

# **Rack House Primary School**

## **English Policy**



**Approved by Governors: Date**

**Updated: October 2018**

**Review date: October 2019**

This policy/document was reviewed by:-

Signed ..... Chair of Curriculum Committee

Signed .....Chair of Governors

Date:

The next revision date is xxx

## **RATIONALE**

At Rack House Primary school, we believe that literacy and communication are key life skills. Through the English curriculum, we will help children develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively through spoken and written language and equip them with the skills to become lifelong learners. We aim to develop these skills through an integrated programme of Speaking & Listening, Reading & Writing.

Literacy is at the heart of all children's learning. Literacy enables children both to communicate with others effectively for a variety of purposes and to examine their own and others' experiences, feelings and ideas, giving these order and meaning. Because Literacy is central to children's intellectual, emotional and social development, it has an essential role across the curriculum at Rack House Primary School and helps pupils' learning to be coherent and progressive.

## **AIMS**

At Rack House Primary School we strive for all of our children to be literate. By the end of Year 6 we aim for all children to be able to:

- be effective, competent communicators and good listeners;
- express opinions, articulate feelings and formulate responses to a range of texts both fiction and non-fiction using appropriate technical vocabulary;
- foster an interest in words and their meanings, and to develop a growing vocabulary in both spoken and written form;
- have an interest in books and to read for enjoyment, engaging with and understanding a range of text types and genres;
- be able to write in a variety of styles and forms showing awareness of audience and purpose;
- develop powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness in all areas of literacy;
- use grammar and punctuation accurately;
- understand spelling conventions;
- produce effective, well-presented written work.

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the 2014 National Curriculum and in the Communication, Language and Literacy section of the Early Years Foundation Stage (2014).

## **FOUNDATION STAGE**

At Rack House Primary School we believe that developing children's positive attitudes to literacy from the earliest stage is of paramount importance. We strive to foster these attitudes by using play, story, songs and rhymes and provide lots of opportunities and time

to talk with children about their experiences and feelings. Phase one phonics is taught in Nursery and is developed further in Reception. Children in Reception begin Guided Reading in the autumn term with opportunities provided for whole-class shared reading using Tales Toolkit. The role of adults in supporting children is crucial to fostering their positive attitudes towards Literacy and at Rack House Primary School we believe strongly that parents are our partners in achieving this.

## **KEY STAGE ONE**

In Key Stage 1 children will be taught to learn to speak confidently and to listen to what others have to say. They will begin to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. The children will be encouraged to use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds. Children will have daily English lessons that focus on National curriculum 2014 teaching requirements. Children will also experience daily phonic sessions to develop their reading skills. Spelling and handwriting skills will initially be taught discretely before being embedded within the English lesson. Grammar will be taught as part of the English lesson, allowing children to apply their learning in context.

## **KEY STAGE TWO**

In Key Stage 2, children have daily English lessons including Reading, Writing, and Spelling and Grammar. Spelling and handwriting skills will initially be taught discretely before being embedded within literacy lessons. However, Grammar will be taught as part of the English lesson, allowing children to apply their learning in context. Literacy skills are developed across the curriculum, with the expectation of high standards of literacy remaining in all subjects. Children should learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They should read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They should explore the use of language in various text types and learn how the structure of language works.

## **ASSESSMENT AND RECORD KEEPING**

The following tools are used in the assessment of English:

- Quality marking and feedback
- Guided Reading criteria and Assessment Focus Grids (*The Literacy Company*)
- NFER assessments (termly)
- PM Benchmark levels and book bands
- Early Years Foundation Stage ABC assessment grids
- Interim frameworks guidance
- Literacy Company Assessment Grids

## **INCLUSION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

All children will receive quality first literacy teaching on a daily basis and activities will be differentiated accordingly. In addition, where identified pupils are considered to require targeted support to enable them to work towards age appropriate objectives, intervention programmes will be implemented to improve their attainment. Pupils that are more able will be challenged within the lesson.

All children will be provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

## **APPENDIX 1: SPOKEN LANGUAGE & DRAMA**

To develop as fully as possible each child's competence, confidence and enjoyment in speaking and listening, group discussion, interaction and drama will be embedded throughout the whole curriculum. The 2014 Curriculum provides guidance on incorporating speaking and listening into planning through specific tasks.

During lessons a range of techniques will be used to engage children in communication including talk for writing, talk for reading, writing strategies and self/peer assessment. Different teaching strategies, including talking partners, ensure that speaking and listening will remain an important part of the teaching sequence.

The curriculum will provide many opportunities to enhance speaking and listening skills. Activities such as class presentations, performance poetry, class/key stage assemblies, school council roles, and also school productions all contribute to the development of confident speakers and listeners.

## **APPENDIX 2: PHONICS AND READING**

Teachers will promote and value reading as an enjoyable activity and a life skill. Pupils will have access to a wide range of reading opportunities that include:

- Letters and Sounds phonics session- Early Years Foundation Stage and KS1
- guided reading
- shared reading
- whole-class reading (UKS2)
- regular independent reading
- home/school reading
- hearing books read aloud on a daily basis
- reading in other subjects including topic texts

Reading in the Early Years Foundation Stage at Rack House Primary School will support children in developing an interest and enjoyment of reading. Initially, the children will be encouraged to develop positive reading behaviours, such as handling books carefully, holding books upright, turning pages and showing an interest in illustrations, understanding and joining in with stories, books, poetry and rhymes, recognising that print carries meaning, in both books and the environment. Through this, children should develop a competency to read a range of familiar words and simple sentences.

