



ENGLISH POLICY

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PRIORY ENGLISH POLICY

Our Vision:

English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. We strive to deliver a high-quality English education that will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Immersing our children with reading will enable them to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Through the use of quality texts our pupils acquire knowledge and build on what they already know. All the fundamental skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society.

1. Our Aims

We want children at Priory to:

- read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding;
- orchestrate a full range of reading cues (phonic, graphic, syntactic, contextual) to monitor their reading and correct their mistakes;
- understand the sound and spelling system and use this to read and spell accurately;
- have fluent and legible handwriting;
- have an interest in words and their meaning and a growing vocabulary;
- know, understand and be able to write in a range of genres in fiction and poetry, and understand and be familiar with some of the ways in which narratives are structured through basic literary ideas of setting, character and plot;
- understand, use and be able to write a range of non-fiction texts;
- plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing;
- have a suitable technical vocabulary through which to understand and discuss their reading and writing;
- understand and use accurately the objectives outlined in the new national curriculum regarding grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- be interested in books, read with enjoyment and evaluate and justify their preferences; through reading and writing, develop their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.

2. Learning and Teaching

The teaching of English will include:

- explicitly taught and planned sessions following the guidance and objectives of the New English National Curriculum;
- learn and apply the key principles and accurate use of grammar, spellings and punctuation.
- word level work with explicit teaching of spelling strategies and rules and phonics where required;
- sentence level work led by quality texts to develop grammatical awareness and punctuation skills;
- text level work involving reading a range of genres to develop comprehension skills and scaffold writing;
- studying a range of text types, including cross-curricular writing, modelled to promote sustained composition;

- immersion in a print rich environment that promotes a reading culture and develops speaking and listening.

There are children of differing ability in all classes at Priory. 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 some children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals. We use a variety of strategies during English lessons to address children's different learning styles. These strategies include; thinking skills, higher order questions, planning for mastery opportunities and tasks by considering different learning styles. Resources such as: digital texts, picture books, paintings, film and media clips, TV programmes are also used as a stimulus to engage our children.

3. English Curriculum Planning

We use the New English National Curriculum as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English.

We carry out the curriculum planning for English in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The New National Curriculum details the genres we teach in the long-term and the key objectives covered each year.

Our medium term plans, based on the New National Curriculum, give details of the main teaching units for each term. These are linked where appropriate to other curriculum areas. These plans define what we teach and ensure purpose, balance and distribution.

Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan. This lists the specific learning objectives for each lesson including GAPS, reading and writing giving the details of how the lessons are to be taught. The class teacher evaluates each child's learning from every lesson and notes it on the plan using RAG highlights and notes.

Speaking and listening

In line with the New English National Curriculum, we believe that speaking and listening is fundamental to children's development and that confidence in this area is essential to be successful in all areas of English.

The four strands to speaking and listening are:

1. speaking;
2. listening and responding;
3. group discussion and interaction
4. drama.

These oral skills are directly taught, modelled and sensitively encouraged in whole class and small group settings. Opportunities across the whole curriculum are planned for and developed. Children play an active part in presentations, topic talks, group discussions, debates and drama activities on a weekly basis. We follow the guidance and ideas from the New English New National Curriculum . Digital videos, tapes and photos are a means of capturing progress and keeping records.

Phonics

- Phonics sessions run in Year 3 for specific children as part of a guided reading session.
- Two to three sounds a week are taught depending on what phase the pupils are on. Phonics activities encourage pupils to say the sound, listen for the sound and write the sound.
- Phonics are taught in other year groups where necessary.

Reading is taught through:

1. Whole class reading that develops listening skills, a love of story and reading for pleasure. This is teacher led reading with children listening and responding to questions, predictions and vocabulary choices as appropriate to the level of the children. In all year groups this happens on a daily basis.
2. Shared reading that immerses children in the pattern of story and features of text types. This happens in English sessions when introducing text and prior to writing. The teacher models as an expert reader and draws out the key elements of the content.
3. Guided reading that targets children's reading skills. Guided reading takes place in small groups with teacher or TA input. Guided reading lesson plans are created by each teacher using key questions from the New National Curriculum. Progress evaluations are completed during each session and stored in each class's green guided reading folder. Each group reads with an adult at least once a week during assembly time.
4. Independent reading in school and at home. Books are sent home with a reading diary to log communication with parents. Books are changed regularly with guidance from a teaching assistant or teacher if needed. Oxford Reading scheme books have a controlled vocabulary and therefore children are moved through the stages as they are able to read the key words. When confident children may choose their own chapter book to take home and these are changed regularly. Some children are also given scheme books to further support their reading skills. Children can also read at home using a computer or tablet to access our Bug Club library.
5. The reading environment. The print rich environment encourages children to interact with displays, to follow instructions and signs, promoting functional language. Themed displays are encouraged along with opportunities to write book reviews in the whole school reading corner. Books are also displayed and promoted around the classroom and the whole learning environment of the school.
6. The school library provides reference and reading materials for children and teachers. The school encourages all children to join and use their local library through termly trips for children to borrow and return books.

