

English Policy

Speaking and Listening, Reading and Writing including Grammar,
Spelling and Punctuation.



English is a fundamental life skill and is at the heart of teaching and learning in every area of the curriculum.
The development of literacy skills remains central to a child's life chances.
English develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes. The acquisition of language skills empowers children to communicate creatively and imaginatively, as well as allowing them to engage with the wider world around them.

This policy updated January 2025

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

At Snaith Primary School we believe that the skills in English: *reading, writing and speaking and listening*; provide the foundations for pupils' achievement throughout the whole curriculum and all other areas of learning for now and the future.

English is a fundamental life skill which every child is entitled to and one that opens the door of opportunity. We believe in a high-quality education which develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes. Our goal is for all children to be able to express themselves creatively and imaginatively through a love of reading and writing.

The overarching aim for English at Snaith Primary School is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

At Snaith Primary School, the teaching and learning of English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- Read, write and communicate orally with confidence, fluency and understanding
- Have an interest in books and literature; whilst practising reading for enjoyment
- Develop and foster a love of words, phrases and sayings, develop their meanings; and use a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms
- Discuss reading and writing comprehensively: expressing opinions; explaining techniques and justifying preferences; about a wide range of literature, genres and text type using appropriate vocabulary
- Understand a range of text types and genres; develop knowledge to appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- provide children with the practical tools to become independent and confident readers and writers.
- Write using a variety of styles and forms.
- Build children's self confidence and independence.
- Developing children's imagination.

Snaith Primary School's aims to promote high standards of language and literacy by:

- understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

Curriculum content

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. Planning is carried out in the long, medium and short term. A skills-based themed approach to planning has been adopted and the teachers ensure that pupils have a balance of fiction, non-fiction and poetry. This will usually be taught through themed base work. Grammar and Punctuation and Spellings are taught through discrete lessons as well as within writing lessons. Reading is taught through Reading Write Inc Phonics, individual reading books, whole class texts as well as using a range of other genre, fiction and non-fiction many linked to the curriculum.

Our aim is to ensure that all children are able to apply their knowledge and skills across the curriculum.

Speaking and listening overview

In the Foundation Stage communication, and language development is key to children's overall development and progress. We ensure that our teaching involves giving the children opportunities to a rich language environment, developing their confidence and skills in expressing themselves and enabling them to speak and listen in a range of situations. We enable the children to use language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences. We actively develop attentive listening and response. We ensure that children interact with others in play. Since September 2024 children take part in 'Drawing Club'. This helps children develop their linguistic skills (alongside developing a love of books and the fine motor skills required for writing.)

In Key Stage 1 we build on the children's speaking and listening experiences from the Foundation Stage. We teach children to speak clearly, thinking about the needs of their listeners. They work in small groups and as a class, joining in discussions and making relevant points. They also learn how to listen carefully to what other people are saying, so that they can remember the main points. They learn to use language in imaginative ways and express their ideas and feelings when working in role and in drama activities. We use a great many resources such as elements of *'Talk for Writing'* as tools to develop children's vocabulary and grammar.

In Key Stage 2 we build on the children's experiences of speaking and listening from Key Stage 1, teaching children how to speak in a range of contexts and for a range of purposes, adapting what they say and how they say it to the purpose and the audience. We enable them to develop confidence and take varied roles in groups, giving them opportunities to contribute in a range of situations with different demands through an integrated approach. We incorporate opportunities for formal and informal speaking discussion and debate with a wide range of audiences alongside widening vocabulary and developing grammatical accuracy.

All children have numerous opportunities for their voice to be heard in school, for example, through the school council and class debates/circle time. Throughout all key stages we teach children to actively listen, respond appropriately, ask questions value and respect the contributions of others.

Assessment of Speaking and Listening and additional support

Is via teachers observations and is recorded on the schools HERO assessment tracking system against the National Curriculum objectives.

In addition, the school uses the Wellcomm toolkit to assess early speech and language skills, offering interventions to support children develop their social communication skills, especially within the early years.

A number of staff are trained in Makaton to support children who require this to develop their language development.

