

ENGLISH POLICY

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Rationale

At Dovers Green School we believe that being literate is a fundamental life skill and therefore an emphasis is placed on ensuring that children are taught the skills necessary to become proficient readers, writers and communicators. Learning to become literate develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes. Children are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as of non-fiction 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, reading and writing across a range of different situations.

English is taught from Foundation Stage to Year 2 to cover the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum and the National Curriculum at KS1. Every child has access to discrete daily phonics lessons until they have completed the Read Write Inc programme. Children are given the opportunity to practise their reading, writing and oracy skills across all areas of the curriculum, including discrete English lessons.

Aims

- To deliver an effective synthetic and systematic phonics programme where by children keep up rather than catch up.
- To deliver an oracy framework to enable children to speak clearly and audibly and to take account of their listeners.
- To encourage children to listen with concentration, in order to identify the main points of what they have heard.
- To give children the opportunity to talk for a range of purposes, including real and imaginary events, discussion, drama and reporting.
- To show children how to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands.
- To teach children effective communication, both verbal and non-verbal, through a variety of activities, including the communication of their ideas, views and feelings.
- To help the children become confident, independent readers, through an appropriate focus on decoding, word reading and comprehension.
- To develop enthusiastic and reflective readers, through contact with an extensive range of quality and diverse reading material.
- To expose children to adventurous vocabulary through the books they read and the books read to them.
- To foster a love of books and reading for pleasure.
- To foster the enjoyment of writing and recognition of its value through writing for a variety of purposes, both fiction and non-fiction.
- To teach the children how to correctly form their letters.
- To improve children's planning, drafting and editing of their written work.
- To teach the children to become accurate at spelling so they can focus on the composition of their written work.

We will do this through:

Phonics

- children in EYFS starting whole class RWI phonics lessons after baseline, then they are assessed and put into streamed groups with the rest of the school from the beginning of the spring term.
- daily phonics lessons for the children in EYFS, year 1 and those needing it in year 2 where children are taught to read and write using the systematic phonics programme Read Write Inc.
- tracking all children on phonics expectation grids to ensure they are meeting age related expectations.
- quickly identifying children who are working below ARE and implementing an appropriate intervention.

Writing

- using a range of creative approaches to meet the needs of all the children through the Literacy Tree scheme, film, Pie Corbett's Talk for Writing structure, 'The Boxing Clever Approach' developed by Alan Peat, talk partners and role play.
- planned, shared writing in every class across the curriculum.
- teaching assistants being actively involved in writing lessons by scribing the writing process or by recording ideas, words and phrases on the flipchart or working wall.
- the continual use of English working walls in KS1 to support the current teaching and learning.
- encouraging children to "have a go" when writing and not to 'dodge' words just because of the spelling.
- teachers and teaching assistants will model using dotted lines under spellings that they are unsure of and children are to be encouraged to do the same in their independent writing.
- in KS1, every child participates in at least one guided writing session per week with the teacher.
- children in EYFS participating in a weekly guided writing session as soon as it is felt they are ready.
- teaching children how to form letters correctly, using print in EYFS, moving to cursive script by the end of Year 2. All children will be taught the RWI letter formation pattern.
- children in KS1 receiving discrete handwriting lessons using the RWI handwriting scheme.
- all KS1 mainstream children having English targets so that they know what they are working on and what they have to do to improve. Early Years children and children in Butterflies will be given targets when it is felt they are ready.
- providing each child with quality verbal or written feedback, and teachers using highlighting to assess individual progress.
- providing our SEND children with strategies and resources to support their sentence construction, such as cut up sentences, shape coding, the use of Clicker, phoneme frames and colour coded sentences.
- overview grids with progressive objectives for writing, reading, spelling, grammar and oracy in all year groups.

See appendix 1&2

Grammar

- weekly grammar lessons for KS1.
- the shape coding technique is used to support children who need additional support with sentence construction.

