



LITERACY POLICY

Committee: Children and Learning

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LOSELEY FIELDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

LITERACY POLICY

At Loseley Fields Primary School, we believe that literacy and communication are key life skills. Through the English curriculum, we will help children develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively through spoken and written language and equip them with the skills to become lifelong learners. We want children to enjoy and appreciate literature and its rich variety.

Literacy is at the heart of all children's learning. Literacy enables children both to communicate with others effectively for a variety of purposes and to examine their own and others' experiences, feelings and ideas, giving these order and meaning. Because literacy is central to children's intellectual, emotional and social development it has an essential role across the curriculum and helps pupils learning to be coherent and progressive.

Aims

The aims of teaching literacy are to enable children to:

- Be effective, competent communicators and good listeners;
- Express opinions, articulate feelings and formulate responses to a range of texts, both fiction and non-fiction using appropriate technical vocabulary;
- Foster an interest in words and their meanings, and to develop a growing vocabulary in both spoken and written form;
- Enjoy, engage with and understand a range of challenging and substantial texts;
- Be able to write in a variety of styles and forms, showing awareness of audience and purpose;
- Develop powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness in all areas of literacy;
- Use grammar and punctuation accurately;
- Understand spelling conventions;
- Develop the skill of drafting and editing to produce well-presented written work.

Teaching and learning

At Loseley Fields Primary School we teach literacy through rich texts that stimulate purposeful and meaningful learning. We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our lessons to 'hook' the children in to the book.

Our principle aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding. Children are taught daily reading and writing lessons where they are taught the necessary skills and knowledge through whole class, independent and guided activities. They have the opportunity to experience a wide range of high-quality texts and to support their work with a variety of resources such as dictionaries, thesauruses and word mats.

Clear objectives are set for each session and are shared with the pupils. Teachers differentiate according to the needs of the pupils and use intervention programmes for targeted support to both support and extend the learning (see appendix).

Literacy Planning

Literacy is a core subject in the national curriculum. We use objectives from the 2014 National Curriculum. Teachers use long term literacy planning for each year group which gives a clear overview of the rich texts which will be used to enhance the pupils learning and the key objectives that will be covered throughout the year. Class teachers complete a weekly plan for the teaching of Literacy. This lists the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes for each lesson, and gives details of how the lessons are to be taught. The class teacher shares these plans with support staff to ensure continuity.

Reading

We believe that all children should have the opportunity to become lifelong confident readers. We place great emphasis on immersing pupils in high quality literature that is at an appropriate level. Time is given to reading stories to the children in a variety of contexts such as to support a topic, within reading and writing as well as class books that are explored throughout a term.

Key objectives:

- to understand the nature and function of print;
- to experience success and enjoyment in reading;
- to expose pupils to a range of literature (from both present and past times) and cultures;
- to expose children to a range of vocabulary;
- to develop enthusiastic, independent and reflective readers;
- to increase their ability to read with fluency, accuracy and understanding and
- to equip pupils with research and retrieval skills.

The emphasis on teaching reading at Key Stage 1 is on using a balance of reading strategies. These include systematic phonics teaching, word recognition, phonic awareness, reading for

meaning, use of contextual clues etc. At Key Stage 2 the emphasis is on higher order reading skills including the use of inference, personal response to the text and comprehension.

Early reading skills build on the oral language and experience which children bring to the school. Nursery rhymes are learnt in the early years and the Bug Club Phonics programme is used to teach phonics systematically through the school. Daily Bug Club Phonics sessions are continued throughout KS1 and where needed into Lower Key Stage 2. The children are able to reinforce their phonics learning through phonically decodable reading books matched to their stage and the phonics programme.

The emphasis in the school is on quality literature and each class has a reading corner. These include a range of genre including fiction, non-fiction and poetry. The importance of picture books and short stories is recognised throughout the school. Children follow the Bug Club Phonics books and teachers correctly match the fully decodable books to each child's ability. Reading the correct level of text is essential in building children's confidence and to practise the correct reading skills for developing proficiency and fluency. Once they have progressed through the reading scheme, and reached the expected standard in Phonics, the children then move on to Rainbow Readers or Accelerated Reader levels. These books are matched to their Zone of Proximal Development to ensure an appropriate level of challenge. Their reading level is assessed using the Star Reading Test to ensure that the ZPD range is appropriate for the child. We have a well-stocked library, with all fiction and many non-fiction books aligned to AR to give the children a wide range of choices.

