

# SUNNYMEDE JUNIOR SCHOOL

## ENGLISH POLICY



**Date:** July 2016  
**Review:** Annually  
**This Review:** June 2017  
**Next Review:** June 2018

Review date	Headteacher's signature	Chair of Governor's signature
June 2017		

This policy should be read alongside other school policies including:

- Reading statement
- Homework policy
- SEND policy
- Assessment policy
- Marking & Feedback policy
- Other English related guidelines e.g. handwriting guidance

This policy should also be read alongside the new National Curriculum in England (published September 2013) and other documentation from the Standards and Testing Agency.

Our school's curriculum overviews, medium and short term planning also help to support this policy.

### **Rationale**

The National Curriculum (2014) states that: 'Teachers should develop pupils' 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 English language provides access to the whole curriculum. Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects'.

At Sunnymede Junior School we recognise that without equipping pupils with effective communication skills, little progress and achievement can be made. We understand that we have a duty to ensure that high quality English teaching is a priority and we aim to fulfil this by providing an appropriate curriculum that is both exciting, creative and promotes mastery.

This includes linking English to the wider curriculum, using a wide variety of text forms to engage and inspire and by offering a wide range of opportunities to create varied text forms as outcomes. As a result, we wish to fulfil the National Curriculum expectation that schools will, 'promote the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills as part of the wider school curriculum' and, therefore, aim to raise achievement and attainment, not just within English as a subject, but across the whole curriculum.

Sunnymede Junior School is an inclusive school. We set high expectations and recognise the importance of accurate and regular assessment in order to support each individual pupil at every stage of their learning. The school uses a number of strategies, including quality first teaching, guided groups, one-to-one support, pre-teaching and small intervention groups to aid this both the teaching and assessment process. We plan for teaching opportunities to support those for whom English is an additional language (EAL) and for those with barriers to learning, as outlined in the SEND code of practice (including those working at greater depth within the standards), as well as challenge those pupils identified as academically more able.

### **Spoken Language**

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be 'taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently in Standard English'. Pupils should:

- Justify ideas with reasons
- Ask questions to check understanding
- Develop vocabulary and build knowledge
- Negotiate
- Evaluate and build on the ideas of others
- Select the appropriate register for effective communication
- Give well-structured descriptions and explanations
- Speculate, hypothesise and explore ideas
- Organise their ideas prior to writing

At Sunnymede Junior School, we encourage our pupils to speak clearly and confidently, whilst articulating their views and opinions. We teach children to express themselves orally in an appropriate way, by matching their style and response to the audience and purpose. In addition, we teach pupils to listen and respond to literature, to give and receive instructions and to develop the skills of participating effectively in group discussions. We encourage and model the use of Standard English.

## **Provision**

Sunnymede Junior School supports this by providing:

- Activities which are planned to encourage full and active participation by all children, irrespective of ability
- Quick identification of pupils with specific speech, language and auditory problems and specialist help sought, where appropriate
- In class poetry recitals
- Talk for Writing opportunities
- School Plays
- Class debates
- Assemblies – pupils produce and present PowerPoints on topical issues
- Events within the community
- School Council and pupil voice events within and beyond the school
- Talk partners
- Guided reading sessions
- Drama / role play
- PSHE and circle time
- CASPA

We believe that by giving pupils a variety of real life contexts to engage in speaking and listening activities, their abilities are highlighted in a purposeful manner.

## **Reading**

The National Curriculum states that, 'Pupils should be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose (both fiction and non-fiction) and be encouraged to read for pleasure. Reading and its importance is specifically highlighted because it means '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'. In order to fulfil this, Sunnymede Junior School provides library facilities, book corners in each classroom and supports and encourages reading at home.