See appendix 2

Spelling:

- through the discrete teaching of spelling rules in Year 2.
- focusing on high frequency words during individual reading and phonics lessons.
- the Read Write Inc Spelling programme in Year 2.
- developing the children's understanding of the patterns in language.
- using mnemonics to teach tricky spellings.

- Year 2 children having their own personal dictionaries where they can record new words or words they are struggling to spell.

See appendix 3

Oracy

- using specific oracy objectives, sentence starters, and roles for year group to ensure progression.
- having a Vocab Jar in each classroom, used to collect new and exciting words.
- ensuring that the children have access to quality role play opportunities.
- developing the children's confidence in using high quality language in both oral and written work through the following strategies:
 - 'Name It' - for example, if a child talks about a car, insist that the child names the make and model to add more detail and interest.
 - 'Push! Push! Push' - do not accept the first idea given, push the children for better quality language.
- pre-teaching key vocabulary across the curriculum for identified children
- using talk partners regularly.

See appendix 4

Reading

- ensuring children are reading books correctly matched to their phonic ability (using the RWI scheme).
- access to high quality reading material, including new and diverse texts.
- suggested books for each year group to read during story time.
- children reading during their RWI lesson for 20 minutes every day.
- Hearing every child read once a week in EYFS by a teacher or teaching assistant on rotation. Guided reading to be introduced in EYFS when appropriate. In KS1 children receiving an individual read or a guided read on a three weekly rotation. As the year progresses higher achieving children in Year 2 may be heard to read in guided reading groups only, to allow them to work on higher order reading skills.
- identifying children who need additional reading support and allocating them a correctly suited intervention e.g. NESSY, RWI flashcards, additional phonics, RWI virtual classroom, additional guided reads and daily reads.
- every class having a planned daily story time in which books and authors are chosen to ensure that children listen to a wide range of quality fiction, non-fiction and poetry.
- providing children easy access to a wide, diverse and varied selection of books to read for pleasure.

See appendix 5

ICT

- every classroom having an interactive whiteboard, a computer, access to iPads and LED boards to aid English skills e.g. using Clicker.
- using different types of recording devices such as tablets and sound buttons, on which the children can dictate and replay sentences.

Monitoring

The teaching and learning of English skills will be monitored by the English subject leads and SLT through learning walks, lesson observations, planning, work sampling, talking to children and pupil data analysis.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Assessment in English is an on going process. Work is monitored by the Class Teacher, Subject Leaders, SLT and the SENCo, in line with the Assessment Policy. Assessment data for reading and writing will be entered onto Arbor. Phonics expectation grids are updated half termly and monitored by the reading lead.

Appendix 1

HANDWRITING

Our main objective is to teach children how to write fluently, quickly and legibly. Time taken to help children learn to write with an effective handwriting style will be time well spent since handwriting will be required in almost every school subject.

Handwriting is:

- a complex motor task accomplished by the action of coordinated finger, wrist and elbow movements and children need to have good trunk and shoulder stability.
- a perceptual skill requiring recognition and reproduction of different shapes and understanding of their orientation on a surface
- a cognitive skill whose rules must be learnt.

Activities to develop handwriting skills - be they to develop fine and gross motor coordination or actual letter formation - need to be planned daily. A progression of skills together with activities to support the children's development is outlined below.

Readiness for writing

This is a very difficult concept to define. There are many possible reasons why a child may not be ready to learn to form letters, but as a general rule of thumb a child who cannot draw a circle, a vertical and/or a horizontal line that is recognisable is unlikely to manage the more complex shapes that make up letters.

Is the child ready to write?

Demonstrate the following then ask the child to imitate freehand:

- Horizontal lines left to right, both straight and wavy.
- Straight scribble
- Round and round scribble
- A diagonal cross
- A horizontal/vertical cross
- An anti-clockwise circle
- A clockwise circle
- A vertical line in a downward direction

Children who are not ready to learn how to form letters would benefit from some general pre-writing activities for example, bead threading, modelling, weaving and finger play. Cutting and pasting activities strengthen the hands, help with in-hand manipulation, and improve hand-eye coordination.

