



# Parkgate Primary School English Policy

**January 2025**

Date for review: January 2026



# **Parkgate Primary School**

## **English Policy – 2024-2025**

This English policy needs to be read alongside other school policies and guidance documents including:

- The 'Story of English' File
- Phonics Policy
- Teaching and Learning Curriculum Planning and Assessment Policy
- Feedback Policy
- Early Years Foundation Stage Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Single Equality Plan
- Foundation Curriculum Theme File
- PSHCE Policy

This policy also should be read alongside the DfE National Curriculum in England (2014) and Standards and Testing Agency (Draft) guidance materials.

### **Rationale**

The DfE National Curriculum (2014) clearly states that developing children's language and literacy skills are 'essential to [them] participating fully as a member society'.

'Teachers should develop pupil's spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for pupils, understanding the language provides access to the whole curriculum. Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects.'

### ***DfE National Curriculum (2014)***

At Parkgate Primary School we recognise that without effective communication, language and literacy skills, children will not develop as learners. We know that we have a duty to ensure that English teaching is a priority and we recognise that the skills learnt in English need to be used and applied across the whole school curriculum to prepare children for the next stage in their education and for lifelong learning.

Parkgate Primary School is an inclusive school. We have high expectations for every child. We use a range of whole class, guided group and one-to-one teaching to support children to meet or exceed the national standards for reading and writing detailed in the EYFS curriculum, DfE English National Curriculum (2014) and end of Key Stage (Draft) Performance Descriptors.

We agree with the statement in the DfE National Curriculum (2014) that, 'pupils...who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised'. Therefore, class teachers plan learning opportunities to ensure all children make at least expected progress from their starting point, including children identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities outlined in the SEND code of practice.

To ensure all our children achieve well we recognise the importance of:

- Quality first teaching and learning
- The effective use of formative assessment
- An engaging and enriching curriculum
- Good oracy skills interwoven through all year groups and subjects

***Further guidance and support for the assessment, planning and teaching of English is outlined in school's 'The Story of English' files.***

## **Spoken Language**

'Pupils should be taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently in Standard English. They should learn to justify their ideas with reasons; ask questions to check understanding; develop vocabulary and build knowledge; negotiate; evaluate and build on the ideas of others and select the appropriate register for effective communication. They should give well-structured descriptions and explanations and develop their understanding through speculating, hypothesising and exploring ideas. This will enable them to clarify their thinking as well as organise their ideas for writing.' *DfE National Curriculum (2014)*

At Parkgate Primary School we understand the importance of oracy. As part of the 'Voice 21' programme, we encourage all our children to speak clearly and confidently and articulate their views and opinions. We teach children the need to express themselves orally in an appropriate way, matching their style and response to audience and purpose. We also teach children to listen and respond, give and receive instructions, and develop the oral skills to participate effectively both socially and in group and class discussions across the whole curriculum.

The DfE National Curriculum (2014) states that, 'spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing'. At Parkgate Primary School we believe all children are entitled to an enriching curriculum that immerses them in the rich cultural heritage of stories and quality literature. The study and enjoyment of quality texts are at the heart of our English curriculum. We aim to develop children's deeper understanding of the English language and their literary heritage through the explicit teaching of 'story-telling' and learning quality texts 'by heart' as part of the 'Talk for Writing' teaching sequence.