The Curriculum divides reading skills into two dimensions:

- Word reading (decoding)
- Comprehension (both listening and reading)

At Sunnymede Junior School, we recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods. We also recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning, including speaking and listening, writing, spelling, grammar and vocabulary. In addition, we understand that reading is a developmental process and part of life-long learning; we encourage and praise children at every stage. As well as developing oral comprehension skills, we also teach pupils the specific skills of written comprehension, as this is the current assessment method used by the DfE at the end of Key Stage 2.

## **Provision**

- All pupils are given the opportunity to read to an adult regularly

- Pupils learn to read easily and fluently through our in-school book band system, regular reading sessions with adults from the local community, in Guided Reading sessions and when reading to teachers or LSAs
- Targeted pupils develop skills in reading for decoding and comprehension, using well-planned discrete phonics (Letters and Sounds) and reading comprehension (Rapid Reading scheme) sessions. Rapid Reading focuses on improving decoding, fluency, vocabulary and verbal comprehension skills for those pupils below the expected standard for their year group
- Targeted pupils develop comprehension skills in intervention sessions delivered by experienced LSAs, covering a particular reading focus for a few weeks to fully embed understanding
- Pupils are encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction, through the use of our in-school book bands, differing class texts, school library visits, high quality attractive books in classrooms and by rewarding pupils who complete the Summer Reading Challenge (ECC)
- Pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure using reading partners in Guided Reading sessions, quiet reading time and by listening to an adult read
- Pupils are to be able to access, read and locate information in all lessons and comprehension is assessed from cross-curricular evidence, as well as evidence from within English lessons
- Pupils are exposed to a range of texts from their literacy heritage during their school career that relate to their class topics where possible
- Pupils complete independent reading tasks on a regular basis

## **Writing**

The National Curriculum states that pupils should:

- Plan, revise and evaluate their writing
- Develop the stamina and skills to write at length
- Use accurate spelling and punctuation
- Be grammatically correct
- Have effective composition which involves articulating and communicating ideas and organise them coherently for the reader
- 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 National Curriculum divides writing skills into two dimensions:

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

At Sunnymede Junior School, we recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various teaching methods. We also recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, reading, spelling, grammar and vocabulary.

## **Provision**

- The new English curriculum has been carefully mapped out to ensure pupils experience a range of high quality text types (including music, drama, visual arts and film), throughout their time at Sunnymede Junior School. These link to topics where appropriate
- The grammar and punctuation aspects of the new curriculum, have been mapped out progressively (from years 3-6) to specifically fit with the text type taught
- Pupils are taught to write using a range of methods, including shared writing, guided groups and through targeted one-to-one support
- Spelling rules and foci from the new curriculum have also been progressively mapped out and includes the use of the National Curriculum's English Appendix 1, which contains word lists for years 3&4 and years 5&6

- Each class is taught spelling systematically for the equivalent of one hour per week, where pupils are given the opportunity to investigate spelling rules and apply them in their writing
- Grammar is taught as a discrete lesson or to build on other learning, as a result of AfL (assessment for learning)
- Grammatical errors are corrected orally or within written work (where appropriate)
- Various methods of assessment are used to influence future teaching by revisiting key learning and building upon it in all areas, from phonics, through to grammar and spelling
- We use high quality texts, modelling and guided/shared writing to demonstrate good practice
- Teaching staff encourage and promote 'Talk for Writing'
- All pupils plan prior to writing using writing frames or other appropriate formats
- Time is provided for pupils to plan, edit and revise
- Pupils use a blue 'polishing pencil' to edit and improve their writing
- Teaching staff mark extended pieces of work in-depth and set next steps with or for the pupil
- We use checklists for pupils to self-assess or peer assess, where appropriate, so they can evaluate work effectively
- We provide pupils with personalised writing targets (and handwriting targets where needed) to challenge each individual to improve their writing
- Examples of pupils' work that meet the WILF (What I'm Looking For) are displayed on classroom working walls
- Pupils are rewarded for effort through various means of positive praise
- We encourage joined handwriting to support spelling and speed writing
- Pupils are able to obtain a pen license once their handwriting is joined and consistently sized or once a child reaches year 6
- Drama techniques are facilitated to help pupils to think about another point of view
- Varied and appropriate support is provided for pupils with SEND and EAL
- Parental support advice is offered, as and when necessary

The skills learnt within lessons are expected to be transferred and consolidated across the curriculum, giving pupils the opportunity to demonstrate their learning in meaningful and varied ways.