Scribbling, drawing and colouring do not **directly** help a child to write but they are important in developing confidence and pencil control. They can also help children understand more about written communication and the opportunity to experiment with a range of pencils, crayons etc.

It is expected that the majority of children will be able to write their names with correct letter formation as soon as possible after entry to school, with due regard to children's readiness for writing. Pupils who have difficulty can identify their work with the first letter or two of their names and learn the rest little by little. It is better that one or two letters are correctly formed than a whole name written with the letters formed incorrectly. If children are taught to form the letters correctly they will form these letters well whenever they need to write them.

Teaching the Basics

Handwriting patterns

These can usefully precede the teaching of letter formation as part of a programme of preparatory activities. In the formation of handwriting patterns children are making and repeating the movements they need to make the letters without the anxiety of completing a letter correctly. In addition, by their repetitive nature patterns also emphasise the rhythmic movement which we aim for when writing.

Children should have ample opportunity to work on handwriting patterns. Once they are able to produce the simpler patterns, moving from left to right across the page, they can use them as a decorative frame for their written work. When children can do these patterns well, pattern making becomes an enjoyable and useful activity in itself which, at the same time, improves aspects of handwriting skills.

Forming letters correctly

It is vital that children are taught how to form letters following the correct movement pathways which is taught through the RWI patter.

	Progression of Skills
Foundation Stage	Assess children for readiness for writing (if appropriate). Activities to develop gross and fine motor control. Children to learn to write their name. To hold writing implements correctly using 'snappy fingers'. To experience writing letters in a variety of textures - salt, paint, sand etc. To see different fonts around the school environment, both handwritten and computer written. To associate letter sounds with the skill of writing. To learn the formation of capital and lower case letters. Focused attention on paper and correct seating positions, particularly for left handers Remember to seat left handers on the left hand side of the table.
Year 1	Activities to promote development of fine and gross motor skills as appropriate. To secure the formation of lower case and capital letters. Encourage letters of even size with consistent use of ascenders and descenders. Regular spacing between words Write on line Monitor individual progress - joining, spacing and size Simple presentational skills eg. lay-out, size, neatness Focused attention on the position of paper, correct seating positions, pencil grip and sitting on the left side of the table.
Year 2	Activities to promote development of fine and gross motor skills as appropriate. Continue joining up, increasing speed and accuracy. Regular daily practice. Encourage confident writers to develop personal style Focused attention on speed and fluency of left handers. Specific teaching on presentation skills.

To develop these skills -

- Practise in one or more of the above needs to be planned daily.
- Use shape families, where the letters of the alphabet are sorted into main movement groups.
- Children need to be supervised during letter formation practice to avoid reinforcing misconceptions. This needs to continue until letter formation is secure.
- Handwriting practice should be little and often, a few minutes at a time to practise individual letter, pattern or joined letters.
- Patterns should focus on features which keep recurring in letter formation.

Resources

- RWI handwriting pattern and scheme.
- The SENCo has many resources from Occupational Therapists designed to target specific issues relating to the development of fine and gross motor control and also in helping children when they get to the letter formation stage.
- The Teodorescu Perceptuo-Motor Programme - develops perceptual and fine-motor skills.
- Write Dance - A Progressive Music and Movement Programme for the development of pre-writing and writing skills.
- Writing slopes.
- Pencil grips.
- Handwriting books for identified children.

Appendix 2

WRITING

- Children need to view writing as a means of communication. This can be achieved through a variety of written activities in all curriculum areas. At the earliest stages this will be mark making which may contain some recognisable letters.
- The children's writing may be supported by an adult encouraging the child to hear and write the initial sound he /she wants to write.
- This early attempt at representing a word by the initial sound only, will progress by an adult supporting the child to hear the final sound through to the medial sound.
- The children will be taught to use RWI sound mats, word banks and dictionaries.
- Phonetically spelt words will give the teacher an opportunity to discuss the child's attempt and to practise the correct spelling. Certain words are used frequently by children at the early stages of writing and it is important that these are learnt correctly. Generally the teacher will only pick up on one to three misspellings in a piece of writing, the correct spelling of which needs to be practised soon after.
- Children should develop an understanding of punctuation through discussion and by reading their work aloud. They will be introduced to capital letters, full stops, commas, question and exclamation marks.
- By example, the teacher should encourage the children to value their own and others' writing. They should be encouraged to take pride in the content and presentation of their work.

