light of any changes to statutory or school requirements.



## 5. SUBJECT ORGANISATION

### Foundation Stage

The Early Learning Goals are followed to ensure continuity and progression from the EYFS through to the National Curriculum. In Foundation stage children have daily discreet phonics lessons which are delivered through the Read, Write, Inc. programme. Children have opportunities to develop their communication, language and literacy skills on a daily basis in both adult led and child initiated activities.

### Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1 daily discreet phonics lessons delivered through the Read, Write, Inc. programme continue and are taught in ability groups. Children have daily mixed ability English lessons. Children take part in both guided and individual reading sessions (e.g. with teachers, TAs, Reading Buddies and parents) and have regular story times to develop a love of reading. English skills are developed across the curriculum. Provision is made for children who require extra support through intervention programmes, differentiated class teaching and differentiated Read, Write, Inc. sessions.

### Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2 children have daily English Lessons including guided reading, grammar, handwriting, and spelling sessions which are supported by the RWI spelling programme. English skills are developed across the curriculum. Provision is made for children who require extra support through intervention and differentiated class teaching.

## 6. APPROACHES TO SPOKEN LANGUAGE

Spoken language permeates the whole curriculum. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to engender confidence, stimulate interest and motivation and raise Reading and Writing standards. Children are encouraged to take part in discussions and develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life.

Opportunities for Speaking and Listening within the school are many and varied, and may include the following:

- ✦ Talking partners;
- ✦ Annual class productions and presentations;
- ✦ Pupil Voice work and feedback/discussion/opinion sessions;
- ✦ Regular 'circle/news/discussion time' in each class;
- ✦ Group work and Drama opportunities across the curriculum, in which children take a variety of different roles;
- ✦ Talk Together programme across the school enables children to talk to peers from every year group within the school.

We recognise the need for all pupils to speak, read and write Standard English fluently and accurately, while acknowledging that a pupil's own dialect, or other language is of prime importance. It is our school policy to model our own language to the children which encourages Standard English both in speaking and writing.

## 7. APPROACHES TO READING

Guided Reading sessions, in which the children have the opportunity to study texts in depth in small groups, take place throughout the school. Shared reading is used for enjoyment, instruction or information in the vast majority of lessons, while children's attention is regularly drawn to the wealth of reading material provided by school and class libraries, displays and notices around the school. The teaching of phonics to facilitate early reading takes place every day through the Read, Write, Inc. programme.

Independent reading is encouraged at every opportunity by Teachers and TAs, through such things as:

- ✦ Regular opportunities to borrow, and share the experience of, a wide variety of reading material from the school and class libraries.
- ✦ The opportunity in all classes to take school reading books home.
- ✦ Home-School reading records in Pines, Poplars and Redwoods.
- ✦ The Accelerated Reading Programme in Key Stage 2.
- ✦ A range of 'Class Teacher recommended reads' held within a book box in each class.
- ✦ Class/Group story, book and poetry displays.
- ✦ Book Week
- ✦ The opportunity to buy books from the Book Fair
- ✦ Reading Buddies.



## 8. APPROACHES TO WRITING

In the **Early Years Foundation Stage** the process of learning the skills of writing begins with a programme of phonological awareness as set out in the Literacy Framework and follows the sequence of work from Read, Write, Inc. Children are given the opportunity to choose well-resourced mark making activities and encouraged to hold their writing implements correctly and form letters accurately – at the appropriate time for their individual abilities. An atmosphere in which there is no failure, and where positive praise maintains discipline, is used to build confidence, while a wide variety of starting activities, which fully take account of different learning styles, is employed to inspire children to try writing activities. The main focus at this early stage is on developing Communication Skills, in order to build a good working vocabulary, to spark emergent writing and encourage the use of Standard English. Opportunities for such activities are structured and children are encouraged to articulate their thinking in every session.

### Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2

We aim to develop the children's ability to produce well structured, detailed writing in which the meaning is made clear and which engages the interest of the reader. Attention is paid throughout the school to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling. Teachers model writing strategies and children have opportunities to write at length in extended independent writing sessions both during and at the end of each unit. The children are given frequent opportunities in school to write in different contexts using quality texts as a model and for a variety of purposes and audiences. There are many opportunities for children to improve their writing inspired by visual literacy, personal experiences, drama, role play, hot seating, film clips and outdoor learning through the school's Forest School and outdoor learning focus. Children may be asked to produce their writing on their own or as part of group. Children will also be given the opportunity to use ICT for their writing. Children write for a variety of different purposes and audiences, and providing 'real reasons to write' is a priority in every class.

## 9. APPROACHES TO SPELLING

Word Level activities take place on a regular basis in every class. Approaches include:

- ✦ Phonological awareness games at EYFS and KS1 (and into KS2 if appropriate)
- ✦ Word and alphabet games and songs
- ✦ Investigating syllables, prefixes, suffixes, letter strings, word origins, homophones, synonyms, rhyme, word patterns, etc
- ✦ Studying the function and use of different parts of speech
- ✦ Creating and learning mnemonics to aid spelling memory
- ✦ The use of the Read, Write, Inc. spelling programme.

## 10. CROSS-CURRICULAR ENGLISH OPPORTUNITIES

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. They will plan for pupils to practice and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum, with a particular focus in our school of writing through all subject areas where the same standard of writing is expected as seen in English books.

## 11. THE USE OF ICT

We recognise the important role ICT has to play in our school in the development of English skills. ICT is used to enhance the teaching of English and to give all children the opportunity to experience, read and write texts and develop visual literacy. The use of ICT is cross-curricular. Opportunities to use ICT to support teaching and learning in English are planned for and used as appropriate, and according to age and ability.

## 12. ASSESSMENT AND TARGET SETTING

Work will be assessed in line with the Assessment and Record Keeping Policy. Children's attainment and achievement in English is tracked throughout the school. Moderated and challenging targets are set at the beginning of the academic year and children's progress towards these targets is closely monitored by class teachers and the Head Teacher. Teachers keep up to date assessments based on the children's on going work and regular formal assessments which are given to the Head Teacher and English coordinator. The children are encouraged to carry out peer and self-assessment alongside daily teacher assessment for learning. It is essential that children receive regular assessment for learning on their progress so that they know the next steps for their learning. The feedback children receive should be based on the outcomes of the lesson and reflect achievement against the success criteria and the effort that the child has made. The child should be able to clearly understand the success of their learning and the amount of effort they have put in.



This can be written or verbal depending on age, ability, activity and time available.

In addition to this:

- ✦ Teachers may make use of appropriate test material in order to inform teacher assessment in reading, writing, spelling and presentation;
- ✦ Assessments in reading and writing are submitted to the Head Teacher at the beginning, middle and end of each year to enable progress to be monitored;
- ✦ The Head teacher and Class Teachers meet at regular moderation meetings to set targets for individuals, groups and classes;
- ✦ Assessment for learning in English is a priority in every classroom and assessments feed directly into short, medium and long term planning and target setting. There are frequent opportunities for children at all stages to take part in the target-setting process through self and peer assessment.

### **13. INCLUSION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. All children have equal access to the English curriculum and to suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity or home background.

We identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving (see above) and take steps to improve their attainment through an individually tailored programme of intervention. Gifted children are also identified and suitable learning challenges provided. Activities and work are differentiated to enable all to take part.

### **15. ROLE OF SUBJECT LEADER**

The Subject Leader is responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through:

- Monitoring and evaluating: pupil progress;
  - the provision of English;
  - the effectiveness of teaching and learning;
  - the quality of the learning environment;
  - the deployment, provision and effectiveness of support staff.
- Taking the lead on policy development;
- supporting colleagues in their CPD;
- purchasing and organising resources;
- keeping up to date with recent developments in the teaching of English.

