



## LITERACY POLICY

Last Reviewed	May 2023	Next Review	May 2024

# Marlcliffe Primary School Literacy Policy

## Introduction

This policy outlines our approach to the development of language in communication (speaking and listening) reading and writing. It is for staff, parents and governors. Review and revision will be on-going. In addition to the guidelines, it attempts to encourage further discussion and reflection. Consideration of the policy should develop an awareness of the elements that combine to ensure good practice.

## Aims

- To provide a language rich environment that promotes a culture of communication, reading and writing;
- To develop in pupils an interest in and a love of books and literature that will not only support their learning across the curriculum but also enrich their lives;
- To value and use books as a basis for learning, pleasure, talk and play;
- To teach children the craft of writing, including handwriting, in order to develop the confidence and skills to write well for a range of purposes and audiences;
- To teach the basics – spelling, handwriting, grammar and punctuation – to ensure accuracy within creativity;
- To foster in pupils the confidence, desire and ability to express their views and opinions both orally and in writing;
- To raise the standards of communication, reading and writing so that every child makes good progress;
- To value and celebrate diversity in culture and language through our reading and writing.

## Learning & Teaching

At Marlcliffe Primary we use the New National Curriculum as a basis for our planning within the subject and expect all teachers to follow this principle. Literacy is taught on a daily basis from Y1 to Y6 for approximately 7 to 8 hours per week, split between embedded grammar, spelling, writing and whole class reading sessions. This is more flexible in reception but a similar amount of time is spent on literacy skills which are also covered via continuous provision.

In Foundation stage, communication and language development is one of the three prime areas of learning. Emphasis is on teaching Literacy through stories and books; through topic links; child-initiated learning through play, plus adult intervention; and demonstration and use of language. In Y1 – 6 teaching and learning usually takes place within a whole class although setting may be used in Y6 if appropriate. These groups are fluid and through continuous assessment for learning, children are allocated to different groups depending on their needs. Within all year groups children's learning is mainly in ability groups in their class, with differentiated tasks and support, but will also include independent and partner work. Good practice in reading and writing is shared and modelled in whole class teaching.

Teachers use a variety of interactive teaching methods to deliver the curriculum and achieve set learning objectives.

## **Reading**

### **Whole Class Reading Sessions**

These take place daily in all KS2 classes; the teacher models the reading process to the whole class as an expert reader, providing support. Teaching objectives are pre-planned and sessions are characterised by explicit teaching of specific reading strategies, oral and written response from children and high levels of collaboration. The children join in, where appropriate with the reading of the text. The texts selected are quality texts that reflect the teaching objectives. Key stage 1 and year 3 and year 4 focus mainly on reading fluency and vocabulary in order to support comprehension skills further through school. A balance of both fiction and non-fiction high quality and ability appropriate texts are included.

### **Guided reading**

This is mainly used in Foundation, key stage 1 and for children working below the expected level in Y3 and Y4, or well below the expected level in Y5 and Y6.

Guided reading takes place as part of a guided session at least once a week for each child within a group. During guided reading, the responsibility for reading shifts to the learner. Guided reading takes place with a group of children of similar ability. During a guided reading session, the children read and respond to a challenging text with the teacher supporting. Texts of graded difficulty are carefully chosen and matched to the reading ability of the group. It is intended that guided reading provides a forum for children to demonstrate what they have learned about reading and to develop further and extend their reading and comprehension skills. The guided reading session also includes other reading opportunities and activities for children not in the teacher focus group.

### **Individual reading**

Children have access to ability appropriate books to support the development of their individual reading skills. Children start taking levelled reading books home in FS and continue to do so until they become competent independent readers achieving a secure level in reading. They can then choose from a wide variety of books from the KS2 library and their classroom library.

In FS and KS1 the children take home books from the reading scheme collections that are allocated to the classes. Parents come into school in the morning and sign books out to read with their children at home. In KS2 children are expected to continue home reading and will sign out their own readers. This is monitored by staff to ensure home reading is supporting reading at school.

Reading is not restricted to the Literacy or reading lessons. Many opportunities are provided for children to practise and extend their reading in other subjects. Reading for pleasure and enjoyment is given a high priority and sufficient time is set aside for this. All classrooms have reading areas and initiatives to encourage further reading.

Whenever possible, 1-1 extra reading is provided, especially to boost basic reading skills for children who are working below age related expectations. We use Reading Recovery sessions (3 x 30 mins a week) for some children in Y1 and Y2. We have a team of reading volunteers who give additional support to identified children.

### **Phonics**

As part of the Literacy lesson, children are taught the principles and practice of phonics following the guidance of Letters and Sounds, the new National Curriculum and the school spelling scheme. Phonics is taught in ability groups across reception and KS1. Generally, the Foundation Stage starts at Phase 2 and continues to Phase 3; Year 1 continues with Phase 3 up to Phase 5 and

Year 2 continues with Phase 5 to Phase 6. The children are tested at the end of each phase and will not move on until they have completed and passed the assessment. The teaching of phonics is key to children developing their reading and will be continued into KS2.

### Assessment:

Children in Year 1 have to undertake a national phonics assessment in the summer term. If they do not reach the required level at the end of Y1, they have to repeat the test at the end of Y2.

Level descriptors for reading are used to record the National Curriculum levels or steps that each child is working at - guided reading is used predominantly to assess specific learning focuses on these descriptors so contributes to these decisions.

