

Policy & Procedure

Thornton Primary School



English Policy 2026- 2029

This policy is reviewed every three years and was agreed by the Governing Body of Thornton Primary School in Spring 2026 **and will be reviewed again in Spring 2029**

Signed: _____ Chair of Governors

Date: _____

Non-Statutory Policy

Thornton Primary School

English Policy

Aims and Vision

Our aim is to develop confident and enthusiastic learners who are always respectful of each other and the staff. We want them to build a strong appreciation of their own positive attributes as well as those of the other children and, in doing so, to develop a 'can-do' attitude to learning, and the community in which they live, through consistent focus upon:



Excellence
Independence Enthusiasm Equality
Responsibility Empathy
Confidence Perseverance Care
Aspiration
Respect
Pride Tolerance
Teamwork Challenge Integrity
Enjoyment



Aims of English teaching and learning All children should:

- develop positive attitudes towards books so that reading is a pleasurable activity
- read a varied selection of texts whilst gaining an increased level of fluency and understanding
- develop a range of reading strategies for approaching reading: using and applying phonological, contextual, grammatical and graphic knowledge
- use reading as a means of gathering information to support their learning throughout the entire curriculum
- write in different contexts and for different purposes and audiences, including themselves
- write with increasing awareness of the conventions of grammar, punctuation and spelling
- form letters correctly, leading to a fluent and legible handwriting style
- develop listening and comprehension skills through a variety of means including reciprocal and non-reciprocal situations
- develop their oral abilities and vocabulary
- express opinions, articulate feelings and formulate appropriate responses to increasingly complex questions and instructions.

English Intent Statement

At Thornton Primary School we believe that a quality Literacy (English) curriculum should develop children's love of reading, writing and discussion. We aim to inspire an appreciation of our rich and varied literary heritage and a habit of reading widely and often.

We believe that all pupils should be able to confidently communicate their knowledge, ideas and emotions through their writing. We want pupils to acquire a wide vocabulary, a solid understanding of grammar and be able to spell new words by effectively applying the spelling patterns and rules they learn throughout their time in primary school. We want to develop the children to write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.

We believe that all good writers refine and edit their writing, so we want children to develop the independence to identify their own areas for improvement in all writing, editing their work effectively throughout the writing process.

We believe that children need to develop a secure knowledge-base in English, which follows a clear pathway of progression as they advance through the primary curriculum. We believe that a secure basis in literacy skills is crucial to a high quality education and will give our children the tools they need to participate fully as a member of society.

Content

The Teaching of English

The structure of English teaching is based upon the English National Curriculum guidelines and covers all of the recommended objectives.

To ensure that there is adequate time for developing Literacy skills, each class has a dedicated English lesson each day, with a duration of approximately 60 minutes- four of these sessions are based on The Write Stuff.

Each class also have dedicated times for reading comprehension (2 short sessions and one longer session per week), handwriting (Years 1-4), grammar sessions (a 30minute session). Opportunities for extra reading and extended writing are planned when appropriate. These sessions are incorporated into the weekly timetable.

The Literacy skills that the children develop are utilised and supported in every area of the curriculum and can be directly linked with other subjects. For example, formal letter writing within Literacy may be developed within a history topic.

Strategies

We have adopted “The Write Stuff” by Jane Considine to improve the standard of writing across the school. The Write Stuff follows a method called “Sentence Stacking” which refers to the fact that sentences are stacked together and organised to engage children with short, intensive moments of learning that they can then apply independently to their own writing. A single lesson is based on a sentence model and is broken down into three learning chunks. Each learning chunk contains three sections:

Initiate- a stimulus to capture the children's imagination and gather vocabulary and ideas in pairs, and as a class through a method of 'kind calling out'

Model- the teacher models a sentence that applies the vocabulary from the first section, outlining clear writing features and technique.

Enable- the children use the model as a guide to write their own independent sentence.

Children are challenged to gain a silver star through 'deepening the moment' using previously learnt skills and applying them to their writing during that chunk.

