

LONG MEADOW SCHOOL

ENGLISH POLICY



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Governor committee:	Curriculum Committee

Long Meadow School English Policy

At Long Meadow School our priority is to create fluent readers and writers, who are equipped with the knowledge and skills required to be confidently literate throughout their lives. Alongside our vision for children's academic achievement is our wish that our children leave Long Meadow with a life-long passion for reading and stories because reading for pleasure provides so many benefits: academically, socially and emotionally.

This policy sets out our practice in the teaching of English: reading, writing, phonics, spelling, grammar and spoken language based on the National Curriculum requirements and our values and vision.

Spoken Language

Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing and so we ensure that our classrooms are language-rich environments that stimulate meaningful speaking and listening opportunities. We create structured opportunities for dialogue and discussion linked to learning and encourage children to share their thoughts in a safe and secure environment. Much of our teaching is dialogic which means that children are actively engaged in their learning and able to verbalise their ideas and opinions. We utilise a range of strategies in the classroom to teach and practise spoken language:

- Use of class discussion and talk partners
- Listening to and participating in stories, poems and songs
- Drama activities and opportunities for role-play and imaginative games
- Collaborative group work including within and across year groups
- Opportunities for children to perform, including plays, learning fairs and poetry performances
- Use of sentence stems and speaking and listening frames to scaffold spoken language
- Opportunities to debate and discuss different issues

Reading and Phonics

Our priority is that every child leaves Long Meadow a competent and confident reader both for academic success and enjoyment of language and stories, enabling children to become life-long readers. We prioritise the teaching of reading by using a systematic phonics programme (Read Write Inc.) in Early Years and Key Stage One and further developing children's reading knowledge and skills by using Whole Class Reading in both Key Stage One and Key Stage Two.

The teaching of reading in Early Years and Key Stage One:

- Daily Read Write Inc. lessons in Early Years which begin in week 2 to ensure that children make a strong start. These lessons follow the Read Write Inc. programme of study teaching children to recognise sounds and orally blend, before reading words (including alien words) and stories linked to their phonic knowledge. Lessons start at 15 minutes in duration and build to 45 minutes by the end of Early Years.
- Daily Read Write Inc. lessons in Key Stage One until children have finished the Read Write Inc. programme and are able to read a passage of age-appropriate text confidently at 90+ words per minute. Lessons last for one hour and teach reading, spelling and writing skills.
- All Read Write Inc. groups across Early Years and Key Stage One are grouped by stage not age to ensure that children are being taught to their specific needs
- Children that finish the Read Write Inc. programme, move on to daily English lessons where they continue to build their reading and writing skills through carefully sequenced units of learning linked to a writing purpose.
- Each week, all children in Early Years and Key Stage One take home a phonetically decodable book that matches their phonic ability, as well as a 50/50 book (a book that

children will require some support with) and a library book to enrich their language and widen their reading horizons.

- Children are assessed every half term by the Reading Leader using the Read Write Inc. assessment practices. This provides consistency across the school and ensures children's progress is regularly monitored.
- Children who are working below age-related expectations or who do not make progress are provided with daily 1:1 tutoring to ensure that they 'keep up' rather than need to 'catch up' further down the line.
- In addition to their daily Read Write Inc lesson, children participate in an afternoon speed sounds lesson for 10 minutes to practise and reinforce sounds taught.
- As well as participating in daily Read Write Inc. lessons, children are exposed to high-quality texts by being read to by an adult in daily story time. These texts cover a range of genres and provide opportunities for children to be exposed to rich language and vocabulary, that they are not yet able to read for themselves.
- Children also have the opportunity to discuss a wider range of stories by participating in weekly whole class reading sessions where they are taught comprehension skills.
- Opportunities for children to read for pleasure are timetabled regularly and all children have access to a well-stocked book corner with a range of age-appropriate and engaging texts.
- All children have weekly access to our well-stocked library and can choose a book to take home.