At Parkgate Primary School we teach and promote spoken language using a range of strategies and approaches including:

- Screening children to identify possible speech, language and auditory difficulties and provide specialist support, where appropriate.
- Planning learning opportunities across the whole curriculum that expect and encourage full and active participation by all children.
- Promoting and encouraging the use of Standard English, where appropriate for audience and purpose.
- Encouraging talk at home through home learning opportunities.
- Using 'Talk Partners' and a range of other speaking and listening tools across the whole curriculum to develop children's talk, thinking and social skills, and ensure all children are positively engaged in their learning.
- Using the '**Talk for Writing**' story-telling approach where children learn quality stories, poems and non-fiction texts 'by heart'. Children are then expected to use and apply the learnt language features and structures, embedded in the quality texts, in their own speech and writing, where appropriate.
- Using '**Book Talk**' in Shared and Guided Reading sessions to develop children's oral, emotional and spiritual responses to quality texts.
- Planning regular opportunities for structured talk across the whole curriculum to develop children's social, moral, cultural, emotional and spiritual responses, particularly in PSHCE, RE, Family Group sessions and class 'Circle Time' if and when appropriate.
- Ensuring regular opportunities to develop children's performance skills for a range of audiences, for example through Class and Family Group presentations and school drama productions.
- Making use of drama and role play opportunities throughout the whole curriculum.
- Planning class and group discussions and debates across the whole curriculum.
- Providing opportunities to take part in public speaking competitions and community events.
- Using the School Council and regular 'pupil voice' consultations to inform the school's self-evaluation and improve overall provision.

## **Reading**

The DfE National Curriculum (2014) states that, 'pupils should be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose and be encouraged to read for pleasure.' Reading is singled out as of extreme importance since through it, 'pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually'. Reading allows pupils to 'acquire knowledge' and to 'build on what they already know'.

Schools are expected to have library facilities and support and encourage reading at home.

The 2014 English Curriculum divides reading skills into two dimensions:

- Word Reading / Decoding (Phonics)
- Language Comprehension (both listening and reading)

At Parkgate Primary School we recognise that both of these dimensions are essential to success and achievement in reading. These areas are also clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, writing, spelling, grammar and vocabulary.

At Parkgate Primary School we understand that reading is a developmental process and part of life-long learning and we encourage and praise children at every stage of it.

*All children are entitled to enjoy the very best children's literature therefore we have developed a 'Reading Passport' programme across key stage 2 which exposes children to a range of high-quality texts through a set of progressive reading challenges. (Coming Spring 25)*

*Further guidance on the teaching of reading and phonics is detailed in the 'Story of English' file.*

At Parkgate Primary School we teach reading through a range of strategies and approaches including:

- Daily synthetic phonics sessions in the Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Lower Key Stage 2 (where needed) using the Oxford Reading Tree 'Floppy's Phonics' Scheme. (See Phonics Policy)
- Weekly Guided Reading sessions in Key Stage 1 with the class teacher to assess and develop children's language comprehension skills, fluency and application of phonic knowledge. (See the 'Story of English' file).
- Mapping National curriculum Core Content Domains into our 'Parkgate Reading Roles'. These roles ensure a skills-based approach to the teaching of reading beginning in year 2. Teachers plan appropriate reading sessions based around the roles for KS1 and KS2 in order to enable children to at least meet age-related expectations. (See *Story of English file*)
- Roles include:
  - Key stage 1
    - Translator
    - Reporter
    - Detective
    - Weather forecaster
  - Key Stage 2 *all of the above inc.*
    - Author
    - Interpreter
    - Librarian
    - Editor
- Tightly focussed fortnightly comprehension teaching across Key Stage 1 and 2, exposing pupils to 'test style' questions and modelling high quality answers.
- Regular supported and one-to-one reading with additional adults to practise children's language comprehension skills, develop fluency and apply phonic knowledge.
- Regular Shared Reading sessions to study quality literature where the class teacher models enjoyment and fluency as well as exploring language comprehension skills, analysing language and grammatical features and applying phonic knowledge, where appropriate.
- Developing children's independent reading skills and a passion for reading at home and in school by using the school's '*Accelerated Reader*' library (KS2), reading scheme (KS1) and a range of whole school initiatives such as 'Golden Tokens', World Book Day, Poetry Week and daily access to our Reading Caravans during lunch times.
- Enjoying a range of quality stories, poems and non-fiction texts through: daily 'story time', Shared Reading, 'Book Talk', 'Talk for Writing' units and cross-curricular themes.
- Encouraging and promoting children to read for pleasure through daily protected reading time, reading partners, silent sustained reading, listening to adults read aloud and home learning opportunities.
- Locating and using information across the whole curriculum, including the use of ICT, where appropriate.