Reading

Developing good read skills, fluency and high-quality comprehension skills along with a love of reading is the key to ensuring that children can learn across the curriculum and be successful in life.

Teaching Reading skills.

Read Write Inc is the synthetic phonics reading programme that the school follows from Nursery through KS1, that teaches children to read accurately and fluently with good comprehension. The programme also helps children learn to form each letter, spell correctly, and compose their ideas step by step.

The programme is designed for children aged 4-7. However, we continue teaching RWI to children beyond the age of 7 if required as we use a stage not age approach. RWI was developed by Ruth Miskin and more information on this can be found at <https://ruthmiskin.com/en/find-out-more/parents/>.

Through 'Read Write Inc.' children experience success from the very beginning. Lively phonic books are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and 'tricky' words, and as children re-read the stories, their fluency increases. Along with a thought-provoking introduction, prompts for thinking out aloud and discussion throughout all sessions, children are supported to read in a storyteller's voice.

In Nursery – children begin to be introduced to the synthetic sounds of the alphabet and the corresponding picture clue cards as age and stage appropriate. This takes place as in small groups or in one to one sessions – as appropriate to the needs of the children. The focus is on oral phonological development through rhyming activities, oral phonemic skills, daily talk and the opportunity to share stories on a daily basis.

In Reception and into Key Stage one

Children are assessed on their phonic knowledge and reading ability each half term. They are grouped according to their knowledge and next steps of learning. Groups are fluid according to children's increasing ability and/or need. Within their group, children continue to develop their knowledge of sounds and graphemes, and use this knowledge to decode, and construct, words along with learning to read and spell common exception words. Alongside this, children are taught to read phonics books aligned to their stage of learning on the phonics scheme. In these sessions, teachers model how to read the text, using a story voice, how to pause for punctuation and discuss the pictures and text to develop comprehension skills. In this way children develop a fluent style. Lessons take place daily and last approximately 45 minutes.

Parents are asked to hear children practice their phonics book at home and to read to their children the library book that their child has selected bring home in order to foster an additional love of reading a range of stories, rhyme, and non-fiction text.

Volunteer Reading helpers also hear children read who may require additional practice in school.

For children who may need to accelerate their learning additional intervention activities take place throughout the week, this includes for any children in KS2 who still require to consolidate their phonics knowledge, following the Fresh Start RWI programme.

In Key Stage 2

We build on the children's experiences, continuing to encourage them to read with fluency while extending their knowledge of words, sentences and text types, widening and developing their comprehension skills and interpreting the meaning of a range of reading material.

To support reading fluency, children access Reading Plus, an online adaptive reading app, which automatically adjusts to the children's learning need, speed of reading and supports children to become more proficient in their basic reading skills and comprehension. With individual log ins, children are able to access this at home as well as at school.

In addition, through a whole class guided reading, we encourage children to read more stimulating, thought provoking and texts independently and support them to reflect on the structure, vocabulary, authors intention and meanings of texts, analysing and discussing them within guided group contexts. Children also often use the guided reading text as a stimulus for their own writing.

Children are taught through a range of genres both fiction, non-fiction and poetry to recognise that reading empowers us with knowledge.

In Key Stage 2 we ask that children read daily at home for at least 15-20 minutes. As with KS1, Volunteer Reading helpers offer an ear for children to have extra practice and support as required.

Alongside developing the skills of reading and comprehension we also support children to read a wide range of high quality and challenging text. This includes through:

- Class texts, identified on carefully defined, progressive whole school reading spine. These texts are of a high quality and offer challenge. Children, with a copy of the material, follow the text while reading is modelled by the adult who pauses periodically to discuss the reading. Developing oral skills, discussion and interaction with the characters, setting and plot is a key focus, while children are supported to read at a higher level than they might independently.
- Class lending libraries that provide age appropriate recommended reads supported by the East Riding Library Service.
- Class reading reps, who share new recommended reads that children bid and vote for to add to their class library each half term.
- Accessing high quality text across the curriculum also to ensure that children learn tier three, subject specific vocabulary.

Assessment of Reading

Alongside daily observations and feedback to children with notes on planning;

In EYFS and KS1 – children are assessed at least each half term against their phonics programme and their progress and development is tracked.