Provision is made for the full range of abilities- Differentiation

- By recognising that some children may need specific help with literacy skills e.g. if they are dyslexic, although they may have other strengths within the subject.
- By giving extra support to children who need extra opportunities for reinforcement- this may be sentence starters, word banks or more intensive adult support.
- By ensuring that pupils with particular ability and flair for English are extended through the use of deepening the moment and further challenges.

SPELLING/PHONICS

There are four main purposes to this part of the policy:

- To establish an entitlement for all pupils;
- To establish expectations for teachers of this subject;
- To promote continuity and coherence across the school;
- To state the school's approaches to this subject in order to promote public, and particularly parents' and carers', understanding of the curriculum.

Spelling is an integral part of the writing process. Pupils who spell with ease are able to concentrate on the content of their writing and the making of meaning. While it is important to remember that spelling is not the most important aspect of writing, confidence in spelling often has a profound effect on the writer's self-image. Accurate spelling implies consideration for the reader and also recognises the deeply embedded notions about correctness which we hold as a society about spelling.

SPELLING/PHONICS

Entitlement and curriculum provision

Spelling is taught as part of a planned programme following the requirements of the National Curriculum.

It is the entitlement of Foundation Stage and Year One to a daily session of phonics. In Years 2-6 children will have weekly explicit spelling sessions in which rules and patterns are taught. Weekly spellings are also closely linked to spelling patterns and rules or to the lists of common exception words that children are expected to be able to spell in each year group.

SPELLING/PHONICS

The Nature of Spelling

Spelling is a developmental process. The stages through which children pass as they develop as spellers are the following: pre-communicative, pre-phonetic, phonetic, transitional and 'correct'. An understanding of the developmental spelling stage of each child will aid teachers in their teaching. Spelling is a visual motor skill and

children will therefore need to develop visual strategies in order to spell correctly. Phonic knowledge alone will be inadequate. Children therefore need to be encouraged to look carefully at words. Children may also need to be helped to understand how the English spelling system works and how our history has influenced our spelling.

Spelling is an important aspect of writing but one that should not be allowed to dominate our marking and assessment. The content of children's writing should be valued.

Children need help and encouragement in order to develop as confident, competent spellers because the ability to spell most words correctly is often closely associated with positive self-esteem and affects performance in other areas of the curriculum.

SPELLING/PHONICS

Teaching and Learning

The teaching of spelling aims to develop pupils as independent spellers who take an active part in their own learning. This is through a multi-sensory approach incorporating the development of fine motor skills, auditory discrimination and visual perception. Pupils are taught the knowledge and skills they need to become independent spellers. Routines and structures are provided to enable pupils to apply what they learn about spelling independently.

Teaching aims to show pupils how to become natural and accurate spellers. The programme approaches this in three ways. Firstly, by using a structured approach as outlined in Little Wandle for Letters and Sounds. Secondly, by ensuring that pupils learn and practise those words which they most frequently misspell as individuals. Thirdly, by increasing their spelling vocabulary by learning how to spell and by using the technical and subject-specific words which occur across the curriculum. Vocabulary development is encouraged by highlighting spelling rules and patterns and increasing children's vocabulary through the use of resources such as the shade o'meter.

SPELLING/PHONICS Implementation

- Years 2-6 have a set of spelling activities to support regular opportunities for children to practice learning spellings that they need next.
- The 'Look, Say, Cover, Write and Check' approach to learning the spelling of words will be taught and encouraged.
- Children will be taught to look for common letter strings, patterns in words and spelling rules.
- Spelling games will encourage children to look closely at words.
- Where possible, children will be encouraged to identify their own spelling errors and edit accordingly.
- Sound out words phonemically and by syllables
- Draw on analogies to known words, roots, derivations, word families, morphology and familiar spelling patterns.

- Identify words which pose a particular challenge and learn them by using mnemonics, multi-sensory re-enforcement and memorising critical features
- Use the quartiles of a dictionary and find words beyond the initial letter
- Make effective use of a spell checker, recognising where it might not be sufficient or appropriate

The school's approach to spelling will be applied across the curriculum. Children will be taught in their normal class group, although there may be exceptions as outlined under SEN. To assess the pupils, they have a low stakes quiz each week to identify the extent to which they have learnt the spelling rules they have been working on.

