



**English at Knighton Mead: Policy 2023-2024**  
**Reviewed: September 2023**

**INTENT:**

At Knighton Mead Primary Academy, our English curriculum is designed to develop children's love of reading, writing and discussion and prepare our learners for life as successful, valuable and socially responsible citizens. We inspire an appreciation of our rich and varied literary heritage and a habit of reading widely and often. We nurture a culture where children take pride in their writing, can write clearly, imaginatively and accurately and adapt their language and style for a range of contexts. We inspire children to be confident in the art of speaking and listening and to use discussion to communicate and further their learning in all areas of the curriculum.

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. Our carefully sequenced, broad and balanced curriculum, underpinned by inclusive practice, aims to provide our children with the opportunity to build on their experiences in order to achieve their goals. We believe that a secure basis in English skills is crucial to a high quality education across the curriculum. We whole-heartedly 'promote high standards of English by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.' (National Curriculum 2014)

**National Curriculum Aims**

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

**IMPLEMENTATION:**

Our English curriculum is implemented using rich texts and engaging pupils with a cross-curricular approach. Texts are chosen to link with the topics pupils are learning about and these are used as a springboard to inspire pupils to read and write. We believe that choosing the right context and starting point to engage our children in their learning is vital in fostering a love for reading and writing.

Our English curriculum aims to provide many purposeful opportunities for reading, writing and discussion. We want all of our pupils to be proficient readers, writers, spellers and speakers, who can transfer their English skills to other curriculum subjects and who are prepared for the next steps in their education. Our English lessons develop pupils' spoken language, reading, writing, grammar and vocabulary, teaching them how to write within specific genres and which structural and language features to include to be successful. Example texts are used to start this process to enable pupils to use other similar writing as models for their own. Lessons also focus on teaching specific spelling, grammar and punctuation skills to enable our pupils to apply the skills they have been taught to their extended writing and writing across the curriculum. We teach our pupils to speak clearly, to convey their ideas fluently and confidently and to ask questions. Teachers use a wide variety of resources as appropriate to their classes, but also ensure that cross curricular links with concurrent topic work are woven into the programme of study.

### **Reading:**

Throughout Key Stage 1 and 2 we teach English using high-quality picture books, novels, poetry and non-fiction engaging pupils using a wide range of teaching approaches. Children are immersed into the text through music, art, drama, discussion and role-play. Other approaches include responding to illustrations, 'Book Talk', story mapping and book making.

Our pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure and to read widely through our reading scheme and frequent use of the Reading Corridor. Pupils at Knighton continue to develop a range of reading skills, as well as a love of reading through the Accelerated Reader programme and the use of focus fiction, non-fiction and poetry texts during tri-weekly reading comprehension sessions. Pupils read books at their own reading and interest levels, enabling a greater sense of enjoyment and success. There is a quizzing element to the programme to encourage challenge and interest directly linked to the books pupils have read. Our Reading Comprehension sessions cover a wide variety of both fiction and non-fiction texts and help to advance the children's comprehension strategies.

We use a wide variety of quality texts and resources to motivate and inspire our children. For our early readers and pupils who have not yet gained a sufficient understanding of phonics program, books are matched to the grapheme-phoneme correspondences pupils have been taught through Read Write Inc. Those in EYFS and Year 1 who have sufficient phonic ability, continue to receive phonically decodable books but are also allocated a PM benchmarked book. In year 2, all pupils who are ready, are placed on the Accelerated Reader programme and regularly assessed so the books they are reading are matched to their ZPD range which corresponds to their reading ability.

We also provide enrichment opportunities, such as participating in Book Week and celebrating World Book Day and running poetry and creative writing competitions. This ensures that children benefit from access to positive role models from the local and wider

locality as well as being inspired by what surrounds them. These additional experiences help us to enrich the curriculum even further and continue to deepen the children's learning.

