



# Lewknor Church of England Primary School

## English Policy

### January 2022 – January 2025



OXFORD DIOCESAN  
BOARD OF EDUCATION

### Introduction

At Lewknor C of E Primary School we believe that language and literacy are fundamental to the overall development of the child and their access to all aspects of the curriculum. We aim to develop the abilities of all children in our school to communicate their ideas effectively in speech and writing. We also believe that by developing the reading and listening skills in our pupils they will become effective communicators. There is a sharp focus on ensuring children gain the language comprehension necessary to read. The curriculum promotes, and provides many opportunities for, reading a wide range of texts.

### Intent

We aim to develop in all children, irrespective of background, race or gender:

- a love for reading where pupils choose to read frequently for enjoyment and information
- the ability to read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- a strong command of the written and spoken word in order to communicate and respond effectively
- a high awareness of audience and the ability to adapt their language and style for different purposes/genres and audiences
- an interest in words and their meanings to acquire a wide vocabulary
- a good understanding of grammar and punctuation
- a legible fluent handwriting style
- the confidence and competence to produce high quality writing
- their powers of imagination, inventiveness, critical awareness and apply these skills across the curriculum
- provide a language-rich environment that promotes a culture of reading and writing
- develop in children a love of books by exposing them to a wide variety of quality books
- teach the basic skills of writing daily – grammar, spelling, handwriting and punctuation – to liberate creativity
- foster in children the confidence, desire and ability to express their views and opinions both orally and in writing
- enable all children to reach their full potential in becoming literate pupils by the time they leave at the end of year 6
- Teachers have identified pupils vulnerable to achievement. Interventions are put in place and these pupils make accelerated progress

### Implementation

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study (2014) and in the Communication and Language and Literacy sections of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021).

In the Foundation Stage (Reception), 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 opportunities to communicate.

At Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2), children learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They learn to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They learn to 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 (Years 3 - 6), children learn to change 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 explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works.

The Governing Body receives regular reports on the progress of English provision.

## **Subject Organisation**

Teachers plan and teach a variety of genres as well as key grammar, spelling and punctuation skills. Each class from Foundation Stage to Year 6 has an English working wall that is used to display work, which shows progression across the school.

## **Approaches to Speaking and Listening**

We believe that speaking and listening skills are an intrinsic part of the writing process. A child needs to be able to say a sentence before they can write it. To help develop this skill, teachers are expected to plan oral activities into their weekly planning so that children have the opportunity to think and say their sentences before they begin writing.

Children are also given many opportunities to retell familiar stories and poems and are expected to know them by heart. This gives them the chance to orally practise using the language of a writer/poet. Each year group has performance poetry units throughout the year. During these units children are expected to perform to a live audience and to know the poem off by heart.

We champion creative writing and welcome children to create their own poetry. We celebrate all writing including poetry on our website.

## **Approaches to Reading**

Children in the Foundation Stage class and Key Stage 1 take home each week several levelled books from school according to their ability. Parents are encouraged to hear their child read the book and then record how they have got on. This encourages teacher - parent communication and involves adults in the learning process. In Key Stage 2 children choose books to take home and read. Children who still require a more structured approach to reading have access to the levelled reading scheme. Throughout the Key Stage children become more independent in recording what they have read in their reading journals. However, we still encourage all readers to share a book at home with their family members for at least 10 minutes per night. We believe that this not only helps to develop inferential skills, but also supports a lifelong love of reading.

### Reading for enjoyment

We recognise that reading is a core tool for life and we aim to foster a love for reading in our children. We have identified the need for children to be heard read and to be read to on a daily basis and throughout the curriculum. Children should be exposed to quality texts and vocabulary above their own reading abilities. Through reading, pupils are introduced to new vocabulary that can then be used in their own writing and speech.

## **Phonics**

Phonics at Lewknor Primary school is taught by following the Read Write Inc scheme. Our daily phonics sessions are fun, involving lots of speaking, listening and games. The emphasis is on children's active participation. They learn to use their phonic knowledge for reading and writing activities and in their independent play.

### **Read Write Inc**

Read Write Inc (RWI) is a phonics based programme which helps children learn to read whilst also developing a wide range of vocabulary and encouraging a love of stories.

### **Who is RWI for?**

Children begin the RWI programme in Early Years and will remain on the programme until completed. Our aim is for most children to be off the scheme by midyear in Year 2, however this differs according to pupils' individual learning needs. At Lewknor we continue to support children in KS2, who may need phonics interventions or catch up programmes.

## How will it work?

Early Years children will generally be taught a sound a day and will be assessed regularly by their class teacher. When they have reached an appropriate level they will be grouped according to their reading level, when they will start reading and writing alongside learning the new sounds. In Years 1 -2 all children will be assessed regularly until they have successfully completed the programme.

## Reading

Fred the Frog puppet plays an important role in our RWI lessons. Fred is only able to speak in sounds, not whole words. We call this Fred Talk. For example, Fred would say 'm-a-t', we would say 'mat'. Fred talk helps children read unfamiliar words by pronouncing each sound in the word one at a time. Children can start blending sounds into words as soon as they know a small group of letters well. During lessons, children are taught to hear sounds and blend them together in a sequence to make a word. We start with blending oral sounds, then progress to reading the letters and blending them together to read the word.

## Order of teaching

In RWI Set 1 sounds are the initial letter sounds. They are taught in the following order:

**m, a, s, d, t, l, n, p, g, o, c, k, u, b, f, e, l, h, sh, r, j, v, y, w, th, z, ch, qu, x, ng, nk**

There are 12 Set 2 sounds that are made up of two or three letters which represent just one sound, e.g. 'ay' as in 'play', 'ee' as in 'tree' and 'igh' as in 'high'. Each Set 2 sound has a list of green words linked to it, so your child can 'sound out' and 'sound blend' words containing the new speed sound they have just learnt, for example 's-p-r-ay = spray'.

