

## **English Policy including the Handwriting Policy**

This policy is a whole school policy including EYFS

A risk assessment has been completed to take into account government guidelines and statutory requirements regarding Covid 19. With this in mind changes to teaching, procedures and resourcing may occur due to identified risks.

### **1 Aims and objectives**

**1.1** The study of English develops children's abilities to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, so using language to learn and communicate ideas, views and feelings. It enables children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as non-fiction and media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations.

**1.2** The aims of English are:

- to enable children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners;
- to encourage children to listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard;
- to enable children to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands;
- to develop children's abilities to reflect on their own and others' contributions and the language used;
- to enable children to evaluate their own and others' contributions through a range of drama activities;
- to develop confident, independent readers through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text-level knowledge;
- to encourage children to become enthusiastic and reflective readers through contact with challenging and lengthy texts;
- to help children enjoy writing and recognize its value;
- to enable children to write with accuracy and meaning in narrative and non-fiction;
- to increase the children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work.

### **2 Teaching and learning style**

**2.1** At Springmead School we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English lessons, as recommended by the EYFS and National Curriculum 2014. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in English. We do this through daily lessons integrated within our class themes that have a high proportion of whole-class and group teaching, including some

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individual time for focused work. They have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts and use a range of resources such as dictionaries, thesauri and a wide range of texts of differing genre to support their work. Children use Computing in English lessons where it enhances their learning, as in drafting their work and using multimedia to study how words and images are combined to convey meaning. Wherever possible we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

- 2.2** There are children of differing ability in all classes at Springmead School. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons we do it through differentiated group work, while in other lessons we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use classroom assistants to support children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

### **3 English curriculum planning**

- 3.1** English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the EYFS, Letters and Sounds and the National Curriculum 2014 as the basis for our curriculum planning and use a wide variety of resources to support planning the theme. Where appropriate we adapt planning to make the most of wider topic based opportunities but we also teach aspects of the subject discreetly.
- 3.2** We carry out the curriculum planning in English in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The National Curriculum details what we teach in the long-term. Our yearly teaching programme identifies the key objectives in literacy that we teach to each year. For the EYFS children, planning is conducted in a way that fits in with the EYFS curriculum.
- 3.3** The medium-term plans, which we also base on the Framework, give details of the main teaching objectives for each term. These plans define what we teach and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term. The English subject leader is responsible for reviewing these plans.
- 3.4** Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan for the teaching of English. This lists the specific learning objectives for each lesson and gives details of the content.

### **4 The Foundation Stage**

- 4.1** We teach English in the Foundation Stage as an integral part of the school's work. In Reception, over the year, the format for the daily lesson becomes similar to that used in the rest of the school. The objectives are set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We give all children the opportunity to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and extend their range of vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore, enjoy, learn about, and use words and

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text in a range of situations. Children in Nursery and Reception have a daily phonics session.

## **5 Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas**

**5.1** The skills that children develop in English 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 in school.

### **5.2 Mathematics**

English contributes significantly to the teaching of mathematics in our school. Children in the Foundation Stage develop their understanding of number, pattern, shape and space by talking about these areas with adults and other children. Children in Early Years and Key Stage 1 meet stories and rhymes that rely on counting and sequencing. Children in Key Stage 2 are encouraged to read and interpret problems in order to identify the mathematics involved. They explain and present their work to others during plenary sessions and they communicate mathematically through the developing use of precise mathematical language.

### **5.3 Computing**

The use of computing enables children to use and apply their developing skills in English in a variety of ways. Younger children use computers and tablets as a source of information and as a way of enabling them to present their completed work effectively. Older children use the Internet when searching for information for example, about a different part of the world, or when using desktop publishing to design a class newspaper. Children use the planning and proofing tools in a word processor when checking their draft work. We encourage all children to use computers and tablets as a resource for learning, whenever they feel it is appropriate.

### **5.4 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship**

English contributes to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. We encourage younger children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues. In their science work they talk about things that improve their health and about rules for keeping them safe around the school. Older children research and debate topical problems and events. They discuss lifestyle choices and meet and talk with many visitors who work within the school community. Planned activities within the classroom encourage children to work together and respect each other's views. Older children enjoy current affairs periodicals in class as part of their free reading.

### **5.5 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

The teaching of English develops skills through which our children can give critical responses to the moral questions they meet in their work. Their understanding and appreciation of a range of texts brings them into contact with their own literary heritage and texts from other cultures. The organisation of

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lessons allows children to work together and gives them the chance to discuss their ideas and results.