Children from Y2 to Y6 undertake a reading proficiency test every half term.

Children in Y2 to Y6 undertake termly NFER reading tests. Question level analysis informs teachers planning and next steps.

Developing Writing including Grammar Spelling and Punctuation

In Foundation Stage Literacy development involves the encouragement of children to link sounds and letters to begin to write. We use a variety of texts to support children's abilities to differentiate between print and pictures. We teach children about the connections between speech and writing. We develop their knowledge and understanding of the symbolic nature of writing, the sounds and names of letters and how to write supported by the 'Read Write Inc.' phonics Programme. Children are grouped according to the phases they are learning for differentiation.

Alongside teaching the technical aspects of writing, children are supported to develop linguistic ability, vocabulary, understanding of character and plot and are excited and enthusiastic to develop their imaginations and record their own stories through the 'Drawing Club' strategy.

In addition writing materials can be found in all areas of learning and children are encouraged to access this as part of their daily routine.

Spelling

The school has developed our own progressive spelling programme, based on the RWI phonics programme of learning, including the common exception words progressing to spellings as defined by the National Curriculum including recommended spelling banks. This can be found on our website.

In KS1 especially, the spelling patterns link to the RWI sound patterns and are developed alongside these.

Throughout Y1-Y6 children have daily spelling practice in school and spellings are sent home weekly linked to the child's stage of learning. Spellings are tested weekly as well as each half term to ensure knowledge has been embedded. The 'Spelling Frame' App is made available to children at school and at home to support the practice of spellings, offering a visual and aural learning tool to support all children.

For children who find learning to spell challenging – they may also be supported by an online programme, Literacy Gold.

Grammar and Punctuation

The school also has a progressive curriculum for the discrete teaching of grammar and punctuation alongside Age Related Success criteria for writing. The objectives on the progressive curriculum (which can be found on the website) are taught daily, and where appropriate link to the writing genre focus for the week as well as being a focus of each lesson.

In Key Stage 1 building on writing experiences from the Foundation Stage children; Continue to develop their spelling skills alongside the RWI programme, including common exception words along with class Age Related Expectation spellings. These are practiced daily and sent home weekly. Along side this, children are taught handwriting through daily practice of modelled correct formation of letters, their size and orientation. These are linked to the spellings of the week.

Learn the rules of Grammar and Punctuation through discrete lessons as well as being taught within writing. The structure of lessons begin with a starter task of a dictated sentence which children repeat, hold and record. The teacher then models the correct sentence for children to 'check and fix', providing instant feedback. In this way children learn how to correctly form sentences that make sense, are accurately punctuated and correctly written.

Develop their skills in writing for a range of genres narrative and non-fiction texts. Children are supported, by the talk for writing structure, to develop, with accuracy, their oral sentences into the written form. Talk for writing supports children to develop their confidence, speaking and writing in full sentence and knowing how to punctuate these. Children have the opportunity to work from modelled examples and build on these to develop their own independent pieces of work.

We use many varied and imaginative resources as a stimulus for writing. Children are provided with modelled examples of what they are expected to write which they analyse before planning and developing their own responses.

Success criteria is used regularly to help children to recognise and reflect on the components their work should include.

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We develop the children's writing skills so that they are able to write independently, enjoying communicating through the written word and understanding the value of writing.

In Key Stage 2

Building on from this in KS2 we continue to develop children's spellings and grammar and punctuation skills through discrete teaching along with opportunity to employ these skills in their own independently written work.

We continue to employ daily dictated sentences, requiring increasingly sophisticated punctuation as part of the lesson starter.

We continue to provide children models of high quality text to analyse and discuss and use a great variety of resources and stimuli to develop children's writing skills and provide a wealth of purposes to writing, many linked to the termly themes and cross curricular learning.

We develop the children's understanding that writing is essential to thinking and learning as well as being enjoyable in its own right.

Success criteria are used regularly to enable children to recognise and reflect on the components their work should include.

Children are also encouraged to re read their own work, peer mark and respond to teachers feedback and marking to self correct. Children are strongly encouraged to use ipads/spell checkers to check their spelling accuracy.