All teachers will be responsible for the planning and teaching of spelling in accordance with the National Curriculum.

Teaching will take into account each child's developmental stage in spelling and all children's best attempts at spelling will be valued and built upon. Children will be shown which parts of a word are correctly spelt and those which need attention. Teachers will not allow the correction of spelling errors to become dominant. All spellings will be marked in conjunction with the schools Marking and Feedback Policy.

All children will have access to suitable dictionaries and thesauruses appropriate to their age.

The learning of spelling will be encouraged as part of the home-school partnership and weekly spellings will be sent home on a weekly basis to practise, in readiness for a test in school. Children will be given words according to their year group or developmental needs where appropriate for SEN pupils.

SPELLING/PHONICS

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Some children, who may be experiencing specific difficulties, will have adaptation to the spelling curriculum to suit their needs. This may be in terms of the number of spellings they are required to learn in a week, or where the spellings have been taken from.

SPELLING/PHONICS

Marking spelling

Guidance for teachers

- Don't mark every miscue or misspelling - Choose three or four at the most and pick the ones that most need correcting – that is, words that the learner ought to be able to spell out at this stage.
- The marker should always be sympathetic to what the writer is trying to communicate, the writer's errors (whilst important) should be second to the content.
- Do not insert letters into a misspelt word. It can confuse the writer. Instead you should write the correct spelling in the margin.

SPELLING/PHONICS

Continuity and Progression

Foundation Stage

The emphasis at this stage is on systematic, multi-sensory, high quality phonics work which is embedded within a rich language experience. The phonics programme used is predominantly Little Wandle for Letters and Sounds. Phonics will be taught daily in Reception.

The application of phonics in writing will be offered through shared and guided writing and independent writing opportunities related to the areas of learning. Where children are in danger of not meeting age-related expectations, the school will take appropriate action in order to support the child's progress during the year.

Key Stage 1

Letters and Sounds will continue to be taught on a daily basis in Year 1. For spelling purposes, the emphasis is on the pupils' ability to segment words into phonemes and then match the most likely letter or letters to each sound.

Phonics is taught as a whole class, with keep-up sessions delivered to those children who need it. A phonics assessment takes place every half term. As children move into Year 2, pupils will continue to learn how to spell a number of high frequency words and common irregular words enabling them to write fluently. They investigate and learn to use common spelling patterns, and frequently used prefixes, suffixes and inflectional endings in their own writing.

Pupils become increasingly independent. They identify reasons for misspellings in their own work and are taught how to use a simple dictionary, a range of word banks and their knowledge of word families. The 'Look-Say-Cover-Write-Check' routine is established and risk-taking in the spelling of unknown words is encouraged during guided and independent writing. Pupils should know what their responsibilities are in terms of spelling and when they may seek assistance from an adult.

Key Stage 2

At Key Stage 2 there is an emphasis on developing a range of strategies to remember how words are spelled. The use of a range of word resources and the morphology of words is developed further. Nevertheless, it is recognised that some pupils will need to consolidate the phonic knowledge and skills from Key Stage 1. An expectation remains that there should be explicit teaching of spellings at least once a week.

Building on the approaches introduced in Key Stage 1, there is an emphasis on developing confidence and independence. It is expected that pupils assume increased responsibility by identifying their own spelling errors, making reasoned choices about likely alternatives and using a range of resources (including spellcheckers and a variety of dictionaries and word banks) for making corrections.

SPELLING/PHONICS

Assessment and Monitoring

Teachers in Year 2 to 6 plan and implement weekly spelling tests focussing on the phoneme of spelling pattern(s) being taught. A record of these are kept and

monitored. Additional spelling practice is implemented with specific groups of children. Some children do not do this as a 'test' for self-esteem reasons.

Phonics assessment are administered every half term in Reception and Year 1. These are then entered onto the tracker, and a heat map is produced.