When learning Set 3 sounds they will be taught that there are more ways in which the same sounds are written, e.g. 'ee' as in 'tree' and 'ea' as in 'tea'.

## Nonsense Words (alien words)

As children build up their knowledge of sounds they are able to apply their decoding skills to any unfamiliar word may it be real or nonsense. During lessons each day, children will practise their decoding skills by sounding out the letters in 'alien' words'. As children are unable to rely on existing knowledge of real words, they instead have to use their lettersound knowledge. This is an important part of the Phonics Screening Check children complete at the end of Year 1.

## Storybooks

In RWI children read storybooks that are closely matched to their developing phonic knowledge. The storybooks consist of green words linked to the sounds they have been learning, red words (words that are not decodeable) and challenge words to extend children's vocabulary.

## Spelling

Children are taught to use their Fred fingers to help them write words. The children say the word out loud and break it down into their individual sounds. When using Fred Fingers each finger represents one sound. If a word has 3 sounds, children hold up 3 fingers, 4 sounds 4 fingers etc. Children then pinch each finger as they say the sounds needed in the word before writing the letters that represent each sound.

Children use their phonic knowledge to become confident spellers. All year groups have regular Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar sessions during which new words, grouped together by common spelling patterns, are investigated and practised. We make sure children have plenty of time to practise and apply their new vocabulary knowledge in their English lessons. We also encourage the use of a dictionary and a thesaurus as well as other independent strategies to ensure children feel confident to take responsibility for expanding their own vocabulary.

We understand that weekly home spelling lists and tests is not always a model of learning that suits all children, nor does it always produce confident, successful spellers and writers in the long run. We use regular formative assessment strategies to closely monitor children's progress, and adapt our teaching strategies accordingly. Our overall aim is to expand a child's vocabulary and children learn to spell by actively exploring, reading and writing new words each week. The proof is ultimately in the children's writing, which we love to see full of ambitious language which children are excited to use!

## **Guided Reading**

Guided reading sessions take place four times a week. Children are grouped according to ability; each group has one guided session per week with the teacher who plans and assesses each child's ability. This is then recorded onto a guided reading record sheet and is used as a continuous monitoring method to ensure children are in correct groups and are making good progress.

Guided reading sessions should consist of a carousel of word and comprehension skills:  
handwriting  
spelling  
reading with the teacher to develop comprehension skills orally  
follow up task linked to the book they are reading

## **Comprehension**

In EYFS children are taught how to use a range of texts to find information, how to form their own opinions of a text and encouraged to share their ideas in a range of situations.

From Year 1 through to the end of KS2 pupils are taught specific skills which enable them to decode the meaning of a text and how to form and express their own personal opinions and make comparisons. Teachers use high-order questioning skills to ensure children have a deeper understanding of a text. It is expected that teachers carefully plan their questions before a reading session to ensure a range of question types (both literal and inferential).

In both Key Stages, children will also get the chance to apply written comprehension skills by reading a text and answering questions that need written answers.

## **Approaches to Writing**

Children are taught writing skills through a creative curriculum, which gives pupils regular opportunities to apply and practise skills across a range of subjects. Our pupils:

- write in a variety of contexts in discrete literacy lessons, topics and cross-curricular writing
- study language through shared texts
- learn compositional skills:
  - Drafting
  - Grammar
  - Punctuation

Sometimes writing is planned so that children can follow the process through incorporating modelling, scaffolding, independent writing, re-drafting and producing a final draft.

## **Making Progress**

Children are given individual writing targets, which are stuck in their English books, and they are expected to work on these in all areas of the curriculum. The teacher and pupil monitor these writing targets daily and new targets are set when necessary and according to individual needs.

**Handwriting** – See the Handwriting Policy.

## **Inclusion**

We recognise that there are children of widely different abilities in all classes therefore we provide learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways:

- setting common tasks which are open ended and can have a variety of responses
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty for more able children
- grouping children by ability and setting different tasks for each group
- providing resources of varying complexity depending on the need of the child
- providing opportunities for individual and small group work for those pupils who have been identified as requiring additional support

Where pupils do not make good progress, interventions are put into place to ensure that gaps in learning are addressed. Where pupils show a talent in English they are provided with additional support in order to ensure their learning moves forward.

## **Assessment**

### Reading

Teachers assess children's reading in a variety of contexts (both informal and formal) continuously. Some examples of reading assessment opportunities include:

- on-going teacher assessment during daily lessons
- guided reading sessions
- New Salford reading test
- end of key stage and non-statutory test scores

### Writing

Progress is monitored on an on-going basis in English lessons. Each child writes an unaided piece of writing during assessment week, at least three times a year. This piece of writing, and all other writing completed by the children on a day-to-day basis, is assessed against criteria based on end-of-year expectations.

### Reporting

Children's progress is formally reported to parents/guardians in the summer term and is discussed with parents/guardians at parent evenings.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Headteacher will:

- provide support by encouraging staff and praising good practice
- monitor learning and teaching through lesson observations
- give feedback to teachers following lesson observations
- support staff development through in-service training and provision of resources

The English Co-ordinator will:

- monitor the provision of English in the school e.g. through the scrutiny of children's work
- ensure continuity by moderating throughout the school
- keep up-to-date with new developments and keep staff informed
- formulate, maintain and review the English Policy and English action plan (see School Development Plan)
- track progress in English and identify areas for development

The Class teacher will:

- be responsible for the teaching of English
- differentiate for each child so that each child makes excellent progress
- assess children's work in order to detail future planning