### **Spelling and Vocabulary Development**

The National Curriculum makes clear that learning vocabulary is key to, 'learning and progress across the whole curriculum,' because it allows pupils to access a wider range of words when writing and enables them to understand and comprehend a variety of texts efficiently.

Spelling and Vocabulary teaching must:

- Be active
- Be progressive
- Make links from already known root words, prefixes and suffixes
- Develop understanding of shades of meaning
- Include 'instruction verbs' used in examinations
- Be cross-curricular and include subject specific vocabulary, for example, accurate mathematical and scientific words

### **Provision**

At Sunnymede Junior School, we encourage our pupils to have a wide and growing spelling and vocabulary skill set in a number of ways, these include:

- Teaching pupils a range of phonics and spelling strategies to support visual, audio and kinesthetic learners
- Pupils experience high quality and varied vocabulary through reading a range of specifically chosen texts
- Displaying key words linked to cross-curricular subjects
- 'Word of the week' display in each classroom
- Correcting the use of vocabulary orally

- In-depth word based lessons looking at spelling patterns
- Teaching the use of dictionaries and thesauri
- Using each available opportunity to explore vocabulary choices and the effect they have on the reader
- Carrying out systematic testing and providing feedback to pupils
- Assessing pupils' understanding of words by putting them into context
- Differentiated weekly spelling words/key words to take home and learn for weekly testing, including words that may be unfamiliar in meaning
- At the end of every half term, pupils are tested on word lists from the National Curriculum's English Appendix 1, appropriate to their year group. This results are shared with parents/carers at consultation evenings
- Targeted one-to-one/small group support, where appropriate

### **Handwriting**

At Sunnymede Junior School we use the Nelson handwriting programmes. Please see Appendix 1 for details.

### **Developing Mastery of English**

We believe that mastery in English is demonstrated by pupils when they use language independently, creatively and experimentally, both orally and in writing across the curriculum and in everyday communications. Pupils read a wide range of materials for their own pleasure and question and reflect on its content to deepen their own understanding of the text itself and the world we live in.

Planning longer sequences of work to explore texts and writing more fully; pupils can consider how an author uses language to impact on readers and manipulate their own writing in order to do the same

Precise questioning is used to encourage pupils to explore their thinking around a text more thoroughly.

Text types are focused on for longer periods of time so pupils are fully immersed in the text and genre, rather than moving on before they have embedded skills and concepts into their wider learning.

Across the curriculum, pupils are supported in exploring new vocabulary, playing around and manipulating words and sentences. This allows them to achieve different and varied effects within their own compositions.

Children will generally work on the same objective within the class, with different strategies and levels of support differentiated to encourage full understanding of the learning goal.

Spelling, grammar and punctuation are taught discretely but also in the context of the text they are learning or work across the curriculum.

Pupils can be seen to be working at greater depth when they apply skills confidently, independently, accurately and effectively in a range of writing.

### **Planning and Assessment**

#### **Planning**

- Termly curriculum overviews can be found on the school's website ([www.sunnymede-jun.ik.org](http://www.sunnymede-jun.ik.org)) for each year group
- Pupils are taught in classes and planning shows differentiation by ability
- Medium term (half –termly) planning is stored centrally
- English is planned for separately to other subjects using the proformas in the appendix

- Letters and Sounds and The National Curriculum's English Appendix 2 are used to ensure developmental learning, building on prior knowledge within phonics, grammar and spelling
- Short term planning is flexible, allowing for assessment for learning after each lesson/group of lessons
- Pupils may be streamed by ability for intervention sessions
- Pupils with EAL will be given additional English support, as necessary