Appendix 3

SPELLING

The most effective starting point in teaching spelling is the child's awareness of the relationship between hearing sounds in words and their representation in text. The children will be taught spelling patterns and rules and be encouraged and supported to develop their own strategies for learning to spell. By the end of Year 2 children will have developed a love of words and enjoy finding out how to spell. They will have developed some personal spelling strategies that will help them become autonomous and independent learners.

Strategies Used For Teaching Spelling

1. *Matching and sequencing*
 - objects - pictures - letters
2. *Onset and Rhyme*
 - Auditory awareness
 - Oral awareness

- Recall
 - Visual discrimination – pictures and words
3. *Visual Perceptual Memory*
- Games to develop auditory, visual and sequencing memory
 - Recognising lower case letters
 - Recognising lower and upper case letters
 - Recognising a sequence of letters
4. *Word Structure*
- Understanding the relationship between letter and sound
 - Understanding parts of words
 - Application of parts of words eg. prefixes, suffixes, roots, contractions etc.
5. *Initial Graphonics*
- Discriminating single sounds
 - Discriminating blends
 - Dictionary skills
6. *Alphabet and alphabetical order*
- Naming letters
 - Recalling order
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7. *Teaching Spelling*
- The following strategies will also be used
- Progression through the RWI phonics scheme
 - Progression through the RWI spelling scheme for children in Year 2
 - Spelling games and investigations
 - Many tactile activities, such as, sand, glue, paint etc. to improve motor skills and visual memory
 - ICT
 - The “look, say, cover, write, check” approach to spelling
 - Hearing children read in order to develop an awareness of phonic and word building and the links between reading, writing and spelling
 - The encouragement of children to have a go at spelling, whilst ensuring that spelling does not become a barrier to writing.
 - Activities to develop auditory, visual and sequencing skills
 - Generating rhyme through the explicit teaching of spelling patterns (onset and rime).
 - Using mnemonics to teach tricky words

Appendix 4

Oracy

All children must be given equal opportunity to develop their vocabulary and their language and listening skills in school.

- Children should understand the need for effective verbal communication and this can be achieved through all curriculum areas.
- Children should talk through discussions, telling stories, reading aloud or reciting rhymes and poems, describing events and experiences, explaining how things work, asking questions and giving directions.
- Children should be taught to consider how talk is influenced by the intended audience and should work in groups of various sizes to present work to friends, the class, whole school, parents and other adults in school.

- Children should be taught to listen with concentration, show respect for other's opinions and comment on what they have heard.
- Children should be taught the conventions of discussion and conversation. They should learn to listen carefully and respond effectively by organising what they say appropriately. This is taught through our oracy curriculum.
- Children should participate in drama activities, improvisations and role play and be given opportunities to watch and comment. Resourcing should reflect equal opportunities and cultural awareness where appropriate
- Children should extend vocabulary by exploring and discussing the meaning of words.

Appendix 5

READING

- Children will be given the opportunity to share and talk about books and to learn rhymes and poems.
- Each classroom has a book corner, which provides a range of diverse reading materials, well displayed and in a comfortable environment.
- Curriculum specific vocabulary and high frequency/tricky words should be taught at each stage.
- Talk with the children about the different characteristics of different types of text, to enable them to appreciate different styles and begin to make their own informed choices.
- Give the children regular access to the school library and class book area.
- Ensure continuous monitoring of reading through the school's assessment procedures. Running records should be used regularly to analyse children's reading and provide the next steps in their learning.
- Phonics assessments take place every half term and determine which streamed groups the children will be taught in.
- Planned daily story times using identified books from the schools' reading spine.