



CLARE COMMUNITY
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Clare Community Primary School

Literacy Policy

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English Policy

Policy Statement

We believe that high-quality English teaching is a fundamental responsibility: it equips our pupils with the essential tools to think, communicate, imagine, and understand the world — not only through English itself, but as a foundation for all learning. Through speaking, listening, reading, writing—and engaging creatively with language in its many forms—we aim to nurture confident communicators, enthusiastic readers and writers, critical thinkers and socially aware individuals.

Our Aims

Our aims are to provide every child, irrespective of background or ability, with:

- strong oral language skills and confidence in speaking and listening;
- secure and fluent reading and writing skills;
- access to a rich, diverse and inclusive literary diet;
- meaningful opportunities for self-expression, creativity and critical engagement;
- a lifelong love of reading and writing, and the motivation to continue learning beyond school.

We therefore commit to an English policy that:

- Enables children to communicate fluently and confidently, both orally and in writing.
- Ignites and sustains a genuine enthusiasm for literacy in all its forms — from reading, writing, speaking and listening to storytelling, drama, media and imaginative expression.
- Supports every child's access to the curriculum, regardless of their background, first language or ability, ensuring equity and inclusion.
- Embeds English across the whole curriculum to support a coherent, cross-curricular approach to learning and to reinforce that language skills underpin all subject learning.

- Promotes continuity and progression throughout all phases, nurturing a love of language and literature from early years onwards.
- Fosters creativity, critical thinking, social awareness, and individuality, enabling pupils not only to express themselves but to interpret and engage thoughtfully with the world around them.

Speaking and Listening

We recognise that these skills are the foundation stones of language development. We build them into both English lessons and the rest of the curriculum through modelling to children how to use Standard English and in different types of sentences, enabling them to ask a range of questions for different purposes.

We allow children time to talk to their learning partners to check understanding, formulate opinions and speculate, hypothesize, explore and organise ideas. We use dramatic techniques to enhance the children's understanding and responses to literature, and as a tool in their own planning. We use a multi-media approach to teaching, often incorporating film/audio clips and information from the Internet. In line with our core values, we teach children to acknowledge and respect the views of others.

To support children who have more difficulty in accessing these skills we teach children specific speaking and listening activities to ensure their full and active participation in the curriculum. Additionally, we seek help at an early stage if we need specialist advice for children with specific language and auditory problems.

Reading

Reading is at the heart of our curriculum and is fundamental to children's learning in all subjects. Our aim is to encourage a love of reading, from the very start of children's education in Literacy lessons through our approach to learning, in addition to our 'Home Reading Scheme' and our class stories we share at the end of the school day. Each 'Read in to Writing' unit teaches reading in depth, through a rounded study of the whole text. The books studied within our reading curriculum have been carefully selected to give children a breadth of reading experience. Teaching staff pose carefully thought out questioning that encourages children to engage with the text and, reinforced by recent research, 'Read in to Writing' promotes that adults read aloud regularly to the class and give children time to practise their reading skills of making meaning clear through pronunciation, expression, stress and pace. We aim to expose children to a range of books that not only develop a love of reading, but have been specifically chosen to develop their oracy, vocabulary and comprehension. Books are available to children through the teaching of literacy, guided reading, daily story sessions and are available for children to access independently.

Guided Reading

Guided Reading takes place as an adult-led activity throughout the week. A trained TA or the class teacher will lead a guided group whilst other children are engaged in continuous provision activities such as independent reading, handwriting and spelling activities, etc... As a school, we use Oxford Reading Tree inFact books to support our teaching in Key stage 2. In Key Stage 1 pupils are taught using books matched to their phonic ability.

Further detailed information regarding guided reading can be found in our 'Guided Reading Policy' on our school website.

Phonics

Phonics is an integral part of the initial reading journey. In Reception and Year 1 pupils have explicit daily phonics sessions. In Year 2 there is a daily lesson for those pupils still needing to phonic input. This is in addition to English lessons and spelling lessons. We use the phonics scheme Essential letters and sounds. The scheme provides robust staff training and formative and summative assessment resources. Within phonic lessons there is an opportunity for whole class reading of a book matched to the phonic level covered in the lesson. We use the Oxford Owl eBook library to access this online reading resource.