All children have an individual reading record in which to record the books they are reading and for parents, carers and teachers to comment on their progress. Children are supported in understanding what they are working on and to develop the skills in which to make progress. Teachers acknowledge in reading record books when a child has demonstrated the particular skill that they are working on. Adults working with children (guided reading, reading volunteer, interventions and in-class reading) write comments in journals to highlight a particular skill or focus for that child. All children take home reading books matched to the Bug Club phonics programme on a regular basis.

The Boosting Reading Potential programme is also used where appropriate, using techniques from Reading Recovery to support children in becoming better readers from Years 1 through to 6. On Track for Reading is an intervention specifically designed to address gaps identified through the PIRA assessment, and this is also used to support children in KS2 in developing specific reading skills such as retrieval and inference.

The school library contains a wide variety of non-fiction material enabling children to practise and develop their research skills.

Children are appointed as Reading Ambassadors to embed a respect for books and encourage children to explore a variety of texts. They do this through selecting texts for their class, writing book reviews and supporting reading initiatives and author events.

Guided Reading - At Loseley Fields we are committed to guided reading so that teachers can confidently teach both higher and lower reading skills. Additional time is allocated to guided reading in class timetables aside from daily Literacy lessons. Guided reading follows a whole class teaching model for most of the week (KS1 use more of a carousel model). Children are explicitly taught specific reading skills daily and work with the teacher at different points during the week. Teaching assistants are deployed accordingly to best support the learning. Bug Club Phonics and the National Curriculum is used to inform objectives for guided reading sessions and teachers keep a record of the coverage of reading skills that are explicitly taught. Texts for group sessions are selected at an instructional level and cover a range of reading genres.

During this time children will be:

- using a range of strategies when reading
- developing and consolidating their decoding skills
- developing their skills of reading aloud, using intonation, pace and expression
- developing their ability to talk about the text
- developing their ability to respond to the text using response tasks

Shared reading - Teachers demonstrate the skills of reading to the whole class. Texts are enjoyed first and foremost for their own sake. The style and content of the text type is then identified, reading with the eyes of a writer.

Regular story time – teachers reading aloud high-quality texts regularly, purely for the pleasure of the children losing themselves in stories and poems.

Assessment – Children are assessed on their phonological awareness every half term. In the summer of Year 1 children complete the Phonics Screening Check. Children in Y1-6 complete a standardised test (PIRA) each term to track attainment and progress. This information is used for target setting (see Assessment Policy).

Writing

Key objectives:

to understand the value of writing as a means of communicating;

to write with enjoyment, perseverance and a sense of purpose;

to become independent writers;

to organise and present their writing in a variety of ways;

to write for a variety of purposes and audiences;

to plan and redraft their writing;

to collaborate and read their work aloud;

to write with confidence, fluency and accuracy;

to recognise the importance of grammar and punctuation and

to structure their writing.

A successful piece of writing is the product of both compositional and transcriptional skills. Finding a balance between the teaching of these skills is essential (see appendix 3).

At Loseley Fields we acknowledge the difference between spoken and written language and where possible the writing is based on immersive activities such as reading, art or drama/talk for writing first. Discussion is encouraged both with the teacher, through open questions, and between pupils. A cross-curricular approach is often used so that work is within context and of interest to the children.

Great importance is placed on allowing the children to experience high quality texts. These high-quality texts link both reading and writing and are chosen from the Power of Reading scheme by CLPE. This provides suggestions for immersive experiences to help the children enter 'the world of the book' and to engage fully both with the text and the characters. They arrive at the point of writing with a clear idea of what they want to communicate.

Time is given to the development of work through planning, editing and publishing. This is based on the National Curriculum but also using 'The Writing Process' model (see below).

The teaching model

Making Choices

Identify the purpose, audience and form of writing.



Shared Reading / Writing

Look at examples of the text type.

Explore the language features using a functional approach to grammar.

e.g. what words are used for effect.



Plan work

Shared, guided or independent work.



Response

Discuss plan with response partners.