### **16. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

Parents are encouraged to become involved with their children's development in English through:

- ✦ parents' meetings three times a year, along with opportunities to look at children's work;
- ✦ the school's 'open' attitude to visits from parents/carers, where teachers make themselves available whenever a discussion need is identified;
- ✦ home/school reading diaries;
- ✦ the use of the Accelerated Reader programs at home; ▪ parents' workshops when appropriate (e.g. in Reading/Writing);
- ✦ open mornings.

### **17. CONCLUSION**

This policy is in line with school policy generally and should be read in conjunction with other school policies. Of particular relevance are the following:

Teaching and Learning

Assessment and Record Keeping

Marking



Remote Learning

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Gifted and Talented

ICT

Equality and Diversity

Health and Safety

### Sibsey Free Primary School

#### Handwriting and Presentation Policy

All classes will follow the school handwriting scheme as closely as the ability of the children will allow. We aim to teach all children to write legibly, with confidence and enjoyment. By the time they leave KS2, we expect them to be developing a consistent, fluent, neat, joined hand, based on the learning and teaching in KS1. Teachers will model good practice at all times.

#### Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1

Children are taught, at the earliest appropriate time for their ability, how to hold a pencil or other drawing implement correctly using the tripod grip. They will also be taught how to sit, how to place the paper and how to form letters, number and punctuation marks accurately. This is emphasised in handwriting sessions and whenever written work takes place. It is vital to ensure the correct formation of both letters and numbers to prevent bad habits from forming at an early age.

Programmes of learning and practice are provided for all children with the aim that, once secure in the movements, they will write some letter strings in a joined hand by the Summer Term of Year 1.

From the very beginning, time is spent on pattern making and children use a variety of resources – whiteboards, sand trays, plastic letter shapes that can be followed with the fingers, etc. – that encourage the development of a free flowing hand.

Special consideration is given to left-handed children to ensure that they hold their pencil correctly and sit appropriately and comfortably when writing, without ‘clawing’ the fingers or bending the wrist.

Handwriting books will be used in KS1 and phased out during Year 2.

We expect children to adapt their handwriting for different purposes, e.g. notices, invitations, posters, classroom display, form filling etc. We also expect them to become increasingly aware of situations when they should judge whether it would be appropriate to use handwriting or a word processor.

#### Key Stage 2

All aspects identified in FS and KS1 continue to be emphasised and practised. Teachers, supported by TAs, reinforce all that has been learn in KS1 and help children to develop a flowing, joined writing style.

Once children have developed a consistent, joined form of handwriting, they are encouraged to develop a personal style.

#### Handwriting and English

Handwriting is part of Language, Communication, Literacy and Read, Write, Inc in KS1, but is reinforced across the whole curriculum.

All teachers, no matter what the activity, emphasise the need for:

- Correct, consistent letter, number and punctuation mark formation;
- Consistent size and orientation of lettering;
- Comfortable and sensible positioning of the body and the paper;



- Correct posture;
- Accurate and consistent joining lines when appropriate.

They also ensure that examples of their own handwriting – on displays, whiteboards and on children's work etc. – are reflective of the school's handwriting policy.

The quality of the children's handwriting is expected to reflect the nature of the work they are undertaking. For example, note taking handwriting would not be expected to be of the same quality as presentation handwriting.

Opportunities to use pens will be introduced during the latter part of the Summer Term in Year 6.

Letter formations to be followed in Reception:

a b c d e f g h i j k l  
m n o p q r s t u v w  
x y z

Letter formations to be followed from Year 1 onwards:

a b c d e f g h i j k l  
m n o p q r s t u v w  
x y z

Capital letter formations:

A B C D E F G H I J K L  
M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

During Year 1 flicks will begin to be introduced and the children will also be introduced to joining letters at the end of the year. Children should all be joining from Year 2 onwards.