### **Writing:**

All children from Reception to Year 6 are provided with many opportunities to develop and apply their writing skills across the curriculum. Initially, pupils need to be able to form the letters needed and then be able to express one's ideas using these letters. Through shared and guided writing opportunities, we equip children to develop the skills of writing clearly and legibly. When the child is confident with these basic skills, they work towards being able to write with a greater sense of purpose and learn to organize their writing according to this purpose. Children are equipped with the necessary tools to do this, being given daily opportunities to focus on spelling and/or grammatical structures.

We develop our pupils writing skills so that they have the stamina and ability to write at length, applying the skills set out in the English National Curriculum. To support children in moving towards independent writing we provide a wide range of activities including the use of film and imagery, music, ICT, modelled, shared and guided writing, peer assessment and discussion. We provide varied and exciting opportunities for writing for purpose and we encourage pupils to see themselves as authors and poets. We promote the importance of written work by providing a writing purpose and opportunities for children's writing to be read aloud and listened to by an audience.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, writing is taught through Read, Write, Inc. and in addition to this, cross curricular writing opportunities are planned into the wider curriculum. In Key Stage 2, writing is delivered through a thematic teaching approach. This approach enables all children to experience a wide and varied range of high-quality text types and ensures skills are embedded through teaching across the curriculum. In addition, it enables children to build on prior learning, improve language acquisition and experience a broader and diverse range of texts.

Our approach to the teaching of writing is underpinned by an engaging approach which allows the children to read as a reader, read as a writer and write as a reader. This approach allows children of all abilities to develop the skills to become confident readers, speakers and then, over time, transfer these skills into becoming confident writers. As they develop, children are encouraged to see writing as a powerful means of self – expression and a creative form of communication. Pupils in time develop the stamina and skills to write at length, with accurate spelling and punctuation.

### **Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation:**

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar strategies are taught explicitly in short interactive and investigative sessions in English. Pupils are taught key rules and strategies with opportunities to analyse how other writers have applied these skills to model texts and extracts in order for our pupils to apply these skills independently and effectively to their own writing. Pupils are taught to recognise which strategies they can use to improve their own spelling. They are encouraged to apply learnt strategies to their independent writing.

In KS1, children learn spelling largely through their daily phonic sessions. In KS2 children are taught spelling through discrete sessions each week. The teaching and learning of grammar

and punctuation is embedded within the English teaching sequence. This means, grammar and punctuation skills and knowledge are built into a sequence of preparatory work which is then applied within longer pieces of writing during the teaching sequence. As they become more confident, children are encouraged to check spellings using a dictionary and to expand their vocabulary using a thesaurus.

### **Handwriting:**

Cursive handwriting is taught with a sequential and progressive approach with teachers and teaching assistants modelling the handwriting style. We believe that children's self-esteem and pride in their work can be raised by good quality presentation. Handwriting sessions are taught discretely. Resources such as handwriting slopes and pencil grips are provided when needed. We strive for our children to correctly form their letters, joining with a cursive style with pupils having good handwriting habits so that they can write fluently and legibly by the end of KS2. Children start by learning how to form their letters in the early years. Then, pupils are introduced to pre-cursive style writing in year 2 before continuing to develop through cursive script from year 3 onwards, including learning joining techniques.

During lessons, we ensure that our pupils sit, position their paper/book and hold their pen/pencil correctly using their other hand to hold their work firmly. It is important that in the Early Years and at Key Stage 1, children are observed closely during the lesson to ensure that letter formation is correct and corrected if needed. In addition to specific handwriting lessons, children are expected to apply their learning in their exercise books and to show care for the presentation of their work. Children are provided with an opportunity each year to earn their pen license by showing consistent, legible handwriting across all areas of the curriculum.

### **Spoken Language:**

This underpins the development of reading and writing and is vital for pupils' development across all aspects of the school curriculum. We provide our pupils with a wide range of opportunities to hear and use good quality and adventurous vocabulary, focusing also on variety. Correct, standard English is always modelled by the teachers and teaching assistants. Children are encouraged to ask questions, discuss in pairs and groups and to use conventions for discussion as well as debate. Opportunities for drama are sought throughout our curriculum as it is recognised that the skills that are developed through this medium are unique. Our school uses the Voice 21 Oracy-rich approach to learning.