The Drafting Process

Modelled / Shared / Guided / Independent work

The paragraph is used to help organise children's writing.

e.g. look at the text features of an action paragraph.



Edit work

Check own work looking for specific features identified either in relation to their own targets or the learning objective. Then check with response partner if appropriate.



Publish work

Not just copying – work is adapted in some way,

E.g. change the genre from a recount to a newspaper report or poster.

In the early years developmental writing is encouraged which emphasises the value of experimentation when writing. At the same time handwriting and spelling are taught and practiced systematically.

Immersion/Experience – Most of our writing starts with a high-quality text, using elements of the Power of Reading approach. Teachers plan immersive experiences around the text, often using drama, art and music in order to ‘hook’ the children into the theme. Writing needs to be planned so that children are clear as to what they are trying to say. Writing should start from discussion, which helps to capture content and purpose. In KS1 & LKS2, elements of the Talk for Writing approach are also used, with children mapping their stories and orally rehearsing sentences prior to writing.

Modelled writing- Teachers explicitly model how to write for a given purpose. They ‘think aloud’ which supports children in understanding how or why a writer chooses a particular piece of language or punctuation. Spelling and grammatical concepts are drip-fed regularly during this time. This also allows teachers to model the proofreading and editing process. Often, modelled writing will follow a marked piece of work to support children in responding to and understanding feedback, as well as, editing their writing in order to improve it.

Shared Writing – Teachers work with the whole class to model, explore and discuss writing. Links between reading and writing are made explicit. Audience and purpose are discussed and specific objectives/steps to success are highlighted. During these sessions the teacher takes ideas from the children and models how to make decisions as a writer. Children are encouraged to question and hypothesise what they think should be included, and use reasoning to justify their opinion.

Guided Writing – The teacher intervenes at the point of the writing and supports children in planning, drafting and editing their own writing. The learning intention is carefully scaffolded so that pupils can concentrate on one particular aspect of their work that has been identified as an area for development. The children might revise and edit work in progress and differentiated support for particular groups is offered. Both shared and guided writing lead to independent writing.

Mid/final plenary – learning objectives and the steps to success are clearly displayed at the start of each lesson and these are referred to in the plenary to look at what has been learnt. The plenary is also used to give feedback, present work, ask questions and celebrate achievement. In KS2 the plenary is also used for children to peer or self-mark their work using the school’s highlighting system.

Handwriting – Handwriting needs to be both legible and accurate. Attention is first given to pencil grip, seating and paper position. Letters are formed with an emphasis on lead ins. Whilst formal handwriting sessions/activities with clear teaching points are given, lessons are

also used to develop work begun in other sessions. A joined script is encouraged from the start of Key stage 2 (for further information see handwriting policy)

Spelling – Children are encouraged to master spelling strategies progressively. The children are taught sounds through explicit teaching and this work is consolidated and continued throughout KS1 and LKS2. They are taught to discriminate and spell phonemes accurately, learning one way of spelling each long vowel sound initially such as ‘ai’ and ‘ee’ and then widening their knowledge to alternative spelling patterns such as ‘ay’ and ‘e_e’. Children are then taught to blend these sounds in order to accurately spell phonetic words. Tricky words spellings are taught in addition to phonetic words with children encouraged to use the letter names when articulating how to spell these words during shared/guided writing.

Children investigate word roots and use analogy to further develop accuracy. In KS2, the Babcock ‘Non Nonsense’ spelling scheme is used to help provide clear progression in these skills and coverage of word level objectives. These lessons revise previously taught patterns as well as introduce new concepts. Spellings are also often taken from the children’s own work so that they are relevant to their individual needs and are also a focus within literacy lessons i.e. shared writing. Children take a spelling activity home weekly (this could be an investigation). The priority is that these taught strategies are then transferred to the children’s own work and this is monitored carefully by the class teacher. Key trends are addressed through ‘drip feeding’ into literacy sessions.