**5.6 Science, History, geography and R.E** contribute to many aspects of themed curriculum e.g. Victorians – Dickens- inventions, Darwin, evolution, creation, Empire

## **6 Teaching English to children with special needs and disabilities**

**6.1** At Springmead School we teach English to all children, whatever their ability. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Teachers provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties. Work in English takes into account the targets set for individual children. Teachers provide help with communication and literacy through:

- using texts that children can read and understand;
- using visual and written materials in different formats;
- using technology and recorded materials;
- using alternative communication such as signs and symbols.

## **7 Opportunities for extension and development**

**7.1** Children are able to have individual LAMDA lessons at an additional cost and are entered for exams as appropriate.

**7.2** Children may be invited to attend Language Explorers if they show enthusiasm and skills in English, here they explore unusual text, respond to stimuli and use drama to embed and develop their fluency with words.

**7.3** Children may enter the Mid Somerset Verse classes or creative writing classes to develop their skills and confidence in these areas.

## **8 Assessment and recording**

**8.1** Teachers assess children's work in English in three phases. The short-term assessments that teachers make as part of every lesson help teachers to adjust their daily plans. Teachers match these short-term assessments closely to the teaching objectives. Writing progression and reading progression assessment sheets are completed to help teachers plan for the next unit of work. Teachers make long-term assessments towards the end of the school year, and they use these to assess progress against school and national targets. With the help of these long-term assessments, teachers are able to set targets for the next school year and summarize the progress of each child before discussing it with the child's parents. The next teacher also uses these long-term assessments as the basis for planning work for the new school year. These long-term assessments are made using end-of-year tests and teacher assessments.

**8.2** The class teacher collates half termly writing assessments and uses them to illustrate progression over the year and is assessed against expected standards for the year group. This is used to set individual targets. This is moderated by the subject leader.

## 9 Resources

9.1 There is a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries and a range of age-appropriate apparatus. All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts. Children have access to the Internet through computers and iPads . The library contains a range of books to support children's individual research.

## 10 Monitoring and review


The role of subject leaders is to:

- provide a strategic lead for the subject with the aim of improving standards;
- offer support and advice to colleagues on the subject;
- monitor pupil progress in that subject area across the school through observations and discussion with staff and children. Also through levelling work, a levelled piece of work for each half term per child;
- review the way the subject is taught at the school and plan for improvement;
- understand current standards in the subject across the school and how this compares to expected targets;
- plan how we are going to improve standards in conjunction with staff and the principal;
- provide efficient resource management for the subject;
- review the curriculum plans for the subject and ensure that there is coverage of the National Curriculum, where we feel it is appropriate, and that progression is planned into schemes of work;
- to keep up to date with the developments in the subject at both national and local level;
- keep detailed information on their subject in a subject leader file;
- work with the Principal to produce a development plan for the subject which links the whole school objectives;
- review policy annually;
- present a review of the subject to staff annually at a staff meeting.

The school gives subject leaders non-contact time, so that they can carry out the necessary duties involved with their role.

This policy is the principal's ongoing responsibility along with reviewing its effectiveness annually in consultation with the staff.

**Signed:**



**Date:**

## Handwriting Policy

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### Aims and Objectives

**1.1** A flexible, fluent and legible handwriting style empowers children to write with confidence and creativity. As such, we actively teach handwriting as part of the English curriculum through daily phonics lessons and discrete weekly lessons, quick reinforcing sessions and application every day. Handwriting is a developmental process with its own distinctive stages of progression from readiness for handwriting, through to letter joins, practicing speed and fluency and higher presentation skills. To develop a clear, legible style of writing, children are taught to;

- Hold a pencil comfortably; promoting a legible style that encourages writing from left to right, from top to bottom of the page and starting and finishing letters correctly
- Develop a consistent size and shape of letters and a regularity of spacing between letters and words
- Join letters correctly
- Develop greater control and fluency as they become increasingly confident.

Since handwriting is an essential movement skill, correct modelling of the agreed handwriting style by all adults is very important.

### 2. Teaching and Learning style

**2.1** Since handwriting is an essential movement skill, correct modelling of the agreed handwriting style by all adults is very important.

**2.2** The following are ways to ensure the children are taught in a consistent manner  
Pencil grip and tension;

- Writing pressure;
- Clarity of the stroke;
- Orientation of the paper for left/right handed children;
- Body posture: children's feet should be flat on the floor
- Their spare hand should be holding the writing paper/book still.