Writing

We believe that writing should be a creative/developmental process both at a functional and an imaginative level. All attempts at writing are valued and we know that all children have potential to be successful writers. The compositional and transcriptional skills are taught alongside the creative aspects. Immersion in reading, talk and preparation for writing is essential to the writing development process.

Writing is taught through:

1. Shared writing that is modelled by the teacher as the expert writer with contributions from the children. This is teacher-led writing with children watching and contributing ideas. Shared writing is not exclusive to English sessions and can be taught within Foundation subjects. The emphasis may be on the generation of ideas, grammatical awareness, spelling and phonics, compositional, transcriptional, presentational and text level skills or other key strategies needed in writing. Not all of these can be modelled in one session, but the teacher as the expert writer leads the cumulative writing process.
2. Guided writing that targets children at their point of writing. Guided writing takes place in small groups with a teaching focus using targets and writing already modelled. Guided group writes with a teacher at least once a week. The main part of the session is spent by the child writing with the adult intervening as appropriate.
3. Independent writing. Throughout the school children need opportunities to develop their confidence and practise their writing skills. All writing activities should have a purpose and quality should be promoted through book making, publication or presentation to another audience. Independent writing takes place during an extended writing session every week.
4. Writing environment. The school environment celebrates quality writing through displays of work in both handwritten and typed form as well as signs and labels. All classrooms have purposeful working walls and well-equipped resources to aid writing.

GAPS

Grammar, punctuation and spelling are taught using the objectives outlined in the New National Curriculum. Teachers use assessment data from their daily marking of writing and half termly Rising Stars GAPS tests to carefully plan weekly units of writing based on embedding these skills.

GAPS is taught through:

1. Carefully focussed planning based on gaps in the children's knowledge taken from their writing and half termly assessment data.
2. Taught use of dictionaries, origin of word dictionaries, and thesauruses.
3. Clear modelling of writing.
4. Games which encourage the children to play with and explore grammar themes.
5. SAT style standalone questions.
6. Homework using Grammar Bug or websites.

Spelling

Developing Spelling

In order to be an efficient speller, a child needs to:

- Be able to segment words into component phonemes;
- Know which graphemes represent the phonemes in words;
- Be able to distinguish visually between words which are 'legitimately' spelled, eg wait, wate;

- Know the meanings of the homophones, e.g. been and bean, so that the correct spelling is used;
- Recall, e.g. by mental image, by memorising order of tricky letters, 'tricky' words;
- Know spelling conventions, e.g., relating to double letters;
- Look for similarities in the spellings of words which are etymologically related, eg, sign, signal.

The teaching of spelling

In order to guide children to becoming more confident spellers, the teaching of spelling is as investigative as possible. The lessons provide visual, auditory and kinesthetic elements in which the children play a vital role in their own learning.

The progression of approaches which are used throughout the school consists of: daily activities and games taken from online resources, the 'Letters and Sounds' framework, investigations from 'Spelling Bank' and 'Support for Spelling', all DFES publications. These books are used in order to fulfill the objectives in the New English National Curriculum alongside the use of the non-statutory word lists for support. These words are also displayed in all classrooms.

The key words used in the teaching of spelling are used from year to year to ensure continuity and aid children's understanding: *blend*, *segment*, *phonemes* and *graphemes* are the more common key words.

The Proof-Reading System

Within the English lesson, proof-reading checking techniques are taught using 'Teacher Demonstration' and 'Shared Writing' teaching methods. The children are made aware that checking their work for spelling mistakes is a vital and important part of the writing process. We agree as a staff that children should have the ability to proof-read work independently and not waste time queuing up to have their writing checked. We also want to avoid the scenario where children become accustomed to teachers proof-reading their work and finding all the mistakes for them.