The school uses a range of resources to support the development of reading and writing in class sessions including Literacy Shed.

Handwriting

From Nursery, correct letter formation is modelled and children are taught to start each letter in the correct place, with the correct size and orientation – as shown below.



As children move through KS1, once letters are formed correctly, children are taught to employ a joined handwriting style, by taking 'their pencil for a walk from the last letter to the start of the next'.

The school has high expectations for handwriting and presentation. Joined handwriting is proven to support children with their spelling ability and is a particular strategy recommended for children with dyslexic tendencies. It is also a requirement to attain the expected national standard for KS2.

Homework

Homework is set to enable teachers and parents to work together to support each child. It is relevant to the theme being studied at the time. Reading and spellings are given each week, greater challenges are given as the children proceed through the school.

Special Educational Needs

All children have access to the English Curriculum regardless of ability. Teacher's planning scaffolds learning for children of all abilities and where required and appropriate provides

differentiation, matched to children's specific needs. Through our teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with SEN, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents and those learning English as an additional language and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. All strategies used will be identified on Pupil Passports, Termly Support Plans and Individual Healthcare Plans.

Assessment of Writing

At Snaith Primary School we believe that assessment is essential to quality teaching and learning. (see assessment policy)

We assess children's work in a number of ways:

Through weekly spelling tests and half termly checks.

Through daily Grammar and Punctuation observations and termly recaps.

Through daily lesson starters of dictated sentences with instant check and fix feedback.

Through daily observations of the writing children produce – assessed against weekly and termly/yearly check lists of Age Related Expectations.

Through half termly writing assessments. (For writing assessments, while children are still provided with stimulus for their task the support structures for writing are removed to ensure children work with independence.)

Oral and/or written feedback is given directly through '*Response Time*' notes, where the teacher will ask the child to improve some part of their writing with reference to either: success criteria, lesson focus or individual writing targets. This children and teachers monitor progress with the greatest impact for learning.

Older children are encouraged to make judgements about their work and improve their own work through self-assessment and 'Polishing Pens'. Sometimes, pupils may assess each other's work – (peer assessment) against success criteria or individual writing targets.

Teachers record children's attainment and achievement against the schools progressive assessment criteria. This has been broken down into termly expectations to ensure that key focus is given to building essential skills.

Attainment is recorded on the schools HERO tracking system, which also charts children's progress.

Role of the Phonic Lead

Oversee and monitor the assessment of phonics – at least half termly

Monitor the progress, including the rate of progress of all children and that resources and groups match the learning needs.

Is to ensure that correct teaching of phonics through school

Observe and offer feedback and support to staff

Ensure staff are appropriately trained

Report findings to the SLT and Governors

Role of the Reading Lead

Oversee and monitor the assessment of Reading

Monitor the progress, including the rate of progress, of all children and that resources and groups match the learning needs.

Observe reading and offer feedback and support to staff

Ensure staff are appropriately trained

Report findings to the SLT and Governors

Role of the Writing Lead

Oversee and monitor the assessment of Writing including undertaking writing moderation

Monitor the progress, including the rate of progress, of all children and that resources and groups match the learning needs, including through sampling work.
Observe teaching and learn and offer feedback and support to staff
Ensure staff are appropriately trained
Report findings to the SLT and Governors

It is also important that they -

- Take the lead in Policy Development
- Purchase and organise resources
- Keep up to date with Literacy Developments

At Snaith Primary School leadership for English is shared between a number of staff.

Phonics Leader – Deborah Agar
Reading Leader – Victoria Clarkson
Writing Leader – Sally Howson

Parental Involvement

We aim to involve parents directly in the life of the school and thus in the development of children's skills, knowledge and understanding in English. Parents are encouraged to read both with and to their children at home, discussing the books with them. They also have the opportunity to help their children with weekly spellings as well as any written homework they have been given.

There are opportunities each term when parents can discuss their children's progress with their teacher. Parents are welcomed into school to support reading in the classroom.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years, the next formal review being November 27

This policy also links to the following policies:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Marking Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- ICT Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Continuing Professional Development Policy