### **Assessment:**

- For SEND, EAL, specifically targeted pupils and those new to school are assessed on their reading ability using Salford Reading Age
- All pupils on entry to Year 3 and new to school pupils are assessed on their ability to read and spell the decodable and tricky words from phases 3-6, as well as high frequency and common sight words (Letters and Sounds)
- Staff use assessment for learning during and as part of every lesson and they adapt their practice accordingly
- Each child's writing is levelled and tracked in line with curriculum expectations. This is recorded on a year group writing objective record form which is attached on yellow card to the inside of each pupil's English book, meaning that assessments can be updated regularly as part of the assessment process. At the end of each term, the evidence is used by the teacher to form a judgment about whether each child is working below, within or above the expected level of attainment for their year group
- In recognition that all children have specific and personal areas of need that are unique to them, a 'Personal Target Tracker' (PTT) is kept alongside the year group objectives record to note personal areas for development throughout the year and track the child's progress in achieving these. These identified areas are likely to be much tighter and more specific than the end of year objectives.
- Assessments of comprehension and speaking and listening skills are made during guided reading sessions and across the curriculum
- Formal assessments of Reading Comprehension ability are carried out, tracked and monitored termly
- Staff attend moderating sessions within county, including the local cluster meetings (BCT – Billericay Community Trust)
- End of term and end of Key Stage 2 Assessments are analysed by the Subject Leader and SLT and used to support English subject Leader action planning and also wider school improvement planning

### **Monitoring**

In order to ensure continuity and progression, the teaching of English across the school will be monitored regularly, using a range of strategies. Day-to-day monitoring is the prime responsibility of the senior leadership team, including phase leaders. The English subject leader also undertakes a range of monitoring activities throughout the year. Any monitoring activities are evaluated and reported to the Leadership Team promptly (within one week). This includes a written summary of strengths, areas for development and what support may be required. Any agreed actions arising should be acted upon within an identified time frame. The subject leader should ask for support with monitoring where appropriate.

The English subject leader performs regular book looks, data analysis, lesson 'drop-ins' / observations and pupil voice discussions. Monitoring will take account of English work across the curriculum. This helps to ensure subject progression, purposeful marking and the level of pupil understanding within the subject. These findings are shared with the senior management team and form part of the report to governors.

A nominated governor for English will monitor the policy and practice of English within the school. They will liaise with the Subject Leader and meet with them in order to monitor and review evidence to

support their evaluation of the school's provision. They will look at the range of evidence and may talk to pupils about their learning experiences in English. The governor completes a monitoring report on their findings following a visit, giving another perspective on the quality of provision within mathematics.

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if considered necessary, and in consultation with relevant stakeholders. Any changes will be presented to the Governing Body for approval.

### **Professional Development**

- The English Subject Leader attends training within county or from other provider, as appropriate, and reports back to all staff
- The BCT has an English cluster group which meets termly to discuss relevant foci
- Teaching staff are expected to attend relevant courses during the school year linked to personal Performance Management Reviews and are also expected to take personal responsibility for updating their subject knowledge in English
- Moderation takes place in house, within the cluster and with support from county

### **Support for Specific Groups**

- Analysis of English achievement is carried out termly; pupils who are making slow or no progress are discussed and additional support put in place if needed
- Pupils with EAL are given additional support in all aspects of English, as necessary
- Pupils who are working at greater depth within their year group's expectations will receive additional support and an appropriately challenging curriculum
- Pupils with SEND will have English based targets on their individualised One Plan. These are reviewed termly.

### **Inclusion**

We believe that all children irrespective of ethnicity, culture, gender, social circumstance, special need or disability should have equal access to the English curriculum. Teaching resources used will ensure that no stereotyping in any form is promoted and that resources reflect positive images of different cultures, ethnicities and of those with disabilities.

All children have equal entitlement and equal access to a range of materials and teaching strategies to support their learning in English. Any disability will be fully catered for to ensure full access to the curriculum. Children with special educational needs will work on the same content but there will be differentiation in accordance with the SEND policy.

