



Stockham Primary School English Policy. 2023

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Reviewed by:	Joanne Wilkinson
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Version History

Version	Date	Description of Changes -
1.0	April 2023	Issuance of the policy

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At Stockham School, we believe early experiences in language and communication are carefully and skilfully built upon and come to fruition as our pupils reach the end of Year 6, equipped with all the skills needed to enjoy success in secondary education and beyond. The entire planned learning experience of our children is encapsulated in our creative, skills based thematic curriculum, underpinned by our school statement “Soaring High”.

The curriculum is built around three “curriculum drivers”:

- **Aspirations** – Who could I be? How can I aim high? How can I make the most of my opportunities? What opportunities are out there for me?
- **Curiosity** – What do I think? What do I wonder? Why?
- **Knowledge of the world** – Who am I? What is my locality? How does my life compare to the wider world? How do I fit in to the wider world? How can I take responsibility for both my community and the wider world?

Language and communication underpin everything we do.

Aims/Intent

The overarching aim for English at Stockham School is to promote high standards of literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of spoken and written word and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

We aim to ensure that all of our children:

- Read easily, fluently and with excellent understanding in a wide range of contexts throughout the curriculum;
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information discovery;
- To have developed excellent phonic knowledge and skills;
- To have motivation to read for pleasure, into secondary school and beyond
- To have extensive general knowledge and understanding of the world through having read a rich and varied range of texts;
- Acquire an extensive and rich vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language;
- Appreciate our rich and varied literary language;
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences;
- Use discussion in order to learn; children should be able to elaborate and clearly explain their understanding and idea;
- Are competent in the art of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

Implementation

Subject Leadership Responsibility

A regular programme of monitoring, evaluation and staff support takes place along with the celebration and sharing of good practice. There is an ongoing commitment to evolve and improve the quality and impact of English on offer to all the children.

Environment and resourcing

In each year group, classes contain children with different abilities and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all of our pupils 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

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use mixed ability or differentiated group work, while in others we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use teaching assistants to support groups of children of all abilities, and to enable work to be scaffolded to the needs of individuals. Whilst we do apply personalised learning, quality first teaching simultaneously keeps in mind high expectations, with the ultimate aim being that all children (regardless of different starting points) meet the Expected Standard or better by the end of Key Stage 2.

There are a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. Every classroom has a reading corner with a good range of quality fiction, poetry and non-fiction. The school library is well stocked and children are given access to it during the school day. All classrooms have dictionaries and a variety of age-appropriate small apparatus. Some classrooms have role play areas with 'small world' equipment, story boxes and puppets etc. To gain further ownership of their reading, pupils have Magpie Books (which they can utilise during free reading time and in adult-led reading and writing activities where appropriate) to collect and build up useful ideas in order that pupils' writing is enhanced by reflecting their reading history. Faster graspers in Key Stage 2 also keep a reading timeline, to record their "aspirational" and "chillout" texts that they have chosen to read throughout the year. Books for independent and guided reading are matched to the decoding ability of each child (90% of the text will be decodeable).

Classroom reading challenges promote reading at home and our home/school reading diaries contain helpful hints to parents and carers to encourage them to support their child's reading development at home. We also utilise parent and carer helpers as reading support. Some children from Years 4 and 6 take part in the Reading Gladiators scheme and then carry out book blessings on the titles from the scheme so that other pupils in the year group can enjoy them.

All children from Years 1–6 participate in the reading raffle which encourages pupils, parents and carers to read a range of quality authors and texts together at home.

Resources are in place for the following interventions:

- Accelerated/Accelerated
- FFT Wave 3 intervention
- NELI
- Personalised 1:1 mentoring in reading and writing
- Rapid Readers Reading Scheme (Key Stage 2)
- Salford Reading Test
- Project X
- Young's Spelling Test

Pupils requiring intervention are identified at termly pupil progress meetings and are benchmarked before and after each intervention so that impact can be ascertained.

Planning

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. Our planning is based around:

- The national curriculum
- Our own identified "curriculum drivers"
- Chris Quigley Essentials Curriculum materials
- Stockham school's Reading and Writing spines
- The ideas and interests of our children linked to the themes they are immersed in

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We carry out curriculum planning in English alongside our flexible theme-based planning and learning, as we move our children towards meeting “milestone indicators”, as exemplified in Chris Quigley’s Essentials Curriculum. We aim for depth of learning.

Retrieval Practice

At the start of each topic, pupils undertake retrieval practice techniques e.g. a short quiz, to establish prior knowledge and understanding of the next sequenced topic content. Throughout each topic pupils revisit previous content to reinforce key knowledge and vocabulary. SLT and subject teams also collect pupil perceptions to check on children’s previous learning and understanding.