The teaching of reading in Key Stage Two:

- Children who have not met the expected standard for reading in Key Stage One and who continue to need to remain on the Read Write Inc. programme, participate in a daily Read Write Inc. lesson in Lower Key Stage Two. This ensures that they are able to competently read and write before they move on to English lessons.
- Children who are still participating in Read Write Inc. lessons are assessed every half term by the Reading Leader using the Read Write Inc. assessment practices. This provides consistency across the school and ensures children's progress is regularly monitored.
- Children who have completed the Read Write Inc. programme and who can read confidently at 90+ words a minute participate in daily English lessons which focus on reading and writing skills.
- All children participate in Whole Class Reading sessions, at least four times a week where they are explicitly taught comprehension skills including inference, information retrieval and vocabulary. Where appropriate, texts used for Whole Class Reading match topics and provide an opportunity to explore themes and contexts linked to these topics. Where it is not appropriate, texts are chosen to provide a range of genres and authors.
- Opportunities for children to read for pleasure are timetabled regularly and all children have access to a well-stocked book corner with a range of age-appropriate and engaging texts.
- All children are able to take home a book banded book and a library book to build their reading fluency and to share their reading with an adult at home. Children are encouraged to read a wide range of genres to widen their reading diet and expose them to a range of vocabulary.
- As well as participating in daily Read Write Inc. or English lessons, children are exposed to high-quality texts by being read to by an adult in daily story time. These texts cover a range of genres and provide opportunities for children to be exposed to rich language and vocabulary, that they are not yet able to read for themselves.
- In Key Stage Two, children are given the chance to become the Reading Champion for their class with the responsibility of promoting reading across the school through a variety of ways: reading to younger classes, sharing book recommendations, creating the half-termly reading newsletter, running the breaktime reading club and developing reading links with the community.
- All children have weekly access to our well-stocked library and can choose a book to take home.
- Children's reading is assessed in several ways both formatively through daily class discussions and learning from Whole Class reading and summatively: Salford Reading and

Comprehension assessments at the beginning of each term, half-termly Read Write Inc. assessments if applicable and independent reading comprehension assessments to inform future teaching.

- Children who require more support with their reading may have their learning supported in class through scaffolds and they may also have additional support outside of lessons through targeted intervention, including programmes like Read Write Inc. Fresh start, Dyslexia Gold or Paired Reading.

Writing

At Long Meadow, we believe that reading and writing are inextricably intertwined and so we link reading and writing to develop both skills simultaneously. We believe that, as much as possible, writing should have a purpose and we make this clear to the children so that they understand why they are writing. We follow the 'purposes' model of teaching writing rather than the 'text type' model and children learn to write for the four main purposes of writing: to entertain, to persuade, to inform, to discuss. By the end of Key Stage Two, we would expect that children understand that many text types can fall under more than one category, for example newspaper reports can be written to persuade, to inform or to entertain. When teaching the skills of writing, we follow a carefully sequenced structure. First, we spend time exploring the purpose, analysing what success looks like through an exploration of the structure (both whole-text and sentence level) and the specific language features. Then we model specific parts of the purpose for writing, focusing on the key grammar and language skills needed to be successful. This is where misconceptions are addressed and children have the opportunity to initially apply their understanding through scaffolded pieces of writing. Finally, the children apply what they have learned by completing a 'hot write' where they write for the purpose independently. This final stage also includes editing, both content and secretarial, as well as publishing for a given audience.

The teaching of Writing:

- A purpose and audience for each piece of writing is decided from the outset.
- Writing is stimulated through hooks which include high-quality books, artefacts, visits and visitors, drama and role-play.
- Children understand what success looks like through careful text and sentence level analysis and are given writing checklists to self-assess their writing.
- Teachers model writing, drawing on their expert knowledge and the knowledge and ideas from the children. Through their modelling, teachers address misconceptions and demonstrate how to address and overcome difficulties that arise through the writing process.
- Teachers provide immediate feedback through 'hot marking' which allows the children to make improvements at the point of writing when it has the most impact.
- Editing is taught as an explicit skill and children are given regular opportunities to use this as a tool to improve the quality and accuracy of their writing.
- Children are encouraged to work collaboratively to share ideas and to support each other to improve their writing.
- Writing is celebrated across the school through displays, rewards, publishing and sharing.
- Writing is assessed through 'hot writes' which happen at the end of each unit. Children are assessed against a specific set of criteria linked to that purpose for writing and the outcomes for their year group.
- Judgements are moderated via both internal and external moderation procedures to ensure consistency and robustness.