Phonic knowledge forms an integral part of a child's learning basic reading and writing skills. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 receive phonic teaching based on the Letters and Sounds program. Letters and Sounds is also used as an

intervention tool where necessary in LKS2. Staff will use the Letters and Sounds program to provide daily lessons in the teaching of phonics to ensure the children use appropriate strategies to decode, blend, segment and read for meaning. Children across Early Years Foundation Stage, and in Key Stage 1 will be regularly assessed and be placed in groups for phonics to ensure they are working at their appropriate level of challenge and expectation. As part of the Letters and Sounds sessions, children will receive a high quality guided reading session with staff planning and delivering high quality reading lessons that teach key reading skills within these lessons. Pupils of similar ability are taught to interpret and discuss texts in more depth. Pupils are encouraged to read for meaning using a variety of taught reading strategies.

In guided reading texts will be chosen to match the ability of the group whilst providing challenge linked to the key AF's – Assessment Focus. Guided reading will provide a forum for pupils to explore new vocabulary and improve their key reading skills. Teachers will follow the Four-part structure when planning guided reading sessions.

Many other opportunities will be provided for pupils to practise and extend reading in other subjects. Pupils will select texts under the guidance of the teacher for independent and home/school reading. Where pupils are working below age appropriate objectives additional reading opportunities and interventions will be provided. In Key Stage 1, all teachers will be responsible for hearing children read at least twice a week during guided reading sessions. In Key Stage 2, all teachers will be responsible for hearing children read at least twice per week during guided reading sessions.

Children will be encouraged to read widely and for pleasure. Classroom reading environments will be print-rich and stimulating with a wide range of books displayed creatively and imaginatively. Working walls will display rich and varied vocabulary; book corners will display recommended reads as well as the "Focus Author" for that term. All classrooms will have a well-stocked book area with a range of fiction and non-fiction. Pupils will also have opportunities to read magazines, information leaflets and topic texts. The school library is an important resource and pupils will be taught how to use it appropriately.

Reading at home is regarded as an important part of reading development. Parents are encouraged to hear their children read regularly at least three times weekly and respond to their child's reading in a home-school reading diary. Children in Key Stage 1 who are accessing the Letters and Sounds program will take home an appropriately levelled reading book each week. In Key Stage 2, children will be encouraged to take home a stage book as well as a reading book from the class library. Staff are expected to monitor the frequency of home reading on a weekly basis.

### **APPENDIX 3: WRITING**

Teachers will promote writing as a key life skill. Using a text-based approach, teachers at Rack House Primary promote a love for writing and look for ways to inspire and motivate pupils so that they see themselves as 'writers'. Teachers establish the purpose and audience for writing and make teaching objectives explicit to pupils so they know why they are studying a particular text type, the kind of writing activities they need to undertake and

what the expected outcome will be. Pupils will have access to a wide range of writing opportunities that will include:

- shared writing
- guided writing
- independent writing
- writing different text types and narrative styles
- writing in different curriculum areas
- handwriting practice
- collaborative writing
- writing related to own experiences and enjoyment
- writing from a variety of stimuli
- planning, drafting, editing and presenting
- using the school blog

When planning a unit of work, teachers will carefully consider the writing process: planning, drafting and writing, proof-reading and editing and reading aloud and sharing with an audience. Teachers will use shared writing to model the writing process. Shared reading and writing provide a context for discussion and demonstration of grammatical features at word level, sentence level and text level. Activities will be differentiated through the use of writing frames, spelling banks, collaborative work and peer or adult support.

During the teaching of English, children will take part in shared, modelled, guided and independent writing activities. Teachers will use modelled and shared writing to demonstrate the writing process through clearly planned compositional writing activities. During guided writing, teachers will provide opportunity for focused teaching and supported application of key skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling. Independent writing opportunities will ensure that the children have the opportunity to apply the teaching points encountered as part of the teaching cycle in their own piece of writing. Independent writing will also provide the teacher with an overview of which aspects of writing have been secured and which need further teaching and extension. Children will be expected to apply their writing skills and knowledge in cross curricular lessons and staff will provide extended writing opportunities to ensure children can write for sustained periods of time and at length. During all writing activities, high expectations and standards of writing in terms of composition, word selection, spelling and punctuation will be encouraged across all subject areas.

#### **APPENDIX 4: SPELLING**

At Rack House Primary, children will have access to a range of spelling opportunities and it is expected that children will be able to spell words accurately by combining the use of grapheme-phoneme correspondence knowledge as the prime approach and to use a range of approaches to learn and spell irregular words. Spelling will be taught through a variety of different approaches:

- Daily discrete Letters and Sounds phonics teaching that explores the grapheme-phoneme link

- Whole class teaching of specific spelling patterns, using No Nonsense Spelling program
- Using phonics knowledge in real life contexts
- Applying spelling skills in cross curricular contexts

Teachers will provide a wide range of contexts for reinforcing spelling patterns and tricky words throughout the school day. Children are expected to be able to spell high frequency words correctly and the common exception word lists for their particular year group.

## **APPENDIX 5: HANDWRITING**

The formal teaching of handwriting takes place outside the literacy session and is explicitly taught in discrete sessions with occasional practise once mastered. Teachers have high expectations in the presentation of work in all areas of the curriculum. As soon as the children are ready, they will be taught to sit properly in order to have the correct posture for writing, hold a pencil in the correct tripod grip and develop a legible and joined handwriting style. The Letter Join handwriting scheme is used from years EYFS-6. Using this scheme teachers demonstrate the correct letter formation and the children practise it. Teachers monitor the formation of letters and as children master formation and joining the focus shifts to writing neatly, consistently and at a reasonable speed. It is expected that all members of staff, class teachers and teaching assistants, model the school handwriting style at all times i.e. when writing on the board or in children's books. By the end of key stage 2, all children should be displaying an efficient, quick, neat and legible handwriting style that is effective in recording their ideas.

Reviewed by: A. Power and E. McGovern

Date: 4<sup>th</sup> October 2018