Whiteboards are often used for whole class word and sentence level work. Words and spelling patterns are displayed in classes, word banks are used in lessons and children are encouraged to have a go at spelling or to use a dictionary before asking the teacher

Sentence level work - A process approach is used where children enjoy a quality text for its own sake – grammar arises naturally from the text and from their writing. Care is taken to ensure the systematic teaching of grammar and punctuation and coverage of sentence level objectives, which are explicitly taught. ‘

Children’s attention is directed to the text level features of different forms of writing. In non-fiction children focus on the features of a range of styles of writing including recounts, reports, explanations, persuasive writing, instructions and arguments. The children have these ‘steps to success’ in their books (see literacy marking policy).

Children are encouraged to rehearse their sentences first so as to avoid speech like writing. For example, they may be asked to say their sentence aloud or use a whiteboard before writing. Children consider the content of their writing first so that they don’t resort to dialogue or other methods to try and ‘pad’ their work out. Through Editing and Publishing their own work children develop their work further and are often asked to consider punctuation and grammar. Games and sentence combining activities are used to help teach complex sentences and use of connectives.

Assessment - Children are assessed throughout the year using 'Writing Grids' which outline the framework for each year group (Year 1 and 6 use the end of year expectations that are outlined in the end of key stage assessment framework). Teachers refer to children's books in order to make a judgement. It is important to look at a range of writing forms as well as a mixture of independent and guided writing. Work is moderated at least every term in phase teams to ensure consistency in terms of teacher's judgements and also twice a year in a whole school staff meeting. Teacher also moderate once a term across GEP schools. Target review meetings with all class teachers take place during the Spring and Summer term to carefully monitor children's progress and inform future development points (see Assessment and marking policy).

Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas

The skills that children develop in literacy lessons are linked to, and applied in, every subject of our curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work at school. Literacy links are encouraged in every foundation subject and made where appropriate.

Inclusion

At our school we teach literacy to all children regardless of their ability and individual needs. Literacy forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our literacy teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils (including those who access the LAN Centre) to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents and those learning English as an additional language. We take all reasonable steps to achieve this.

Assessments are used to identify children who are not making the expected progress in literacy and they are supported through small group reading and writing intervention programmes.

Resources

There is a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries, thesauruses, word mats and other writing aids and a class library. The library contains a range of books to support children's individual research and encourage reading for pleasure.

Reading scheme books are colour banded and kept centrally.

Monitoring

SLT and Literacy Leads carry out regular monitoring across the school. This includes: formal observations, book scrutiny, pupil progress meetings and learning walks.

Appendix 1

Interventions

Teachers and teaching assistants plan programmes together and monitor progress for these pupils.

The following intervention programmes are currently used across Keys Stage One:

Bug Club Phonics Intervention

Better Reading Partnership- decoding support

The following intervention programmes are currently used across Key Stage Two:

Better Reading Partnership- decoding support

Bug Club phonics Year 3/4

'On Track for Reading' - reading skills

'Fresh Start'- year 5/6 program encouraging reading and writing fluency.

Appendix 2

Phonics

Children will learn:

grapheme–phoneme correspondences (that is, the alphabetic code) in a clearly defined, incremental sequence

synthesise (blend) phonemes (sounds) in order all through a word to read it

to segment words into their constituent phonemes for spelling

that blending and segmenting are reversible processes

Teaching Phonics in EYFS and KS1

Phonics is taught daily following Bug Club Phonics progression.

Phonics lesson

Review sounds and words previously taught

Teach new sound or trick word

Practice blending reading words and sentences

Practice spelling words using magnetic letters (EYFS) or sound cards (Year 1)

Practice writing the new sound or writing captions/sentences

Lessons are fast paced, varied and engaging.

All children are actively involved in phonics lessons

Knowledge is constantly reviewed and reinforced

Pupils are given opportunities to apply what they have learnt in guided reading or when they read aloud to an adult.

Children are assessed individually half termly and those who are falling behind are identified early and catch up is put in place

Phonics KS2

All children in year 3 are assessed at the beginning of the year, to ensure that their phonic knowledge is embedded and the class teacher is made aware of any gaps. In year 3, phonics is taught in the first half term to those who need it and then phonic interventions are organised in small group work or 1-1 for the children who are still not secure with all their sounds. These interventions will continue until pupils reach the expected level.

If further intervention is needed at Yrs 5 & 6, the RWInc 'Fresh Start' reading intervention has an element of phonics instruction to revise those key GPCs, enabling decoding and comprehension.