Spelling

Understanding how to spell correctly is important in supporting children to communicate their ideas clearly and accurately. We recognise that the English language makes learning to spell difficult for children, due to the high number of possible grapheme choices for each phoneme. Because of this, we teach children to spell using the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme in Early Years and Key Stage One and the Read Write Inc. Spelling programme from Year 2, which is a robust and systematic approach to teaching spelling. The programme provides explicit, systematic teaching that is continually practised and reinforced until knowledge is committed to children's long-term

memory. Throughout each unit, children participate in a range of activities to explore and practise a specific spelling pattern and, following this, opportunities to revisit and revise are planned into the Long Term Plan for each year group.

The Teaching of Spelling:

- In Early Years and Key Stage One, spelling is taught as part of the speed sounds lesson and children are taught how to spell words that contain sounds that they know using 'Fred Fingers'. Alongside this, children are taught how to spell 'red words' (high frequency words) and apply this when writing.
- In Key Stage Two, the Read Write Inc. programme is taught in year groups for 15 minutes every day.
- Children who are not working at age-related expectations can begin at a different starting point before they catch up with their peers.
- The online resources are used for whole-class teaching and then the practice books contain partner, group and independent activities to consolidate understanding and to practise and monitor children's spelling.
- There are 6 practice tests per year group which are completed at the end of each half term. This enables teachers to track children's progress through the tests and identify which concepts the class may need to consolidate.
- Spelling is also assessed using the Single Word Spelling Test which is administered at the beginning of each term.
- When writing, children are expected to apply what they have learned in spelling lessons and are provided with a range of resources to build their independence: Read Write Inc. grapheme mats, word banks, personalised spelling lists where appropriate and dictionaries.
- When writing, children are encouraged to 'wobble' underline words they do not know how to spell so as to not affect the flow of their writing. They are expected to return to this word as part of the editing process and use an independent resource or seek support in order to be able to spell this word.
- Incorrect spellings are identified by adults using the 'sp' code and children practise spelling corrections as part of their Next Day Plenary.
- Where additional spelling support is required, children participate in a spelling intervention group where specific spelling patterns are revised.

Grammar

An understanding of how to use grammar correctly is an essential part of learning to write to ensure unambiguity and clarity of meaning. We believe that grammar is best taught in context which is why most explicit grammar teaching, linked to the year group guidelines in the National Curriculum are taught as part of the writing process. Children are given further opportunities to explore grammar principles through Whole Class Reading discussions and independent learning experiences.

The Teaching of Grammar:

- Grammar skills are progressive, starting with the basics of sentence construction and building to more complex concepts such as using passive and active voice.
- The content of grammar teaching for each year group is based on the National Curriculum guidance for each year group.
- Grammar is linked, where possible, to the purpose of writing being studied so as to provide a meaningful context.
- Grammar is assessed as part of the writing process through 'hot writes' at the end of each unit as well as formally at the end of each Key Stage as part of the SATs.

Handwriting

We place value on children taking pride and care over their learning and handwriting is an integral part of this. Having a fluent, comfortable handwriting style is crucial for children to develop writing stamina and to feel proud of their learning. We use the Read Write Inc. programme in Early Years

and Key Stage One to teach correct letter formation and move on to using the PenPals programme from Year 2 to further develop handwriting skills.

The Teaching of Handwriting:

- In Early Years and Year One, children are taught how to form letters correctly using the Read Write Inc. programme. Each sound is paired with an image to provide a memory hook for the children. Handwriting is taught as part of each lesson to ensure that the skills are practised regularly.
- In Key Stage Two, children follow the progression as set out in the PenPals programme to develop and practise handwriting skills, including developing a joined style.
- In Key Stage Two, handwriting lessons are taught explicitly several times a week for 15 minutes at a time to provide regular practise.
- Children use a pencil in Early Years and Key Stage One and then move on to using a pen in Key Stage Two.
- Displays across the school include elements of hand-written text alongside typed text to model neat handwriting.
- Immediate feedback is provided to children during handwriting lessons through the use of 'hot marking' so that children can make improvements at the point of learning.
- Handwriting is assessed as part of the writing assessments and there are clear expectations for each year group.
- Children who require more support with their handwriting may have their learning supported in class through scaffolds, including using a different pen and using highlighted lines and they may also have additional support outside of lessons through targeted intervention, including programmes.