



# The Dragonfly Federation

East Ruston and Stalham  
Infant and Pre-schools

A Flying Start for all



## **English Policy**

### **INTRODUCTION**

English is the basis of all communication and learning within our school. It is a core subject in the National Curriculum. This policy outlines the nature, objectives and implementation of English in our school.

The school policy for English reflects the consensus of opinion of the whole teaching staff.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all teaching staff.

### **THE NATURE OF ENGLISH**

English is the medium for learning and extends through all activities both inside and outside school. The teaching of English embraces all aspects of language, both spoken and written. In the literate society in which we live, an ability to communicate effectively, both orally and through the written word and to read a wide range of different type of texts, is essential if children are to achieve their potential throughout their schooldays and into adult life.

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. There are three Attainment Targets:-

Speaking and Listening/drama  
Reading  
Writing

Each of these areas has its own skills and knowledge which are planned for specifically as well as reinforced through other subject areas.

## **OBJECTIVES**

Our aims in English are in line with the Aims of the School and meet the requirements of the New National Curriculum. We plan to provide a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, develop basic skills and widen the children's experiences.

Our aim is for children to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes in English to enable them to:

- \* communicate confidently and effectively in speech and writing
- \* listen with understanding
- \* enjoy reading and become enthusiastic, knowledgeable and responsive readers
- \* express themselves creatively and imaginatively and adapt what they write and say in different situations

This is across all subject areas and activities.

Specific objectives under the three attainment targets of the National Curriculum can be summarised as below.

### **Speaking and Listening /drama**

We aim to enable children to express themselves orally in an appropriate way, matching their style and response to audience and purpose. They need to be able to give and receive instructions and to develop the skill of participating in group discussion.

As speaking and listening skills are fundamental to progress in other areas of the curriculum and to the general emotional and intellectual development of the child we plan for opportunities to develop these skills. We also give children opportunities and encourage them to communicate their thoughts, ideas and feelings, to assist them in their relationships with others. This is in line with the Aims of the School.

### **Reading**

**The school emphasizes the teaching of systematic synthetic phonics using 'Letters and Sounds'**

Our objective is that children interact with the text; that they read with understanding and respond to a wide range of different types of texts. There is a focus on reading for pleasure and all children are encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction, to establish an appreciation and love of reading and to gain knowledge across the curriculum.

We acknowledge that success in reading has a direct effect on independence and progress in most other areas of the curriculum. It is crucial in developing children's self-confidence and motivation. Therefore the teaching of reading (skills, understanding and interpretation) is given high priority by all staff.

## **Writing**

We teach children to learn to write in order to be able to communicate meaning to a wide range of audiences. Writing is a developmental process and children's attempts at all stages are valued. As they develop, children need to be able to structure their writing so that it is coherent and to use correct spelling, punctuation and grammar to make the meaning of their writing clear to the reader. At all levels the teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar as well as vocabulary development are seen as key factors in the successful acquisition of skills needed for writing. We also encourage children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

The implementation of English at Stalham Infant School is in line with the New National Curriculum and the school's Teaching and Learning Policy.

Staff across the school recognise that within planned focuses there will be a range of ability and differentiation is planned to take this into account. This includes planning for children with Special Educational Needs. Staff also recognise that competence in the range of English skills has a crucial effect on the self-esteem and motivation of children. Class teachers and Classroom Assistants work closely together to plan support for individuals and groups of children. Support and encouragement is vital from an early stage, in consultation with parents.

## **Speaking and Listening/drama**

Activities within the classroom are planned in such a way as to encourage full and active participation by all children, irrespective of ability i.e. talking partners. Children with specific speech and auditory problems will be identified and specialist help sought when appropriate

In line with the New National curriculum pupils will be expected to recite poetry by heart and will be encouraged to participate in class discussions. Pupils will be given the opportunity to participate in role play and drama through school performances and during lessons. Topic work is designed to develop skills of confident participation and self-expression.

Each classroom has access to a CD player for listening to story CDs.

PSHE is linked directly with speaking and listening. SEAL has been introduced to give pupils further opportunities to speak and listen in class.

Within the context of the home/school partnership, parents will be encouraged to see the value in time spent talking and listening to their children. They will be encouraged to understand how speaking and listening skills enrich the skills of reading and writing. The annual meeting for the parents of pre-school children will suggest ways in which parents can encourage the oral skills of their children.

## **Reading**

Children are encouraged to enjoy reading with the emphasis on the re-reading of text and reading alone. They are given opportunities to share a wide range of books and other reading material. They take part in regular reading when they share books with the teacher or other adults and other children. Phonics are taught systematically throughout the school, using 'Letters and Sounds'. This stage is not age related but through careful planning and assessment teaching of phonics is phase rather than age.

Children have the opportunity to read to a variety of audience, including younger children, their own class and adults.