### **The Role of the English Subject Leader**

There is a named co-ordinator responsible for co-ordinating the teaching of English throughout the school. Their role is to:

- Provide support, advice and resources to members of staff, asking challenging questions where necessary in order to lead to improved provision for the children
- Monitor the planning and teaching of English and outcomes for all children, supporting staff with planning and assessment of where necessary (to include reviewing the quality of termly and weekly planning, book scrutiny, review of curriculum coverage, assessment records, pupil voice activities, review of the learning environment and, where appropriate, direct observation of teaching and learning)
- Ensure the curriculum and school policy is understood and implemented by all relevant parties

- Attend relevant training and support staff through relevant INSET sessions
- Monitor the use of resources throughout the school and ensure high quality resources are available - and used - to support high quality teaching
- Keep up to date with developments in the teaching of English, adapting the school's curriculum, assessment systems and policies in line with any changes to statutory requirements and national and local developments.

## **Handwriting Guidance** Updated June 2017

At Sunnymede Junior School, we are committed to improving the quality of writing across the school, given the importance of this skill set to our children in future years. Handwriting remains a vital skill, despite the digital age in which we live. It will continue to be essential for our children to produce neat handwriting in the future, no matter what career paths they eventually take. Indeed, our children are still required to use paper and pen / pencil throughout the school day and exams continue to be completed manually. As such, we ask that you encourage your child to write manually at home on a regular basis. This is not to suggest that the use of computers for writing is not valued but simply to request that a balance is struck. Indeed, there is much pleasure and self-satisfaction to be gained by seeing a page of beautifully crafted writing!

As a school, we use the *Nelson* handwriting scheme. In the Infant school, the children are taught to form letters using exit flicks. They are also introduced to the main joins in year 2 and those who are ready are encouraged to join. We build on this in the juniors, teaching the four key joins systematically, along with different aspects of presentation. Where children continue to have difficulty forming any individual letters correctly, they will continue to receive support with this and, if necessary, join a handwriting intervention group to support them further.

So that you can best support us in ensuring your child is using the correct letter formations when writing at home, along with the correct method for joining, a *Handwriting leaflet for Parents* is available for parents. It sets out the correct letter formations in lower and upper case form, as well as numerals. It also sets out the four handwriting joins and a handwriting checklist that you can use at home. This leaflet gives general guidance only; if you would like to know the next steps in handwriting and presentation for your own child, please do make an appointment to see your child's teacher and they will be happy to give you further advice.

We have decided that when children join us in Year 3, they will begin by writing with pencil. Teachers will regularly review the progress each child is making in developing the neatness and fluency of their script. Once they are making a concerted effort to join their writing and have demonstrated that it is legible and reasonably neat, they will be issued with a 'pen licence'. This will take the form of a certificate which will be awarded in an assembly to recognise the significant achievement they have made. In order to activate their pen licence, they will need to bring in a good quality black rollerball pen to use at school. Pens vary in quality but we recommend the uni-ball Eye micro UB150 rollerball pen (0.5 mm tip). To make this process easier, we keep these pens in stock in the school office and they can be purchased from us at a cost of only £1.00. If you purchase the pen from us, we will also label it with their name using an indelible marker. Once your child has brought their pen to school, they will be able to use it to write all lessons except for Maths, some Science lessons and music lessons. For children who have been writing with pen for some time, they will continue to write in pen, provided that the pen they bring to school is of a suitable quality and their handwriting does not deteriorate. In Year six, all pupils will write in pen to prepare for secondary school, regardless of whether they have been awarded their pen licence.