Reading

In most cases, Stockham School’s reading curriculum is driven by key texts from the reading spine that launch or underpin each topic and drive the themes. Some texts are selected as high-quality literature that will improve the cultural capital of our children.

We know that children learn best when the curriculum is well sequenced. Children are taught new core-knowledge, skills, understanding and vocabulary to deepen their conceptual awareness. However, our pupils are given multiple opportunities to build upon prior knowledge. Children of all abilities develop their skills, knowledge and understanding against each reading learning objective.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, we teach reading through a rigorous systematic synthetic phonics programme - **Twinkl** and our reading provision is also fully informed by current research and **The Reading Framework: Teaching the Foundations of Literacy (DFE January 2022)**.

Throughout their time in EYFS and KS1, children are also encouraged to take home a reading for pleasure book from the library or classroom book corner in order to develop a love of reading for pleasure and to increase cultural capital. This book is to be enjoyed with parents and carers who read the book **to** the child, unless the child has complete Level 6 of the Twinkl Phonics Scheme. Readers still working through the phonics scheme are **not** expected to decode the reading for pleasure book.

At Key Stage 2, the teaching of reading happens in a combination of shared reading (usually whole-class) and guided reading (in small groups).

In addition to direct teaching, teachers read high quality texts to pupils throughout the year, also using this as an opportunity to hear pupils read aloud and develop their fluency and prosody. These texts are detailed on the whole-school reading spine. We teach spelling and word level through the ‘No Nonsense Spelling’ schemes and Spelling Shed. All these schemes are compatible with the requirements of the National Curriculum.

To support reading widely for pleasure, children in Key Stage 2 have Magpie Books that can be used during free reading time or in adult-led reading and writing activities where appropriate. Pupils use these books to collect and build up interesting ideas to use in their writing.

Each day, pupils in every year group are furnished with additional opportunities to develop and apply their reading skills across the curriculum. Some SEND pupils at Key Stage 2 require more rigour, support and structure to maintain and improve their fluency, prosody and comprehension skills. These children may have one-to-one reading sessions with a teaching assistant or learning support assistant alongside their regular guided sessions.

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They may also be put onto an intervention scheme for a period of time overseen by learning support assistants.

Reading Sessions

We teach children to read through reading practice sessions three times a week. These:

- are taught by a fully trained adult to small groups of approximately six children;
- are monitored by the class teacher, who rotates and works with each group on a regular basis.

Each reading practice session has a clear focus, so that the demands of the session do not overload the children's working memory. The reading practice sessions have been designed to focus on three key reading skills:

1. Decoding
2. Prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
3. Comprehension: teaching children to understand the text

Reading for Pleasure

We know that reading is the key that unlocks all the learning and we understand the vital connection between learning to read for pleasure and academic success/mental well-being. Because of this, throughout a child's time at Stockham School, a team of adults and older children serve as role models to nurture every pupil's reading career, to ensure they are reading for pleasure.

An ethos of reading for pleasure permeates the entire school curriculum. We intend to enhance the quality of childhood experience and expand the horizons of every child, (whether due to a disadvantaged background or any other reason). We intend to provide all children with a wealth of rich texts and, in particular, texts that they may not otherwise encounter in childhood.

The following provision is evident in our school:

- Daily class reader/storytime sessions
- Classroom reading challenges
- Classroom book corners
- Classroom book recommendations/book blessings
- The Library
- Providing opportunities to read/be read to in most lessons
- Opportunities to use Magpie Books
- Reading Gladiators
- Celebrating World Book Day
- The Book Fair
- Enrichment Storytime
- Adults as reading role models
- Book Club
- Visitors

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In particular, we strive to enhance the quality of childhood experience and expand the horizons of every child, including disadvantaged pupils. We provide all children with a wealth of rich texts, including texts that they may not have otherwise encountered during childhood.

Drama, Speaking and Listening

Drama is taught as an intrinsic part of the reading, writing and speaking and listening (communication) curriculum, but may be used as a technique in other subject areas as well. Drama enables our pupils to deepen their understanding of texts and concepts, as well as improve their spoken language. It also empowers pupils to give a personal response to their learning. Strategies used may include:

- Hot-seating
- Conscience Alley
- Role-Play
- Visualisation
- Group Discussion
- Improvisation
- Use of puppets/props etc.
- Storyboxes/small world play.

Writing

At Stockham School, writing is embedded into our creative, theme based curriculum in order to provide a flexible, meaningful and “connected” approach to learning, but discrete teaching is also undertaken (such as in phonics, reading, grammar and punctuation). We believe that great writers emerge from great readers, so much of our wider curriculum is built around quality fiction and non-fiction.

