

# Elmwood Infant and Nursery School

## Literacy Policy



*Article 12 'Every child has the right to be heard and listened to'*

*Article 28 'Every child has the right to an education'*

*Article 29 'Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full'*



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**Date Policy agreed: March 2017**

**Date of next review: Spring 2020**

### Introduction

At Elmwood Infant School we firmly believe that Literacy is a significant life skill and that the development of strong learning foundations will enable our children to listen, speak, read and write confidently throughout their school career and on into adult life. We believe that it is important to foster an enthusiasm for, and an appreciation of, the different strands of Literacy (Reading, Writing and Spoken Language) in a broad, cross-curricular and real-life sense at all stages throughout the school. At Elmwood we believe it is important to value children's home languages as children with a strong foundation in first language acquire additional languages more successfully and have greater academic success.

### Aims and Objectives

- ❖ To provide children with the opportunity to read, write and speak with confidence, fluency and understanding.
- ❖ To give children an environment which is safe and secure and which provides encouragement for the development of all aspects of Literacy.
- ❖ To ensure that there is equality of access and opportunity for all children to develop their Literacy skills.
- ❖ To seek to ensure that all children achieve their full potential in all aspects of Literacy.

### Role of the Subject Leader

- ❖ To have an impact on raising standards of attainment for Literacy across the whole school.
- ❖ Ensure the effective implementation of the Statutory National Curriculum for English.
- ❖ To ensure, together with the Head Teacher, a rigorous and effective programme of lesson observations and monitoring.

- ❖ To ensure a regular and effective programme of analysis of children's work sample monitoring is in place.
- ❖ To ensure a regular and effective programme of analysis of short term planning is in place.
- ❖ To effectively manage any funding designated to Literacy.
- ❖ To monitor whole school and individual needs and to be able to assess individual professional development opportunities and needs.
- ❖ To provide training for teachers and support staff.
- ❖ To maintain the availability of high quality resources.
- ❖ To maintain an overview of current trends and developments within the subject.

## Teaching and Learning

### Reading

The 2014 Curriculum divides reading skills into two areas:

- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading)

We believe in developing a rich reading culture by creating welcoming book areas in all classrooms. All children from Reception to Year 2 have the opportunity to visit our library on a two weekly cycle, which provides an inspiring environment for our children to read for pleasure. It contains a wide selection of fiction books and non-fiction books to support children's individual research skills

Reading takes place in many ways every week:

**Whole class reading:** This develops listening skills, a love of stories, poems and non fiction books and reading for pleasure. Teachers read aloud to the children, who listen and respond to questions, make predictions and learn new vocabulary.

**Guided reading:** In the Autumn term, children in the Foundation Stage read one to one with an adult. In the spring and summer terms some children will read in a small group of 2 or 3 with their teacher or teaching assistant. In KS1, sets of guided reading books are book banded by colour and are selected according to the children's reading ability. Each group reads at least once a week with an adult. Some children will also be targeted to read one to one with an adult.

Adults record children's comments and progress on guided reading record sheets or individual reading sheets. In Key Stage One, class teachers complete reading assessment sheets to show children's achievements and next steps for learning.

**Independent Reading:** All children have opportunities to read independently throughout the week.

**Reading homework:** Parents are actively encouraged to read with their children and discuss their books with them. Children in KS1 choose their reading book from colour book band boxes and are guided by the adults in the classroom as to which box to choose from. Reception children choose a picture book daily which adults at home can read to them and discuss the story together. They are also given a relevant colour banded reading scheme book once a week to read to an adult at home. This is changed by an adult in the classroom once a week.

Children from Reception to Year 2 have a reading homework book where they can share their thoughts about the book they have read at home. Parents are encouraged to complete a reading journal when they share a book with their child.  
(See Homework Policy for additional information)

We encourage all children to join and use their local library. A member of staff from the local library usually visits school in the summer term to promote the summer reading challenge.