Where children write in pencil (all children use pencil for Maths), we provide HB pencils for children to write with. A number of children, however, prefer to bring in their own pencils. If they choose to do so, the pencil must be HB grade and of a good quality. There is strong evidence that the quality of a writing instrument can really affect the legibility and presentational quality of writing. Writing instruments that are too short, long, heavy or thick often result in poor quality output. It has been decided, therefore, that children may not use pencils with 'pencil toppers' or 'pencil grips'. If a child needs to use a pencil grip due to a particular need, these will happily be provided by the school. If children bring in unsuitable writing instruments for use in school, the class teacher will discuss this with the pupil and, where necessary, their parent, requesting that more appropriate instruments are used.

Note to Teacher: All year groups have been issued with a handwriting planning pack, including a Nelson Teacher Guide and text book resources. These support the handwriting planning process.

### **Year Group Writing Objective Record**

For writing, each pupil is assessed individually, based on the end of year objectives. The EOY objective record is photocopied on yellow card and secured by a treasury tag to the back of each pupil's English book. All pupils will have the end of year objective record relevant to their year group. A child will only have an end of year objective record for the previous year if they are working significantly below age-related expectations due to a specific learning need in that area e.g. a child with SEND. However, this must only take place with the agreement of the Head or SENCO.

Assessment of end of year objectives is based on on-going writing across the year in both the pupil's English book and across the curriculum. Assessments should only draw on independent pupils' writing. By way of example: if a pupil has been supported with vocabulary in a specific piece of writing, this piece of writing cannot be used to assess a related objective. However, it could be used to assess text structure or punctuation etc. The same applies for different strands. This is why it is important to identify the nature of the support when the AS code is used (see marking code). Where there has been no adult support at all, that piece of writing can be used to assess all objectives.

Each objective should be evidenced three times to ensure the pupil is secure in this area of learning. On the first two times this is evidenced, the teacher should date the box to the right of the objective. Once the objective has been evidenced a third time, the objective should be highlighted and dated to the left of the objective.

### **Personal Target Trackers (PTTs)**

Whilst all pupils will be working to achieve the end of year objectives for their year group, all pupils will also have their own personal areas of development that may not be related directly to the year group objectives. These will be much more specific to them and reflect 'smaller, more manageable steps'. In order to plan these personal targets, all pupils will have a 'Personal Target Tracker' that will be photocopied on the reverse of the yellow card in the back of their English book. On the left hand side the teacher should undertake a detailed gap analysis of each pupil's writing, identifying gaps in writing across the different strands. This should be initiated at the start of the year and used as an integral part of the on-going marking process, updating as new gaps are identified.

Once gaps in learning are identified, the right hand side should be used to identify the current target/s. In order to do this, the teacher – with pupil input wherever possible – will identify one or two of the gaps identified and word them as a simple target on the 'current writing focus' column on the right hand side. A pupil may have one or two personal targets at one time, as deemed appropriate by the teacher. Targets must be very precise and understood by the pupil if they are to move forward in their learning. These targets should be shared with pupils and teachers must be pro-active in ensuring the pupils know and achieve their targets. Teachers should consider how they plan learning to ensure different individual targets are met e.g. pre-teaching, 1-1 support, guided group work etc.

Evidence of children working on targets should be evident through the marking process and across the curriculum. If the Personal Target Trackers are being implemented and managed effectively by teachers, evidence will be seen in the pupil's work and through marking. Teachers must actively look for evidence when marking. In order to evidence that pupils are working towards their targets, the following marking procedure will be used:

The teacher will use a pink pen to write PT in circle in the margin and next to the evidence. This should also be dated on the personal progress trackers in the back of the pupil's book.



### **Pupil self-assessment:**

Teachers will regularly encourage pupils to self-assess when they have worked towards their target. Teachers should ensure they look at their personal target trackers in lessons to keep them focused. When they believe they have done so, the pupil may should write PT in a circle in the margin. When marking, the teacher will put a pink tick next to / through the child's symbol if they agree. If they do not agree, the teacher will write VF next to the PT symbol made by the pupil and ensure they follow this up by talking to the pupil about why it is not met.

The personal progress planners are a key element of the formative assessment process and MUST be used regularly when marking to ensure that targets are met swiftly.