**2.3** Children need to be made aware of:

- Where the letter starts;
- Where the individual letter stands with regard to the baseline;
- Ascenders and descenders - lined paper will assist;
- Spacing and finger space between words;
- Consistent writing size;
- Capital letters and their appropriate use

## 2.4 Left Handed pupils

Teachers should be aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils and make appropriate provision:

- Paper should be positioned to the left for right handed pupils and to the right for left handed
- pupils and slanted to suit the individual in either case
- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision
- Pupils should be positioned so that they can place their paper to their left side
- Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space.

## Planning

**3.1** Regular handwriting lessons. The children work on 'air writing', small whiteboards, lined paper, lined handwriting books, photo-copy sheets, apps on the class set of ipads, such as hip hop hen and on the interactive whiteboard.

**3.2** There is a selection of poems for the use of handwriting available in the staff room. They are in order of ability. The font to be used across the school specifically for handwriting (Joinit) is also available on the computer system for teachers to provide their own handwriting sheets for the children too.

## 4 The Foundation Stage

**4.1** In the Foundation stage, the early learning goals for Communication and Language and Literacy underpin all handwriting work. Reception children work according to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework. Their curriculum encourages the children to develop essential pre-writing skills which form the foundations of the handwriting lessons in Key Stages 1 and 2. This achieved by ensuring that when the children learn to form the letters, they use a multisensory approach.

Making patterns and letter shapes in the air, on each other's' backs, in shaving foam/ wet sand/ paint etc.

Linking letter sounds with their shape e.g. s = slippery snake, and encouraging children to write individual letters/ words when they are ready via their Letters and Sounds work.

Encouraging the children to use the correct 'tripod' pencil grip, as we feel it is vitally important for young children to be taught how to hold their pencil and form their letters correctly. It is extremely difficult to correct an older child's incorrect pencil grip or incorrect letter formation once bad habits are established.

Begin with teaching the lower case formation initially, with the exception of the initial letter of the child's name. The capital letters are introduced later.

**4.2** At Springmead we use a pre-cursive style of handwriting in the foundation stage. This prepares children for joining as they move through to Year 2, where they then begin to join up their writing once they have established the correct orientation of the letters.

## **5. Contribution of handwriting to teaching in other subject areas**

**5.1** Good, clear, legible handwriting is essential for all subjects across the curriculum. Time devoted to the teaching and learning of letter formation in the early years will pay off. Legible writing that can be produced comfortably, at speed and with little conscious effort allows a child to attend to the higher-level aspects of writing composition and content. This is important when assessments are based on written work, particularly in time-limited written examinations, which remain as a major form of assessment for many formal qualifications. Without fast and legible handwriting, students may miss out on learning opportunities and under-achieve academically.

## **6 Teaching handwriting to children with special needs and disabilities**

**6.1** Children with Special Educational needs, where necessary, will be provided with specialist equipment such as pencil grips, slanted writing board or wider ruled lined paper. Children will also have the opportunity to use iPads to rehearse specific skills on a more regular basis. Intervention may be required for children who experience significant difficulties with their writing skills and fine motor coordination.

## **7 Assessment**

**7.1** Handwriting is currently assessed and recorded on Assessing Pupil's Progress tracker. The handwriting coordinator also leads a work scrutiny staff meeting, looking at handwriting across the whole school to track progression and raise standards.

## **8 Resources**

- 8.1** To aid pupils' handwriting we have purchased a site license for 'Joinit'.
- This is loaded on to all the teachers' computers in the school.
  - Teachers should use the Teach Handwriting [www.teachhandwriting.co.uk/](http://www.teachhandwriting.co.uk/) website which can be used to model the formation of the letters and to print worksheets. The handwriting power point on Twinkl can also be used to demonstrate cursive handwriting.
  - Hip Hop Hen is on all the iPads, ideal for pre cursive letter practice in the EYFS and Year 1.

## **9 Monitoring and Review**

**9.1** Children in the EYFS are assessed on an ongoing basis through observation. Within Key Stage One and Key Stage Two, handwriting is assessed as part of children's writing assessments each half term.

**9.2** Handwriting pens are given when the Year 4 teacher believes the child is ready. In Year 6, children are encouraged to bring in their own pens from home.

**9.3** Every year a child in Year 2 is selected to win the handwriting cup, which is presented at the leaver's assembly. This is to promote the importance of good handwriting and therefore a positive recognition for the child, working hard on their presentation.



# Springmead School

Date: 04/01/2021

Review period: 12 months

This policy is the Principal's ongoing responsibility and reviewing its effectiveness annually in consultation with the staff.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Taylor".

Date: 4.1.21