### **Inclusion**

All children receive quality first literacy teaching daily that teaches to the top and activities are differentiated accordingly. In addition, where identified pupils are considered to require targeted support to enable them to work towards age-appropriate expectations, effective intervention programmes will be implemented in order to accelerate learning. Teachers and teaching assistants work alongside each other to monitor and evaluate progress of these pupils.

There will be further support for pupils who have been placed on the SEND register and have SEND support, which will be in addition to and different from English teaching, based on

specific needs. Most able pupils who are placed on the register for English will be planned for in line with the school policy. The needs of children with English as an additional language will be met through tailored planning and targeted support, as appropriate. Differentiation in planning will also target EAL pupils. This is supported by our equal opportunities policy.

Our disadvantaged pupils also receive a range of different support and opportunities to develop both cultural capital and to help make progress in line with non-disadvantaged pupils. These include: Specific monitoring and tracking within pupil progress meetings and internal school data; additional learning support when required; and access to enrichment opportunities.

### **Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

Assessment is carried out in line with the school's Assessment Policy. Children are assessed on entering school and are formally assessed at the end of each key stage. In addition, children complete a phonics screening check at the end of year one. Periodic teacher assessment level judgements are informed using a range of children's work. These judgements are moderated through staff and phase meetings. Analysis of assessment data is used to set whole school numerical English targets. Children's individual targets are linked to the school target and are regularly reviewed at scheduled Pupil Progress Meetings.

### **Staff Development**

A range of CPD models are used including whole staff/phase meetings, peer to peer coaching and individual development. Teachers are expected to keep up to date with subject knowledge and use current materials that are available in school or on educational websites. Training needs are identified as a result of whole school monitoring and evaluation, performance management and through induction programmes. The English strategic leader will arrange for relevant advice and information, such as feedback from courses or newsletters, to be disseminated. Where necessary the English strategic leader organises school-based training.

### **Resources**

A range of resources are available in school to enhance learning in English across the school. RWI speed chart and speed sounds support the teaching in all year groups along with levelled texts. Writing first aid kits are provided for all children and are regularly added to.

In EYFS and Y1, RWI phonically decodable books are used in line with the RWI programme of study. Phonics trackers are used to assess children's phonics sound knowledge and reading skills to ensure they continue to make progress. Groups are assessed every half term (6 weeks) and children are moved accordingly to either accelerate progress or provide further consolidation. Any children who are not making sufficient progress will be given targeted intervention or additional 1:1 support. Once children have developed a sufficient level of reading skills, benchmarking assessment is used alongside this to support development in reading comprehension. Children who are identified from this assessment as needing

further support are enrolled onto 'Boosting Reading @ Primary' (BRP) which is a one-to-one reading intervention to develop independent reading and comprehension skills.

From Y2 to Y6, once children have reached grey level books in RWI, AR books ranging from 0.5-6.5 are provided for all children. In KS2, any children that failed to pass the phonics screening check or who are new to speaking English, are enrolled on Fresh Start phonics programme as an accelerated intervention to develop phonetic knowledge and reading skills.

In addition to this, each class has a variety of books that are linked to their topic to expose the children to a broad variety of texts types and authors and each class is equipped with a class library to promote reading for pleasure.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

English is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team.

The focus for any monitoring activities is linked to the English strategic plan and school development plan. Evaluation of the impact of teaching and learning then informs priorities.

Monitoring activities will include:

- Scrutiny of planning and books.
- Pupil voice (interview.)
- Learning Walks.
- Formal observations.
- Analysis of data.
- RWI assessments.
- Benchmarking
- Governors will work alongside the English Strategic Leader to ensure the policy is being followed to successfully deliver the planned outcomes.

### **INTENDED IMPACT:**

Children leave Knighton Mead Primary Academy as happy, confident learners who have developed a love of reading and writing with the key skills and knowledge necessary for the next stage of their learning. They have high aspirations and are confident in the art of speaking and listening, able to successfully use discussion to communicate and further their learning.