Accelerated Reader

At Clare Community Primary School, children use an online programme called 'Accelerated Reader' to support their reading. We have used the programme for a number of years, and it has been successful in motivating many children to read more, developing reading skills and raising standards in literacy. Accelerated Reader also enables teachers to monitor what children are reading more easily. Accelerated Reader books are just 'normal' books, but an online quiz has been devised to assess understanding when children have finished reading their books. Children start reading books on the Accelerated Reader programme once they have sufficiently mastered early reading skills and phonics. Some pupils will start on Accelerated reader in year 2, with the aim being that all pupils in Key Stage 2 are on the scheme from Year 3. Those pupils in Key Stage 2 who are finding it difficult to master reading skills will be supported to access both books at their phonic ability as well as books within the Accelerated Reading scheme.

Writing

Writing tasks are embedded within their reading of the whole text, as children's deep reading knowledge and understanding of the text are crucial to their success as writers. Within the 'Read in to Writing' scheme, punctuation and grammar is taught both directly and discreetly through quality first teaching ensuring that pupils build on prior learning and maximise purposeful curriculum connections, to enable children to be confident and secure in all areas. Explicit vocabulary teaching is taught within the 'Read in to Writing' scheme with direct and clear teaching of Tier 2 and Tier 3 level vocabulary. Children are taught the morphology of words and the nuances of their meaning. Pupils complete a 'Big write' every two weeks, where pupils demonstrate what they have learnt in an independent piece of writing. These consist of a range of genres across the year. Children's writing is assessed each half term against our writing assessment framework and feedback is given in the form of 'next steps' ahead of their next piece of assessed writing. This process also provides teachers with sufficient evidence that an objective has been demonstrated across a range of pieces in order for the child to progress to the next assessment level.

Grammar and Punctuation

In Key Stage 2, children are taught a discrete lesson on an element of grammar or punctuation, each week. Teachers follow CCPS Coverage Grids that can be found on our school website, to ensure all areas of punctuation and grammar are covered and that there is progression across the school. Grammar and punctuation skills are also taught simultaneously with other reading and writing objectives, in the context of the English Unit being covered. Grammatical terms used by teachers can be found on our school website. Children in Years 3-5 are assessed termly using the Rising Stars Progress Tests. Children in Year 6 are assessed on previous GPS papers, rather than the Rising Stars Progress Tests.

Handwriting

At Clare Community Primary School, we use ELS and Letter-join as the basis of our handwriting teaching that covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum. Handwriting is a basic skill that influences the quality of work throughout the curriculum.

In EYFS, children start with fine motor activities and pencil control skills to then encourage basic mark making and an interest in writing. Basic letter formation is taught alongside phonics using the ELS scheme. As new graphemes are introduced within phonics sessions, an element of teaching focusses on forming the letters correctly. Children also learn to sit letters on the line and numbers within boxes in numeracy sessions.

In Key Stage One, lines and squares in exercise books become gradually smaller and triple lined handwriting books are introduced to help develop the formation of letters further and the distinction of ascenders and descenders. Children continue to learn handwriting through the ELS scheme and, for children who are ready, letters in digraphs are joined together. As children progress through Key Stage One, the focus in handwriting shifts from individual letters to letter strings, words and finally sentences, in order to understand capital and lowercase letters, finger spaces and to introduce tricky joins.

In Key Stage Two, handwriting is explicitly taught using interactive and written resources from the letter-join scheme of learning. Worksheets and resources across the curriculum, where necessary, are edited to use the letter-join font for consistency, as are classroom displays and resources.

At the end of Key Stage Two, all pupils should have the ability to produce fluent, legible and, eventually, stamina that comes with joined-up handwriting. Children should also understand the different forms of handwriting used for different purposes. The act of handwriting should be attractive and accessible to all children. We aim to make handwriting an automatic process that does not interfere with creative and mental thinking.

For those children that are not consistently joining and need further practice, small intervention groups will focus on key letter formations and joins to accelerate their progress, and angled writing aids and pencil grips are used to support children with their handwriting if needed.

As a catalyst to speedy handwriting, we encourage parents and carers to use the Letter-join website and the resources within the Home Edition of Letter-join.

When teaching handwriting, all teachers use the same language to ensure consistency, following the same verbal path as outlined on our school website.

Further information can be found in our Handwriting Policy on the school website.

Spelling

Reception

In Reception the children follow the ELS Phonics scheme and begin to use the sounds that they have learnt to sound out and spell 2 and 3 letter words. They use a range of resources to encourage word building and spelling, these include magnetic letters, printing letters, alphabet pebbles and writing. Alongside this the children start to read and write trickier common exception words. The ELS Phonics scheme has handwriting books that include letter formation, cvc words and the common exception words for the children to read and write.