Our approach to reading is in line with the New National Curriculum -

## **Shared Reading**

Using large texts (of which big books are a part) and the interactive whiteboard. These are read by the class with the support of the teacher. They are chosen to cover a range of genre and for specific learning objectives.

## **Guided reading**

A small group of similar ability children reading the same book under the guidance of the teacher and working on specific objectives. The children read both individually and to the teacher. There is a focus on comprehension of text and on engaging with and interpreting texts. The group discuss together specific parts of the book e.g. vocabulary, storyline etc.

## **Independent reading**

Particular emphasis is placed on building up a strong sense of home/school partnership. The support and encouragement of parents is sought and valued. At the pre-school meeting and throughout the child's time at school parents are informed of ways in which they can support their child and are encouraged to play a vital role in their child's reading development. Children take home books and reading games to share and enjoy with their parents. These books are within coloured bands that are guidance for teachers. Expectations are that children will read to teachers in a variety of ways working alongside parent/carers to ensure that skills taught at school are used to develop a love of reading competence, understanding and fluency in reading so that the child is prepared for the next stage of the educational journey.

Each classroom has a reading area with its own colour coded books and a range of fiction and non-fiction books. The school library, which is used by all classes, contains fiction and non-fiction. Books for a particular class theme or topic may be kept in the classroom. All children are taught to use information books. Volunteers come into the school to listen to readers.

## **Writing**

Children are given opportunities to write in a variety of forms and for a range of audiences, including themselves. Children are encouraged to write independently from Year R. This is alongside the regular build-up of handwriting and spelling skills. Children will be helped to understand why it is sometimes useful to plan and draft writing. Teaching is focused on the correct use of punctuation and

grammar in order to make meaning clear. Stamina for writing and memory skills are developed through the use of dictation.

Children are given meaningful and varied purposes for writing. Cross-curricular opportunities are used wherever possible for providing real purposes and audiences for writing. Children are encouraged to 'have a go' and all attempts will be valued. There will be opportunities for individual writing, shared writing with an adult and collaborative writing with peers.

Writing skills should be demonstrated whenever possible right across the curriculum and should be reflected in topic work as appropriate and other core subjects.

Children have use of computers for drafting and editing writing, currently using Textease.

Children have easy access to a range of types and sizes of paper and different pencils and pens. Writing is encouraged in the context of structured play.

## **Spelling/phonics**

We teach children to spell using Letters and Sounds. Spelling is taught in conjunction with handwriting using joined up script at the end of Y1 and into Y2. From the earliest stages, children are encouraged to look closely at the composition of words including prefixes and suffixes, as well as looking for words within words. They are also encouraged to 'have a go' at words with the emphasis being on the correct usage of phonics that have been taught. The initial stages may include 'sticky writing' developed through gradually taking over small words which become known or through initial letters. This progresses through to trying words out and using a range of resources to check, dictionaries, word banks and lists, other children, teachers. High frequency words are taught through a range of strategies (i.e. letters and Sounds. Tricky words (those which do not 'sound out') are taught systematically through Letters and Sounds. The phonic check carried out at the end of year 1 highlights those pupils who may need support in the Pupil Premium group which is led by a Higher Level Teaching Assistant. This group reinforces phonics for those pupils who are slightly underachieving and ensure they reach at least expected attainment in the end of key stage 1 teacher assessments.

## **Handwriting**

Children are shown how to hold a pencil comfortably and will be encouraged to adopt a correct posture when writing. They are taught correct letter formation in stroke-related families. From Year R onwards they are taught to write letters with exit strokes so that they will have little difficulty in learning to join up their letters when they are ready to do so. Handwriting is closely linked with spelling so that the teaching of common letter strings is taught in the context of Handwriting lessons. Children are helped to understand that there is a balance between speed and legibility which is dependent on the purpose of writing. Joined up writing is taught as a class lesson and is directly linked with spelling. Correct letter formation is taught in a subject specific way. Pupils are taught where letters start and finish so that it is easy to join when introduced. Cross curricular opportunities are used whenever possible for providing real purposes for using handwriting skills. The motor skills necessary for Handwriting are also developed in Art and P.E.

## **ASSESSMENT AND RECORDING**

Assessment for Learning.(AfL) is an essential part of the planning for teaching and learning of English.. Teachers use Assessing Pupil Progress (APP) materials regularly to moderate and to track progress.

Data analysis is used to determine pupil progress and strengths and weaknesses in provision. This information is then used to identify priorities for the School Improvement Plan.

## **SPECIAL NEEDS (See SEN Policy)**

'Tracks' programme is used for pupils experiencing difficulties with the English curriculum. Pupils are identified by the end of the autumn term in Year 1 at School Action level. If the SENCO is involved, supplementary work is done in small groups or 1:1 situation. The end of year 1 phonic check indicates the level of support pupils may need in year 2.