Results of progress and standards will be discussed with the Literacy coordinator and action points will be implemented accordingly. Assessment details of Year 6 will be forwarded to secondary schools on transition.

READING

Entitlement and curriculum provision

- To encourage and promote reading for pleasure.
- To create a school environment that celebrates reading
- Encourage children to become independent and reflective readers.
- Develop children's experiences of reading through a variety of texts including the use of libraries, ICT and other media.
- Develop reading strategies and skills, accuracy and fluency, understanding and response to texts.
- Develop children's ability to reference, locate and use evidence from a variety of texts

READING

Teaching and learning

- Objectives for the teaching of reading are taken from the National Curriculum Framework (2014)
- Children are encouraged to use a variety of strategies to decode and understand texts.
- Comprehension skills are taught explicitly during shared and whole class reading sessions

READING

Curriculum provision Shared

Reading

- Shared reading takes place during Literacy lessons. This includes big books or texts displayed on the IWB. During this time specific reading skills are taught.
- Learning objectives for shared reading will be taken from the National Curriculum Framework (2014)
- Shared reading can also be used to teach children about different genres.

Short and Long Reading Comprehension Sessions

- Every child (Year 2-6) takes part in carefully planned short reading comprehension sessions, at least twice a week and one longer session.
- Our sessions are always challenging- the children share a text together and have the opportunity to track other pupils, or the teacher reading. There are also opportunities for the children to read aloud to their peers. The children have to answer comprehension questions based around the reading domains for KS1 (retrieve, sequence, predict, interpret, vocabulary) and KS2 (all of KS1 plus compare and contrast, and authors choice).

Individual Reading

- Each child has an individual reading book to take home and share with their parents/ carers which is based upon their phonics phase in Reception and Year 1. The books match the Little Wandle phonics planning and are used as the basis of the reading sessions within school, before being sent home.
- Our individual reading books are stored in the main corridor and they are sorted into book band colours.
- Individual reading books will be chosen from a specified book band decided upon by the teacher.
- The children have free choice within the specified colour band.
- We have a wide variety of schemes and publishers and genres in each colour band.
- Our teaching and support staff are trained to carry out running records with children to ensure that children are reading books with the correct amount of challenge.
- We encourage our children to re-read books in order to improve fluency and accuracy and facilitate reading for pleasure.

Other Reading Provision

- Each classroom has a reading area with book storage.
- Vulnerable readers are identified within school. These children are heard read on a more frequent basis to improve their word recognition, decoding and comprehension skills.
- The children have the opportunity to participate in Reading Challenges when reading for pleasure at home.
- Reading workshops are held once a year to explain current teaching methods and theory to parents.
- Opportunities are planned for children to read aloud to a variety of audiences.
- Class novels/ stories are read aloud to the children for 10 mins at least three times a week.

WRITING

Aims

- Ensure progression of writing skills across the school
- Provide meaningful writing experiences
- Encourage children to develop confidence, independence and a love for writing
- Enable children to develop a wide and interesting vocabulary

- Inspire children to write through exciting shared experiences
- Model a high standard of writing to secure high expectations
- Ensure children are taught and recognise the range of functions that writing can have e.g. persuade, instruct, inform and entertain
- Develop a clear understanding of the structure and language features associated with different genres of writing
- Children will learn to write in a fluent and joined handwriting style using the PenPals handwriting scheme.

WRITING

Teaching and Learning

- High quality texts are used to challenge engage and enthuse children
- Teachers follow a writing MTP progression map which ensures genre coverage throughout the school, and also shows progression in the writing skills.
- Progression of teaching writing includes exploring a model text through a series of sentence stacking lessons. A large model text is created in each class room as part of the working wall.
- Writing experience days are planned in to provide opportunities to inspire writing.

WRITING

Curriculum Provision

Modelled Writing

The teacher talks aloud the thought process as a writer. They have complete control over the writing and make explicit the structure, language features, spelling and punctuation of the text type as appropriate. This takes place for each 'chunk' in a sentence stacking lesson.