We intend to give pupils the opportunity to:

- Emulate quality authors in their writing;
- Use the writing of quality authors as an inspiration or stimulus for their own work;
- Reflect on what they have read in their writing (writing about what they have read);
- Use meaningful evaluation (reflecting upon the purpose of their written text).

We intend to enable all pupils to grow and develop their own authorship throughout their time at our school. We understand the vital importance of writing (and spoken communication) in providing children with a voice so that they can share their ideas with the world. We know that it is especially crucial that disadvantaged and SEN pupils develop this “voice” and we intend for them to do so; therefore, we aim to provide purpose and context as much as possible.

We want all pupils to leave our school well-equipped for secondary education, with the ability to write effectively in a range of fiction genres and non-fiction text types. We understand the duality of writing: it is an invaluable life skill, yet it is also a means of self-expression (by committing words to a blank page we leave our mark on the world).

At Stockham School, we believe that writing should be taught using a range of pedagogical approaches that are challenging yet enjoyable for our pupils, so that our children want to write, recognising that a person can write for their own entertainment, which will then entertain the reader in turn. For this reason, our writing opportunities are often integrated into

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thematic work so that tasks are pertinent, contextual and for real purposes. Writing skills may be taught in isolation (e.g. grammar, spelling and handwriting) but longer writing tasks are usually linked to our curriculum topics/units. Storytelling and Talk for Writing are other engaging and inclusive pedagogical approaches to writing that are sometimes employed - using the power of stories and storytelling/oracy to raise standards in reading and writing.

We strive to provide children with a wide range of writing opportunities in both fiction and non-fiction, writing in every subject across the curriculum. However, our intention is also to grant classroom practitioners the professional freedom to present the pupils in their class with unforeseen writing opportunities as and when these arise. For example, (in addition to planned writing opportunities) current affairs (including local, national and global events), trips, visits, special events, topical assemblies and other experiences may provide purposeful and fresh writing opportunities.

The teaching of writing

Our School's writing is driven by a writing spine which provides pupils with a wide range of writing opportunities in both fiction and non-fiction, writing in multiple subject disciplines across the curriculum. Pupils are given opportunities to write for a range of audiences and purposes, adopting the level of formality required to suit each task. Our 'writing spines' remain a working document so they can be adjusted to suit the needs of the children based on formative assessments. Year group SPAG progression documents also ensure high standards of writing. These documents list aspects of writing for each year group which children should routinely use with accuracy and consistency.

We know that children learn best when the curriculum is well-sequenced. Children are taught new core knowledge, skills, understanding and vocabulary to deepen their conceptual awareness. However, our pupils are also given multiple opportunities to build on prior knowledge. Children of all abilities develop their skills, knowledge and understanding against each writing learning objective.

Year group progression documents ensure progression and high standards of writing. Both of these documents list aspects of writing for each year group, which most children should routinely use with accuracy and consistency and are applied in writing lessons.

We strive for:

- Pupils to draw on their independent reading careers to inform their writing.
- Pupils to enjoy writing because they have a deep-seated love of reading that has been nurtured and fostered from their very first day in our school.
- Pupils to enjoy writing for a range of audiences and purposes, adapting their use of grammatical features, vocabulary and punctuation to suit the level of formality required.
- Pupils to write in most subject disciplines across the curriculum.
- Work to evidence a tight writing focus, where knowledge, skills and understanding are being applied.
- Higher attaining pupils (and pupils showing potential of attaining greater depth in end of key stage assessments) to receive appropriate challenge and opportunity to invent and write freely in their areas of interest (again, drawing upon their reading history as they do so).
- Pupils to regularly proofread, edit and improve their work, ready to read it aloud and share it with others.

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Our approach to English fits in well with the ethos that underpins our school curriculum and curriculum drivers:

- Soaring high
- Active learning
- Reading and writing linked to themes
- Grammar taught contextually
- Reading for pleasure
- Building confidence and fluency in spoken language
- Development of key learning skills
- Authorship
- Developing depth of learning

Communication and Language in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Our communication and language provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is fully informed by the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021).

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back and forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. At Stockham School, we provide children with a number of quality conversations with adults and peers each day, in our language-rich environment. By commenting on what the children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, our early years practitioners build children's language effectively.

Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

In foundation, we frequently read to the children, engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then provide them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, giving the children the opportunity to thrive. This, again, is to develop communication and language, but is also to embed a love of reading for pleasure from a young age.

Assessment

For the assessment of phonics, please see Phonics Policy.

Children are continually assessed focusing on the breadth of their learning, and more importantly, on the depth of their learning. Teachers will continually assess the acquisition of skills and knowledge throughout each session and will reinforce, support or challenge pupils accordingly to deepen their understanding and master techniques. Pupils are encouraged to peer and self-assess, e.g. considering form or effectiveness and how these can be modified and improved. As the children move through each year group, class teachers are assessing against the key indicators specifically to determine whether the children are working at a basic level, advancing level or deep level of learning.