In Year 2, Catch Up programme is introduced for those pupils still experiencing difficulties. In line with the new SEND requirements the school recognizes that there is one category to replace school action and school action plus. Should

problems persist the Cluster SENCO becomes involved and advice given is followed accordingly. Pupil Premium money is used to support those pupils who need support in order to achieve National expectations.

Similarly more able pupils are identified early and challenges are provided through differentiated tasks. These pupils are on the more able/Gifted and talented register and planning clearly highlights the differentiated challenges set for them in order to extend learning.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The Headteacher working with the English Leadership and Management team will monitor progress made in English and analyse data in order to identify areas that need improving. The planning for English and the learning which is taking place as part of ongoing planned monitoring is the responsibility of the Headteacher, in conjunction with the School Improvement and Development Plan and the Teaching and Learning policy which is central to the school improvement procedure.

**Reviewed January 2016**



## *Appendix 1*

### ***STALHAM INFANT AND PRE SCHOOL***

#### ***HANDWRITING POLICY***

##### **INTRODUCTION.**

Handwriting is a key component of the language curriculum. This policy outlines the nature, purpose and implementation of handwriting in the school.

This policy reflects the consensus of the opinion of all teaching and support staff.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all staff working directly with children.

##### **THE NATURE OF HANDWRITING.**

Handwriting is an important aspect of communicating for all children. It encourages the need to take pride in written work and the need to take into account a specific audience.

##### **OBJECTIVES.**

The schools aims for handwriting are to produce a legible, fluent and fast style. This style should be developed so that letters can be joined easily when this becomes appropriate once the individual letter formation is sound. The school also aims for consistency through the school with all members of staff using the same, agreed “patter” to help children recall the movement for each letter.

##### **IMPLEMENTATION.**

The implementation of handwriting at Stalham Infant School is in line with the teaching and learning policy, the New National curriculum, equal opportunities policy and guidelines from the SEN policy.

In the foundation stage handwriting is taught in conjunction with the early learning goals.

All teachers are responsible for the planning, delivery and assessment of handwriting.

Teachers should be aware of the needs of left-handed children in terms of specific formation instructions and sitting position.

The guidelines for letter formation will be shared with parents in the form of written advice including the “patter” for each letter and correct joining of letters.

Provision for left-handers should include:

- Consider seating arrangements.
- The angle of the paper.
- The possible use of a sloping board.
- The writers position in relation to the classroom board.

### **Foundation stage.**

The skills of handwriting will be developed through :-

Good gross and fine motor control.

Recognition of pattern.

The language of shapes and movement.

Kinaesthetics including artwork, sky writing, sand trays etc.

Supervision where possible until formation is secure.

### **Key stage 1.**

#### **Continuity with the foundation stage.**

A balance between group, all class and sometimes individual teaching.

Handwriting will be taught in joined script as soon as formation is secure.

Digraphs will be taught as a joined unit to reinforce phonics and handwriting.

High frequency words will be taught in joined script.

#### **Specific rules.**

The letters b, j, g, k, p, q, s, x, y, and z will not be joined.

Capital letters and lower case letters will not be joined.

#### **Opportunities for the development of Handwriting.**

Demonstrating letter formation during shared writing sessions,

Linking the teaching of phonics with letter formation and joining.

Links with gross hand movements using paint, fingers, crayons, sand and play dough.

Developing finer hand control through drawing and pattern work in art.

Formal work sheets to link patterns and basic letter formation.

Identifying and supporting children experiencing difficulty with fine control and grip.

#### **Resources and materials.**

A range of pencils are available to develop skills throughout the school with triangular grips in reception, HB pencils in years 1 and 2.

Children move from plain paper in reception to broad lines in year 1 with narrower lines in year 2.

#### **Assessment.**

Assessment is continuous over a period of an academic year, noting strengths and weaknesses in control, grip and formation. This is in line with schools assessment policy. Handwriting will be a component of the writing moderation exercise for the targeted children in the school each year.

### Letter formation and patter.

A a B b C c

Round up down and flick. Down back up and round. Start at the top and round

D d E e F f

Round up down and flick. Straight along up and round. Round down and cross.

G g H h I i

Round up down and curl. Down back up and over. Down flick and dot.

J j K k L l

Down through the line curve and dot. Down lift pencil in and out. Down and flick.

M m N n O o

Down up over and over and flick. Down up and over and flick. Start at the top and  
all the way round.

P p Q q R r

Down back up and round. Round up down and flick. Down up and over.

S s T t U u

Start at the top and curve down. Down curve and cross. Down curve up down and flick.

V v W w X x

Down and up. Down up down and up. Down lift pencil and cross

Y y Z z

Down curve up down and curve. Straight down and straight.