## **Writing**

The 2014 Curriculum divides writing skills into 4 areas:

- Transcription
- Composition
- Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation
- Handwriting

The school believes that its teachers must work together to plan, deliver and moderate the teaching of Literacy in order to ensure that expectations are high and that children are able to achieve the best of their ability. We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our daily Literacy lessons in order to meet the needs of all our pupils. These include demonstration, modelling, explanation, questioning, discussion, conferencing and feedback. In the Early Years opportunities for writing are developed through focussed activities with an adult, play contexts, including small world, role play and construction. At KS1 the teaching of writing is developed through the week, where the teacher focusses on developing the use of vocabulary, phonic knowledge, conjunctions, sentence openers, grammar, punctuation and spelling. This culminates at the end of the week with a piece of 'Big Writing'.

Children have the opportunity to experience a wide variety of texts, and to support their work with a variety of resources such as word banks, dictionaries and thesauruses. Children use ICT in Literacy lessons where it enhances their learning. Wherever possible we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

In all classes, children have a wide range of abilities, and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children. They are encouraged and supported to choose their own level of challenge within their learning. Staff have high expectations that all children can

achieve their full potential. Support staff work in class, supporting all ability groups, specific individuals or groups of children.

In the Foundation Stage, language and literacy development are incorporated in all areas of learning. Opportunities are provided for children to communicate thoughts, ideas and feelings. Purposeful role-play and small world opportunities are used to develop language, vocabulary and imagination. Children are given opportunities to share and enjoy a wide range of rhymes, songs, poetry and fiction and non-fiction books. A language rich environment is provided which reflects the importance of language through signs, notices and books. Children are provided with opportunities to see adults writing and they can experiment with writing themselves.

## **Spoken Language**

The planning of speaking and listening is integral to all literacy lessons. Children are given a range of speaking and listening opportunities to support their reading and writing activities. Some of these activities include:

- providing a range of opportunities for children to talk to and listen in formal and informal settings
- listening and responding to stories, rhymes, poems and songs read aloud
- retelling stories and poems
- the use of drama and role play to explore imagined situations in stories and develop vocabulary
- participating in discussion and debate about topical issues in the news
- talking about their own experiences in or out of school such as school trips, family activities etc..
- expressing opinions and justifying ideas
- listening to ideas and opinions of adults and peers
- asking and answering questions
- discussion and editing of work and ideas with other children and adults.
- taking part in school performances/assemblies

Children work in a range of ways to develop their speaking and listening skills, for example: paired talk, group work, one to one with an adult and whole class discussions.

The staff at Elmwood Infant and Nursey School believe in the importance of promoting spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum. Speaking and listening skills are vital components of every part of the curriculum and opportunities to develop these skills are planned for all children in all classes from the Nursery to Year 2.

## **Handwriting**

The Penpals Handwriting scheme is used to teach letter formation and then joined handwriting in school. Penpals offers clear progress from the Foundation Stage to Year 2. Children in the Nursery are provided with activities to develop their gross and fine motor skills. The children in Reception are taught how to form the individual letters alongside

practical activities to develop their fine motor skills. In Key Stage 1 children have a weekly handwriting lesson to continue learning their formation of individual letters, capital letters and numbers and learn the joins. Handwriting is also modelled daily during shared and guided writing. Children in Year 1 and 2 are sent home handwriting homework.

## **Phonics**

Phonics is taught from Nursery through to KS1. The teaching and learning of phonics is planned using letters and sounds and in the Foundation Stage and Year 1, they also use Jolly Phonics and Education City. In the Nursery we focus on allowing children to tune into sounds. In Reception and into KS1 the phonic phases are matched to the children's phonic ability. The children are set for phonics in KS1 and in Reception in the Spring and Summer term.

At the end of Year 1, the children's phonic ability is assessed and staff carry out the statutory phonic screening check. Year 2 children who do not pass the phonic screening check in year 1 are re-assessed at the end of year 2.