- Providing additional support for children identified as not making expected progress in their reading to ensure they catch up and keep up through the use of effective targeted interventions such as: one-to-one or small group work and the use of specific digital programs such as 'Fluency Zoo' (in years 3 and 4) and the sub sections of 'Literacy Gold' like 'Reading Unlocked', 'Reading Fluency' and 'Comprehension Superstars' in years 5 and 6.

### **Writing, Grammar and Spelling**

The DfE National Curriculum (2014) states that pupils should:

- Develop the stamina and skills to write at length.
- Use accurate spelling and punctuation.
- Be grammatically correct.
- Write in a range of ways and purposes including narratives, explanations, descriptions, comparisons, summaries and evaluations.
- Write to support their understanding and consolidation of what they have heard or read.

The DfE English Curriculum (2014) divides writing skills into two dimensions:

- **Transcription** (spelling and handwriting)
- **Composition** (articulating ideas in speech and writing)

We recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through a variety of strategies and approaches. We recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, reading, spelling, grammar and vocabulary.

***Further guidance on the teaching of writing, grammar and spelling is detailed in the 'Story of English' file.***

At Parkgate Primary School we teach writing, grammar and spelling through a range of strategies and approaches including:

- Daily synthetic phonics sessions in the Early Years and Key Stage 1 using the Oxford Reading Tree 'Floppy Phonics' Scheme. ***(See Phonics Policy)***.
- Regular, timetabled handwriting lessons using the 'Kinetic Letters' handwriting scheme linked to DfE National Curriculum (2014) age-related expectations. Children's specific needs are identified through the class teacher's ongoing day-to-day assessment and marking. ***(See 'Kinetic Letters' scheme for further guidance on the teaching of handwriting)***.
- Regular, timetabled spelling lessons using the 'Spelling Shed' spelling scheme linked to DfE National Curriculum (2014) age-related expectations. Children's specific needs are identified through the class teacher's ongoing day-to-day assessment and feedback.
- Grammar and punctuation sessions linked to DfE National Curriculum (2014) age-related expectations interwoven through weekly English lessons. These can be stand-alone or taught as part of a wider unit of work ***(See the 'Story of English' file for further detail on progression in grammar and punctuation)***.
- Using the Talk for Writing teaching sequence and approach to plan, teach and assess literacy units.
  - **Imitation** – Children learn a model text through 'story-telling', using actions, story maps, drama and role play.
  - **Innovation** – Class teachers and children use the learnt model text to tell and write their own innovations.
  - **Invention** – Children use and apply the learning from the learnt model texts and wider reading to create their own inventions, including the writing of non-fiction text types across the whole curriculum.
- Class teachers adapting and creating model texts for children to learn. These include the specific language and grammatical features that children will need to explore and use in their speech and writing to achieve or exceed age-related expectations in writing as detailed in the DfE National Curriculum (2014). Specific aspects of writing composition and transcription are also identified through the class teacher's analysis of writing samples and ongoing day-to-day assessments and feedback.
- Regular Shared and Modelled Writing sessions where the class teacher models and co-constructs writing together with the children. ***(See 'Story of English file for further guidance on Shared Writing)***.
- Co-constructing '**writers' toolkits**' from model texts for children to use when writing independently.