More formal testing using SATs style papers from Y2 also forms part of the teacher assessment as well as giving children practice at writing answers to questions.

## **Communication (Speaking and Listening)**

This is not taught discretely but rather a variety of speaking and listening skills are encouraged across the curriculum, particularly in reading, through paired and group work and collaborative learning.

### **1. Word & language games**

Talk games and activities are used to develop vocabulary, punctuation, spelling and grammar, as well as looking at writing structures such as settings in stories, introductions in reports. Many of these games are interactive using ICT such as class whiteboards.

### **2. Paired talk**

Children use talking partners to articulate their ideas and make focused oral responses and questions during learning times.

### **3. Drama**

Drama can be used as part of literacy lessons and can take place effectively within a classroom space but teachers are encouraged to use the drama studio. The development of dramatic skills for each pupil should:

- enhance their ability to communicate in English
- allow them to express deeper feelings and emotions
- encourage them to work collectively
- build their confidence in 'performing' in front of an audience
- hot-seating techniques help children understand the character in role

There will be drama productions each year which may include Christmas KS1 performances and a Year 6 performance at the end of the Summer Term. Other smaller performances may be planned throughout the year.

### **Early Speaking and Listening Skills**

As part of the foundation stage curriculum, speaking and listening forms the basis for the majority of both focused and continuous provision activities. It is built into lessons in all areas of the curriculum in order to provide good models for the children. Communication and language is one of the three prime areas of learning. It "involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich

language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.” EYFS Statutory Framework 2017

## **Writing**

### **Basic Skills**

This is an area of focus across the whole school in line with curriculum expectations and as a result of monitoring and evaluation systems.

Literacy lessons cover and reinforce the basic skills of spelling, handwriting, presentation, grammar and sentence structure both in discreet teaching slots and as part of other writing.

### **Shared and guided writing**

This is an integral part of the literacy lesson where teachers and children construct a piece of writing together, giving opportunities for the teacher to model writing using the children’s ideas. This modelling covers basic skills such as handwriting and presentation, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure and grammar, as well as content such as creative and imaginative ideas or factual writing. Teachers also make use of WAGOLLS (what a good one looks like) to provide high quality and ability appropriate examples of different texts.

### **Writing for a purpose**

Literacy lessons explore the purpose of writing and differences in styles of writing. This includes non-fiction and fiction genres such as instructions, report, diary, suspense, parody, persuasion, poetry and recount, as well as considering the audience. Learning is differentiated according to the needs of children who work in ability groups so that each child can make good progress. Use of ‘talk for writing’, which has actions to match retelling a story or piece of non-fiction, supports children by encouraging them to verbalise their ideas and improve the language, before putting it on paper.

### **Writing across the curriculum**

Reading and writing are an integral part of the curriculum in all foundation subjects such as history, geography, RE, science and PSHE. This is a good way of seeing if children are applying the skills taught in literacy lessons to other areas. Writing assessment folders may also include examples of literacy from other curriculum areas. Long term plans for literacy are used to plan stimuli for writing which support our teaching of the wider curriculum in order to maximise learning opportunities, create a purpose and audience for our writing and consolidate basic literacy skills.

### **Handwriting**

Foundation Stage use and practise basic letter formation, using ‘flicks’ as a lead to the next letter. Y1 to Y6 follow a handwriting and presentation scheme which teaches joining. Teachers expect high quality presentation in written work, line guides are used for most pieces of writing.

**Assessment:** A summative assessment of writing takes place 6 times a year, at the end of each half term. The assessments are formulated using level or step descriptors for writing and can also include examples of writing from across the curriculum. The writing assessment system is reviewed routinely in line with statutory guidance and exemplification for year 2 and year 6. Assessment for learning is continuous and shapes future teaching and planning.

Analysis of writing assessments feed into pupil progress meeting which allows for targeted, precision teaching within the classroom so that children are learning what is needed to help them to progress.

Moderation of writing assessments is carried out several times a year, guided by the SLT and literacy team.

### **Spelling**

In key stage 1, spelling is phonics based. Teachers follow a a scheme of work designed and planned to give our children the best possible opportunities in early reading. Differentiated spelling lists are sent home weekly.

In Key Stage One, an accredited scheme (Spelling Shed) is used to deliver teaching and learning. See spelling policy for further information.

### **Punctuation and grammar**

These areas are also very specific in the National Curriculum, and teachers follow the guidelines for their year group/groups. Punctuation and grammar are taught in context at sentence and text level. We use progression grids and long-term planning documents based on the national curriculum expectations, to inform planning. These support use of good quality punctuation and grammar in writing and structure grammar content for each year group at the appropriate level.

Assessment of SPAG: Children in Year 6 take a written test which covers Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar. Teachers are working from National Curriculum objectives to ensure that children cover the necessary areas across school and are well prepared for the test.

### **SEND**

Literacy lessons, tasks and materials are differentiated by the class teacher to meet the needs of individual children. A number of intervention strategies are used to develop children's specific learning needs in Literacy. These include many programmes designed to support classroom learning, as well as specific programmes for dyslexia and other special needs.

Reading Recovery is an intense programme that supports children, mainly in Y1 and 2, who need additional support in reading.

Identification of children with SENDs in literacy complies with the new SEND code of practice. (See SEND policy.)

### **Target setting**

Target setting is personalised within the classroom and based on steps to success. Teachers will set targets when marking using the marking policy.

#### *Appendix*

*New national Curriculum.* <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-primary-curriculum>