Shared Writing

Shared writing is a collaborative approach. The pupils contribute their thought and ideas for the teacher to select the most appropriate. Learning objectives for shared writing will be taken from the New National Curriculum Framework (2014).

Independent writing

The children are given regular opportunities to apply their understanding of the text type in their own writing

Cross curricular writing

Writing often takes place in other subjects across the curriculum. Children's written skills should be attended to whenever they are writing.

English Assessment

Informal assessment occurs throughout every lesson through discussion and evaluation of the children's work. This is invaluable in enabling the teacher to check that children have grasped the main teaching focus of that lesson.

More formal records for each pupil will consist of:

- Teachers carry out ongoing teacher assessment. This is recorded on Insights termly based on Symphony On-Track assessment.
- We moderate pupils' work, as a whole staff, at least termly. Levels are agreed between professionals. We seek to moderate with other schools throughout the year.
- Work is assessed via marking and improvements encouraged through highlighting,
- NTS tests are taken three times in Y2-5 a year to aid teacher assessment in reading.
- Spelling Tests are carried out weekly in Years 2-6. Children's spellings are based on the National Curriculum year group lists.
- Optional SATS/Mocks are carried out each May in Year 2 and Year 6. Year 2 Reading tests are marked according to the mark scheme.
- Pupils on the SEN register are identified and monitored. Progress towards targets in school support plans is analysed by teachers and the SEND Coordinator

Cross-Curricular Links

Cross-curricular links are made in specific subject areas:

- These occur in all subject areas

The Role of The Head teacher

In consultation with the English Subject leader, the Head teacher:

- determines the ways English should support, enrich and extend the curriculum;
- decides the provision and allocation of resources;
- decides ways in which developments can be assessed, and records maintained;
- ensures that English is used in a way to achieve the aims and objectives of the school;
- ensures that there is an English policy, and identifies an English subject leader.

The Role of the English subject leader

The English subject leader should:

- ensure the development of a scheme of work for the English curriculum. This will follow the National curriculum guidelines and will be built around aspects of the school's curriculum topics and cover aspects of the English National Curriculum statements.
- promote the integration of English within appropriate teaching and learning activities;
- manage the provision and deployment of resources and give guidance on classroom organisation support,
- inspire colleagues to deliver high quality teaching and learning opportunities;
- analyse data to identify strengths and weaknesses in outcomes; planning for improvement accordingly.
- write, monitor and evaluate an action plan for English for the Core Strategic Plan
- lead INSET within the school, and investigate suitable courses elsewhere,
- act as a contact point between the school and support agencies, including the LA,
- provide technical expertise,
- lead the evaluation and review of the school's English policy,
- monitor and review the English provision within the school,

Monitoring and Evaluation

The teaching of English will be monitored through the Core Strategic Plan by the English subject leader in the first instance and then by the Senior Leadership Team

and the Head teacher. SATS results are analysed and areas for development prioritised. Governors are kept informed via a subject report as scheduled in the Monitoring and Evaluation programme. The Governor(s) assigned to monitoring English will be kept abreast of developments, progress and changes within the subject.

Health and Safety

Health and Safety issues in English include the safe teaching of appropriate procedures when dealing with e.g. overhead projectors, tape recorders etc. The children are taught to be aware of their own and others' safety. Children also learn about e.g. what constitutes appropriate reading material. They are expected to display appropriate behaviour at all times.

Equality Statement

At Thornton Primary School, we actively seek to encourage equity and equality through our teaching. As such, we seek to advance the equality of opportunity between people who share any of the following characteristic:

- gender;
- ethnicity;
- disability;
- religion or belief;
- sexual orientation;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy or maternity.

The use of stereotypes under any of the above headings will always be challenged.

Inclusion

Our school is an inclusive school. We aim to make all pupils feel included in all our activities. We try to make all our teaching fully inclusive. We recognise the entitlement of all pupils to a balanced, broadly-based curriculum. We have systems in place for early identification of barriers to their learning and participation so that they can engage in school activities with all other pupils. We acknowledge the need for high expectations and suitable targets for all children.