- Regular Guided and Supported Writing sessions with the class teacher and additional adults to develop and assess children's specific composition and transcription skills identified through the class teacher's ongoing day-to-day assessment and feedback.
- Correcting presentational, grammatical and spelling errors following the school's feedback policy. (**See Feedback Codes**)
- Providing regular focused feedback that children act upon using their green 'polishing pens' at the next available opportunity.
- Setting 'gap tasks' and writing challenges regularly to improve children's use and application of grammatical skills at word, sentence and text level, linked to Talk for Writing across both fiction and non-fiction units.
- A simplified and bespoke program for the EYFS and year 1 entitled 'Scribble Club' 'Drawing Club' and 'The Curious Quests' where the children are exposed to a variety of texts and vocabulary and encouraged to share the joy of the pen. Following the EYFS and National Curriculum children draw and write daily with focused learning intentions, modelled writing examples and encouragement to write their ideas in simple drawings, labels, phrases and sentences.

### **Vocabulary Development**

The DfE National Curriculum (2014) makes clear that learning vocabulary is key to 'learning and progress across the whole curriculum' since it allows pupils to access a wider range of words when writing and for them to understand and comprehend texts more efficiently.

Direct vocabulary teaching needs permeate through the curriculum. The teaching of vocabulary must:

- Be active.
- Be progressive and systematic.
- Make links from known words.
- Develop an understanding of shades of meaning.
- Include 'instruction verbs' used in examinations.
- Include subject specific vocabulary such as accurate mathematical and scientific words (Tier 3 Vocabulary).

At Parkgate Primary School we teach and encourage all children to have a wide and growing vocabulary through a range of strategies and approaches including:

- Sharing spelling lists/ key words to learn in school and at home, particularly the age-related spelling lists detailed in the DfE English National Curriculum (2014) and subject specific words explored in the curriculum themes.
- Collecting and displaying key words and phrases linked to the class reading of quality texts for children to 'magpie' and use in their own speech and writing.
- Creating 'Talk for Writing' model texts that include new vocabulary for children to explore and use in their speech and writing.
- Modelling the use of the correct vocabulary, including the use of Standard English, where appropriate.
- Explicitly teaching and exploring the language of questions and responses, for example, in Guided Reading sessions.
- Planning word based investigations looking at patterns and word origins.
- Using dictionaries, thesaurus and ICT.
- Exploring vocabulary choices and the effect they have on the reader through the analysis of model texts and creation of 'Readers' and Writers' Toolkits' in Shared and Guided Reading and Writing sessions.
- Teaching the language and differences between 'Tiered Vocabulary' and regularly displaying this in the learning environments.

### **Assessment and Planning**

At Parkgate Primary School we aim to ensure all children achieve well. Class teachers plan learning opportunities to ensure appropriate rates of progress for all children. Therefore, formative assessment and the class teacher's

knowledge of the age-related expectations, detailed in the DfE English Curriculum (2014) and end of key stage national standards, are used to assess and plan.

To ensure children are ready for the next stage of their education the majority of children are expected to achieve at least the national standards in reading and writing by the time they leave Parkgate Primary School.

***Further information and detail on assessment and planning can be found in the 'Assessment, Curriculum Planning, Teaching and Learning Policy' and 'Story of English File'.***