KS1 & KS2

From Y1 – 6, discrete spelling lessons take place once a week, where their spelling rule is explored and applied to words, which follow their rule. During these sessions, explicit spelling knowledge is taught and skills are practised. A range of teaching methods are used to ensure we meet the needs of all learners. Following the spelling input, the children will have access to Spelling Shed, in and out of school, to practise their spelling rules. Children will have further opportunity to practise their spellings throughout the week and apply their learnt spelling rules and spellings to their written work. Once a week, the children will have a spelling test of their set spellings, as well as ongoing assessments, within their written work, of applied spelling rules. The teaching and learning of spelling each week consists of:

Weekly Focus: Each week, a specific spelling rule or pattern is introduced.

Variety of Activities: Teachers use various activities to teach and practice the rule, ensuring children explore different ways to spell sounds, for example:

- Look, say, cover, write, check
- Segmentation strategy
- Memorable 'silly sentences'
- Clapping and counting sounds/syllables
- Mnemonics etc... (Appendix 1)

Contextual Learning: Children learn to apply spelling rules within meaningful contexts, helping them to spell new words related to their other school subjects.

Review and Consolidation: Regular review sessions help children consolidate their learning, and one lesson a week is used for consolidation and assessment. Children should have a minimum of one session per week using the SpellingShed App to support their learning, giving them opportunity to practise their spellings.

Parental Engagement: Children are expected to practise their spellings at home with the support of an adult. Parents are provided with half termly overviews (Appendix 2) including spelling rules and words lists. Children have access to the SpellingShed App at home.

Planning and Assessment

Reading

Pupils read regularly with staff and within these sessions, careful questioning is used to assess a pupil's comprehension of the text. Pupils in Reception to Year 5 complete termly Progress in Reading tests (PIRA) to assess their reading level and to identify pupils who may require further interventions. Pupils in Year 6 complete termly assessments aimed at supporting them in sitting the SATs in May.

Pupils in Key stage 2 (and those in Year 2 who have moved on to Accelerated reader) take an online reading assessment each half term called Star Reader Assessment. This produces a standardized score and reading age as well as assigning pupils with a ZPD range for books to choose from. Staff use this data to carefully monitor progress and intervene when necessary. Staff also monitor how often pupils read at home from reception age and promote daily reading. Staff intervene when pupils are not reading regularly at home and when needed will add in extra

opportunities to read in class. Pupils on Accelerated reading books quiz each time they complete a book. Staff monitor this data and track the amount of books each child reads, as well as the quiz results. Staff then use this to intervene when necessary.

Staff in Reception and Key Stage 1 monitor pupils' ability to read common exception words.

Phonics

Pupils have a phonic baseline taken in Reception in September and then GPC (Grapheme/phoneme correspondence) is checked each half term at least. Phonics is assessed throughout reception and Year 1. In Year 1 pupils undertake the phonic screening in June. Any pupils not achieving the pass mark will re-sit this in Year 2 in June. Pupils in Year 2 still working to achieve the phonic screening will also be assessed each half term.

Writing

Pupils complete a 'Big write' every two weeks, where pupils demonstrate what they have learnt in an independent piece of writing. These consist of a range of genres across the year. Children's writing is assessed each half term against our writing assessment framework and feedback is given in the form of 'next steps' ahead of their next piece of assessed writing. This process also provides teachers with sufficient evidence that an objective has been demonstrated across a range of pieces in order for the child to progress to the next assessment level. Teachers also check spellings and link these in either with common exception and keywords or with those spelling patterns covered in the spelling scheme. Our English scheme 'Read in to Writing' encourages regular free writes, where pupils are encouraged to write independently in short bursts of time. Our aim is to develop children's confidence to write independently as well as having the key skills to do so accurately.

English and Other Areas of the Curriculum

Our expectations are that the explicit learning in English lessons will directly feed into learning in other areas, and the teaching aims and expected English outcomes will be an integral part of achievement in other subjects, particularly regarding cross-curricular writing and speaking and listening where there will be explicit opportunities to develop these skills.

We recognise that rich vocabulary is the foundation of understanding, and so explicit vocabulary teaching is woven through every subject, ensuring pupils can access, articulate and deepen their learning across the curriculum.

Additionally, we value oracy as a vital tool for learning, and so the development of confident, articulate speakers is embedded across all subjects, enabling pupils to think, communicate and collaborate effectively.

English Home Learning

See our Home Learning Policy on our school website.