## **Curriculum Planning**

The Literacy Curriculum at Elmwood is planned for and delivered using the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum and the new National Curriculum (2014). Pupil provision is related to attainment rather than age.

We carry out curriculum planning in three phases (long, medium and short - term).

The National Curriculum 2014 details what we teach in the long term.

Our medium term plans ensure there is an appropriate balance and distribution of work and genre across each term.

Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan for the teaching of Literacy. This lists the specific objectives for the week's lessons and gives details of how the lessons are to be taught. Planning also includes details of each challenge: Hot, Boiling Hot, On Fire and a deeper thinking challenge - Lava. Phonics and grammar are also planned for and taught weekly in Years One and Two.

Phonics is taught in Reception weekly.

The English Subject Leader and other members of the Senior Management Team are responsible for monitoring planning, literacy books, 'Big Writing' files and outcomes.

## **Use of ICT**

The use of ICT enables children to use and apply their developing skills in English in a variety of ways. Younger children use ICT as a source of information and as a way of enabling them to present their completed work effectively. Older children use the internet when searching for information. We encourage all children to use ICT as an independent resource for learning.

A range of equipment such as digital cameras, flip cameras and camcorders are used to promote speaking and listening and also prepare children for writing activities. The interactive white board is used daily to model writing and allows children to interact and engage with the writing process.

## **Contributions of Literacy to teaching in other curriculum areas**

The skills that children develop in Literacy are linked to, and applied, in every subject of our curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing and speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work in school. We encourage children to learn about other cultures through planned learning experiences. Links with children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are actively promoted throughout the school. Rights Respecting values and articles are also integral to the teaching and learning of all areas of the curriculum.

## **Literacy and Inclusion**

At Elmwood we teach Literacy to all children, whatever their ability. We provide learning opportunities that are matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties and those learning English as an additional language, as well as providing appropriate, challenging planned work for those children who are Gifted, Able and Talented.

## **Equalities Statement**

We aim to include all children and ensure they can access the curriculum regardless of their age, gender, race, culture, religion, belief, disability or ability. Elmwood Infant School is committed to creating a positive, inclusive environment that will enable everyone to work free from racial intimidation and harassment and to achieve their full potential. Policies are available on each of these that expand on this further.

## **Assessment and Recording**

Teachers make daily assessments which are used to inform their short term planning. These are closely matched to the teaching objectives and will often be made from day to day observations. We believe written or verbal feedback is pivotal in helping guide children's progress and helping them to understand their next steps in learning. (See the Marking and Feedback Policy)

In Year 1, the teachers assess children's work in reading and writing every term. Year 2 teachers assess children's work in reading and writing every half term. Their progress is recorded and tracked on 'O'Track'.

KS1 class teachers also record children's progress on reading and writing assessment sheets created by the school. We make end of year assessments at the end of the summer term and use them to assess progress against school, local authority and national targets.

In the Foundation Stage, children's progress is also tracked each term on O'Track.

## **Resources**

The school is well resourced with a range of resources to support the teaching of Literacy across the school. We believe in providing a vocabulary rich environment which supports our children across all areas of the curriculum. All classrooms have dictionaries and thesauruses and a range of other support materials. Each classroom has a reading corner with access to a range of fiction, poetry and non-fiction texts.

## **Parents and carers**

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We do all we can to inform parents about what their children are learning by:

- ❖ Holding parents' evenings to discuss children's progress.
- ❖ Sending an annual report to parents in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can develop their learning.
- ❖ Holding workshops to develop parents' knowledge of how to support their child with different areas of Literacy.
- ❖ Sending home half termly news letters to parents, with areas of focus for that half term.

## **Monitoring and Review**

Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality of teaching in Literacy is the role of the Literacy subject leader alongside the SLT.

We are aware of the need to regularly review our policies to take account of the new initiatives, changes in curriculum or developments in technology.