Dictionary Use

There are a range of dictionaries and thesauruses in each class which are differentiated in ability levels to suit the range of needs within the English lesson. As well as doing investigations using dictionaries and undertaking specific dictionary work, the children are also encouraged to have dictionaries on the table during guided reading in order to research the meaning of unknown words.

Standardised Testing of Spelling

Our children are tested every September and June using the online SWST Spelling Tests. A spelling quotient and a spelling age is found for each child. The results are then used to identify the more-able and less-able spellers in each year group. These children are then grouped accordingly.

For children on the SEN register, information gathered from the SWST spelling results is used to inform the SENCO and class teacher of the children who may need specific spelling targets on their Provision Maps.

Year six take past SAT spelling tests throughout the year, in order to address weaker areas. In addition to this, Year 3, 4 and 5 children sit half-termly spelling tests as part of their Rising Stars assessments. These results are used to inform planning and next steps.

Spelling Homework

Children will have mini spelling investigations set as homework. These tasks will be appropriate to their needs and will be linked to the spelling investigations or vocabulary work covered in the English lessons. Year group objectives for the teaching of spelling can be found in the New English National Curriculum. Specific phonic teaching can be found in the 'Letters and Sounds' handbook.

5. Handwriting and Presentation

We believe that neat well formed handwriting and presentation of written work helps to raise standards as the pupils take pride in and have a sense of ownership of their work. As a school we are adopting the fully cursive method of handwriting using the Nelson style of joins.

Aims

- ☺ To raise standards in writing across the school.
- ☺ To have a consistent approach when teaching handwriting and presentation of work throughout the school.
- ☺ To adopt a common approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard, on displays or when making resources.

Handwriting Guidance

By the end of Key Stage 2 we want our children to be able to produce a fluent, consistently formed style of fully cursive handwriting with equal spacing between the letters and words. This should maintain a personal style that engages the reader.

- Children will have handwriting sessions at least once a week depending on their needs.
- Some children will attend lunchtime clubs to support when needed.
- All children will write in pencil until neat and confident enough to use pen.

Materials

Pencils and handwriting pens are provided by the school. To aid pupils' handwriting we have purchased a site license for 'Handwriting for Windows'. This font should be used alongside 'Comic Sans' and 'Sassoon Primary Infant' when producing computer generated writing.

Special Educational Needs

Pupils with a defined record of support are supported in their handwriting and presentation through individual education plans, monitored by the class teacher and Special Needs coordinator. Thicker triangular pencils, pencil grips and wider lines will be used by children experiencing problems writing alongside other activities to develop their fine motor skills.

6. Assessment and Recording

At Priory we use the Andrell Education Criterion scale based on the New National Curriculum objectives to assess children's unaided writing each term. Individual targets are then set and discussed with the children so that they are clear on how they can make progress across the next term. This writing is then kept in a children's red assessment folders. We use these to track our children's progress in writing throughout their time at Priory.

Progress and levels in reading are recorded during the guided reading sessions and comprehension lessons using record sheets, observations and notes, tests, marking and individual target setting conferences. These assessments are used to inform planning and to target teaching to the needs of the children as well as to track progress. These notes are kept in a class guided reading folder.

Teachers continually assess children's work in English. Short term assessments are made after every lesson by RAG highlighting each child's progress and recording this on to their planning. These AFL notes support teachers in adjusting their daily plans to meet the needs of their pupils. Daily and in-depth weekly marking of children's independent writing is completed by the teacher providing a positive comment that is specifically linked to the Learning and Objective, and a target, where necessary in order to move children on in their writing (see marking policy for PAR marking).

Every half term children will take Rising Stars assessments for all areas of English. These are then carefully analysed by teachers and subject leaders to inform planning and to identify whole school areas for development.

7. Monitoring

The English Leader and sub-coordinators work in conjunction with the S.L.T to:

- model good practice;
- analyse data from assessments and highlight strengths and weaknesses;
- feedback annually to Governing Body regarding KS2 SATS and internal assessments;
- write SDP foci for English, linked to analysed data;
- be responsible for the upgrading and ordering of resources and arranging for their storage;
- keep staff informed about developments and new initiatives to support the teaching of language and English and ensure staff are informed;
- audit needs and organise staff training;
- train staff in the learning and teaching of English;
- monitor planning on a termly basis with the head teacher; scrutiny of books and lesson observations with constructive feedback;
- support teachers in planning and using resources;
- update the school policy when necessary.