### **Assessment**

- Class teachers assess pupil's learning during every part of the lesson and are expected to adapt their teaching and planning to meet their children's needs and interests.
- Feedback and marking are used to assess children's progress and learning.
- Children are expected to act promptly at the next available learning opportunity to the class teacher's focused feedback using their green 'polishing pens'.
- Class teachers regularly carry out a range of formal and informal assessments to establish prior learning and assess progress within lessons and across units of learning.
- Each Guided and Supported Reading session is used as an assessment opportunity with a sharp focus on developing an aspect of language comprehension, improving fluency and applying phonic knowledge.
- Each Guided and Supported Writing session is used as an assessment opportunity with a sharp focus on developing an aspect of children's transcription and/or composition.
- At Key Stage 2, class teachers use their day-to-day feedback and analysis of weekly word-level teaching to identify specific spelling needs to ensure children meet or exceed the national age-related expectations for spelling outlined in the DfE English Curriculum (2014).
- To focus planning on specific areas of grammatical knowledge and language that children need to develop to meet or exceed the DfE English National Curriculum (2014) expectations, a 'Green for Growth' cold writing sample is carried out and analysed by the class teacher before each narrative and **'Talk for Writing'** unit is taught. The features identified are then used to comment on progress throughout the unit and on overall achievement at the end using a 'Hot Task'.
- The class teacher's judgements are based on how well each child is currently achieving against the DfE English curriculum (2014) national age-related expectations and whether they are 'on track' meet or exceed the national standards by the end of each key stage. Current attainment is compared to prior attainment and discussions about future potential.
- Assessments in English are carried out half termly in years 1-6 using writing assessment grids developed from the National Curriculum standards in order to support end of term assessments and identify underachievement. Y2 and Y6 also rely on any DfE guidance. Where needed, individual targets are recorded in the front of exercise books to promote self-assessment and increased progress.
- A standards file is updated to support teacher assessment judgements and moderation. The standards file aims to demonstrate what age-related expectations look like across the year through samples of children's learning.
- Staff attend regular moderation sessions within school and across the local cluster network of schools.
- National assessments are carried out each year in:
  - Reception - Baseline Assessment and End of EYFS Key Stage Outcomes.
  - Year 1 - Phonics Screen, with prior support and intervention for children who are at risk of not meeting the expected standard.
  - Year 2 - Phonics screen re-take, with targeted intervention for those children who did not achieve in Year 1, and Reading, Writing and Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (2015)
  - Year 6 - Reading, Writing and Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling.
  - At Key Stage 1 and 2 current attainment and progress in reading and writing are reported to parents/carers each term through the Report Cards and parent/carer consultation meetings.
- End of year and key stage assessments are analysed by the Head teacher and Deputy Headteacher, Performance and Standards Leaders and the Reading and Writing Leaders. Outcomes are reported to the Governing Body and feed into the school self-evaluation, development plan and performance management procedures.

## Planning

- Pupils are taught in mixed ability classes and planning is adapted to meet the different needs and abilities within the class.
- Long Term Overviews for the Core Texts studied and key writing outcomes can be found on the school's whole school English Map. Generally, a half term consists of 3 weeks narrative, 2 weeks non-fiction and 1 week studying poetry. Each unit of learning has a specific focus e.g., in a narrative unit the focus might be to develop character or setting. Similarly, in non-fiction, the focus would be a study of a particular text type and, where possible, this will be linked to the quality fiction text being studied and/or the current curriculum theme.
- Formative assessment and feedback informs short term planning.
- Planning formats for class teachers are available for:
  - Reading
  - Writing
  - Phonics
  - Spelling

## Professional Development

- The English Team ensure the school staff are kept up to date with national developments in the English curriculum, teaching and assessment.
- To update and share expertise and skills, all staff are expected to attend relevant courses and CPD opportunities, including engaging in regular peer coaching and support.
- Staff training follows the DfE guidance for CPD.
- Moderation of teacher summative assessment judgements takes place within school and across the local network cluster of schools with support from local authority moderators.

## Specific Groups

- Analysis of phonics, reading and writing summative assessment outcomes are carried out termly/half-termly with children who are stuck or not making the expected progress discussed and action taken to meet their specific needs, particularly children in receipt of the Pupil Premium.
- Children with English as an Additional Language (EAL) are given additional support in all aspects of English, as appropriate to their specific needs and acquisition of the English Language. **(See Inclusion Policy)**.
- Children who are higher achievers or potential higher achievers are given differentiated support and challenge to deepen their knowledge and skills to achieve the 'Mastery Standard'.
- Children with an identified SEND will have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or a Personal Plan (PP) to ensure appropriate access to the English curriculum that in turn ensures a good rate of progress from their starting point. These are reviewed each term with parents/carers.

This policy was reviewed by Governors: January 2025

This policy will be reviewed: January 2028