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All children are rigorously tracked to monitor progress. Areas for development are identified by staff and next steps are decided by the teacher and subject leader. This is an informed assessment based on knowledge of the pupil and the content of their work. Other formative assessment used includes:

- Observing children
- Live feedback
- Effective questioning
- Probing and Quizzing

On-going formative assessment of takes place during all sessions and high frequency word and phonic assessments are updated regularly. Summative assessments include termly Phonics Testing, LAPs assessments and comprehension tests (Year 2-6). Each child has their own pupil assessment record which provides a complete, ongoing profile of their attainment in Reading, as well as other subjects. Assessments take place each term using “milestones” and “pebbles steps” in line with the National Curriculum. Achievement is celebrated and next steps in learning are decided on and reviewed regularly.

Each teacher makes an annual assessment judgement of each child, which feeds into each child’s annual report to parents. This involves assessing the children in relation to the ‘Chris Quigley’ Milestone Depth of Learning Grids. The teacher also passes this information up to the next teacher at the end of the year.

Equality, Diversity and Accessibility

All pupils will access a broad and balanced curriculum, which meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of pupils, including those who have diverse special educational needs, disadvantaged pupils, disabled youngsters, higher achieving pupils and those who have English as an additional language.

Lesson planning, delivery and assessment tries to ensure that children are provided with appropriate and effective opportunities to actively participate and succeed in the whole range of learning opportunities offered within and outside the curriculum.

The needs of individuals are met by providing reasonable adjustments, dedicated support staff, a range of equipment, appropriate groupings, safe spaces in which to work and when appropriate, differentiated tasks which enable all pupils to make good progress over time.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

The teaching of reading and writing offers opportunities to support the SMSC development of our children in the following ways: selecting texts that promote exploration of an aspect of SMSC; reading and exploring current affairs texts, such as First News and Newsround; carrying out debate around character motivations and actions; consciously including texts which promote equality and diversity on our Reading Spine. This is not an exhaustive list.

Professional Development (CPD)

All staff can continually liaise with the English Lead to receive support in subject knowledge and pedagogy. In addition, reading CPD is offered throughout the year at staff meetings and at the beginning of termly pupil progress meetings, where the Reading and writing spines are reviewed. School staff can receive ongoing support with the Twinkl phonics programme

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by liaising with the Phonics Leader. Finally, the English Lead monitors the effectiveness and impact of each class teacher's promotion of reading for pleasure.

Impact

Our reading and writing curriculums, enrichment and extra-curricular activities gives our pupils the optimal conditions in which to succeed as a reader and author. Highlighted impact includes: (this is not an exhaustive list)

- Good progress in reading and writing, despite atypically low starting points
- Pupils who write for a range of purposes and begin to develop their own sense of authorship
- Pupils who have the confidence to approach and engage with any text
- Pupils who have developed a wide range of vocabulary and can use it according to context and purpose
- Pupils who read widely for pleasure, understanding why reading is so important
- Pupils placing multiple tickets into the reading raffle pots signifying reading for pleasure at home
- Pupils who have successfully completed Reading Gladiators
- Pupils beginning Key Stage 2 as "free readers"
- Older pupils who can offer reading support, advice and encouragement to younger pupils
- A culture of book blessings/recommendations in classrooms

Curriculum Subject Leadership

The core purpose of a subject leader is to provide professional leadership and management for a subject to secure high quality teaching, effective use of resources and improved standards of learning and achievement for all pupils. The Subject Lead reports to the Head Teacher and their Governor link. They will ensure that the following considerations are appropriately overseen:

- Play a leading role in preparing and reviewing policy for the teaching of their subject;
- Plan and organise the curriculum for their subject throughout the school, establishing how good standards, continuity and progression can be achieved and sustained;
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of policy and planning;
- Regularly and systematically provide guidance to colleagues on content, methodology and resources; develop policies and schemes of work;
- Manage, audit and update resources;
- Monitor teaching, learning and standards throughout the school;
- Supporting and advising colleagues;
- Designing and delivering CPD;
- Overseeing the school's programme of extra-curricular clubs and activities, such as Reading Gladiators;
- Developing children's leadership roles within the school.

A subject leader will be expected to speak with confidence and have:

- A clear understanding of the school's curriculum vision along with the subject intent and implementation;

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- An understanding of the progression throughout their area/subject;
- An understanding of the value that learning in their area/subject has for pupils;
- Multiple forms of evidence of the effectiveness of teaching in their area/subject – impact;
- The strengths and areas for development in order to be able to offer support in their area/subject when needed by their colleagues.

Policy Review

Policy Written: March 2023

This policy will be reviewed, at least, every 2 years or earlier if there is a need to do so.