

# RAVENSCOTE JUNIOR SCHOOL

## ENGLISH POLICY

2024 - 2025



Date of Approval		Date of Review	
March 2024		March 2025	
<b>Signed</b>	Amy Wells Headteacher	<b>Signed</b>	Emily Gibson Chair of Governors



## Ravenscote Junior School

## English

At Ravenscote we believe that English, in all of its component forms, is a vital way of communicating. Reading is the absolute bedrock of our curriculum – it is the foundation upon which all learning can be built. Through writing, children are able to express themselves creatively and imaginatively and to communicate effectively with others.

**Aims for our policy:**

- To provide a language-rich environment that promotes a culture of reading and writing.
- To develop in children an interest in, and a love of, books and literature that will not only support their learning across the curriculum but also enrich their lives.
- To value and use books across the curriculum for learning, for pleasure, for discussion and debate and play.
- To teach children the craft of writing in order to develop the confidence and skills to write well for a range of purposes and audience.
- To embed the 44 sounds in the English language through teaching a systematic, synthetic phonetic scheme. Developing decoding skills for word reading, striving for reading fluency and comprehension.
- Teach spelling, handwriting and punctuation explicitly.
- To foster in children the confidence, desire and ability to express their views and opinions both orally and in writing.
- To develop empathy.
- To value and celebrate diversity in culture and language.
- To use grammar, spelling and punctuation accurately.

By the end of Year 6, we aim for our children to be able to:

- Read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding, orchestrating a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct.
- Have an interest in books and read for enjoyment.
- Have an interest in words, their meanings; developing a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms.
- Understand a range of text types and genres – to be able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the situation.



- Be developing the powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.
- Have a suitable technical vocabulary to articulate their response.

At Key Stage Two (Years 3-6), children should learn to adapt 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 literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works.

## Learning and Teaching

### Writing

At Ravenscote we follow the principles set out in the National English Curriculum, adapting it to suit the needs and abilities of our children. English is taught on a daily basis from Year 3 - 6. Teaching and learning takes place within a whole class setting (shared/modelled reading and writing). Good practice is shared and modelled within whole class settings and the children also work independently or with a partner on set tasks. Teachers use a variety of interactive teaching methods to deliver the curriculum and achieve set learning objectives. English and language development is taught through the connected curriculum. Every year group explores a diverse range of Narrative, Non-Fiction and Poetry texts.

Adaptations are made to meet the individual needs of the learner. Learning Support Assistants support children, as identified by the class teacher and Inclusion Assistant Headteacher. Small groups of children also receive targeted support for reading and writing.

The planning for each year group provides detailed lesson plans which include:

- Specific learning objectives;
- Progression;
- Learning adaptations – in guided and group activities;
- Breadth and balance;
- Time allocation.

Headteacher's Awards are often based on English excellence. The awards are given out in celebration assemblies.

### Reading

**We aim to enable the children:**

- To read with fluency, accuracy and understanding.
- To read a diverse range of high quality texts enthusiastically.



- To use their knowledge of words, sentences and texts to understand and respond to the meaning.
- To increase their ability to read challenging and lengthy texts independently;
- To reflect on the meaning of texts.
- To develop a love of reading with an increasingly wide and diverse literary repertoire.

Each class has four sessions of reading per week; whole class fluency, whole class comprehension, individual comprehension and Book Talk. Year 6 have a specific, additional comprehension lesson.

During **Whole Class Comprehension** lessons, a class text is shared. Choral reading, paired reading, guided oral reading and repeated reading are all methods used to teach reading fluency. Teachers model how to use evidence from the text to create a high-quality answer to comprehension questions. During **Independent Comprehension** lessons, the children read an extract from an unfamiliar text and utilise the skills modelled and learnt in a whole class comprehension lesson and apply them to write their own responses. **Book talk** lessons give children an opportunity to develop their social, speaking and listening skills while at the same time creating and expressing their own personal opinions on the books they are reading. During these sessions, the text can be discussed at the appropriate level to develop greater understanding especially what is inferred in the text. **Story time** is timetabled for 10 minutes everyday. The class teacher reads to the class, modelling fluency and prosody and developing children's language, vocabulary and comprehension.

Every child is individually assessed and 'Banded Books' are matched to the children's reading abilities. The children in years 3-5 are strongly encouraged to share this text three times a week and children in year 6, five times a week, with an adult as part of their weekly home learning. We have a rich, diverse range of high quality texts that the children can choose from at their level. Children are assessed throughout the year and moved along the banded books as their reading fluency and comprehension progressed. Once the children have reached 'Black Band' they are a 'Raven Reader'. They can choose from our selection of Black Banded books, or choose a challenging text from another source, increasing their autonomy and reading for pleasure at this stage of their reading journey.

**Reading for pleasure** is promoted throughout the school and all curriculum areas. Each class has a well-stocked book shelf with a wide variety of high-quality texts suitable for all abilities. Our school library; **The Book Bus** is well stocked with current and classical texts across a wide range of genres. There is a Book Bus club every lunchtime, where children can borrow, return and share texts with a teacher, their peers or with a Year 6 prefect. Every child is encouraged to borrow a book from the school library. Children may read their own, appropriate, reading books from home or the local libraries as additional reading.

For those whom we have identified have gaps in their phonics knowledge, we follow the **systematic, synthetic phonics programme – Read, Write, Inc.** This rigorous programme runs parallel to our reading lessons for Years 3 and 4, and further **Read, Write, Inc. Fast Track** sessions are provided for children that whom need additional support to enable them to make accelerated progress. In Years 5 and 6, we run a **Read, Write Inc, Fresh Start** intervention on a one-to-one basis with our specialist reading teacher to target specific gaps in children's phonics knowledge.





## Monitoring of reading

All teachers will be responsible for ensuring that:

- Ravenscote handbooks are marked each week (with a signature and date) and record the number of reads on a school spreadsheet (monitored by year leads and literacy leads);
- “Read around the world” displays are updated weekly to reflect the children’s progress;
- Every child reads their book band book to an adult (Class teacher, LSA, specialist teacher or parent reader) at least once every two weeks, with many more opportunities to read other texts out loud to adults every day;
- The lowest 20%, Pupil Premium children, children on the inclusion register, children who have failed their phonics check in KS1 and children who struggle to read enough at home are all prioritised for reading to an adult in school: the more of these categories a child falls into, the more often they will be reading to an adult;
- Children are assessed and supported in choosing reading books that are appropriate for their ability using our book band scheme;
- Each child has both their reading book and their Ravenscote handbook on their desk every morning;
- The Google Sheets form for recording readers is up to date, so that any member of the English team or SLT can monitor the hearing of readers;
- The class is read to for 10 minutes everyday;
- They have a knowledge of the reading books they have read in class and had read to them;
- They foster an environment in which children love to read;
- Reading for pleasure is promoted.

## Handwriting & Presentation

These are important elements to our English work. All children are encouraged to write in a legible, cursive style and present their work in a suitable manner. Handwriting is taught explicitly, following the ‘ISHA’ handwriting scheme.

## The use of I.C.T.

Opportunities to use ICT to support teaching and learning in English will be planned for and used as appropriate. Now Press Play is used to bring stories to life as an alternative source of storytelling.

## Inclusion in English

In writing, reading, spelling and grammar lessons, tasks and materials are adapted by the class teacher to meet the needs of individual children and ensure that everyone in the class can access the learning. These adaptations take many forms but the majority of the high-quality teaching strategies can be summarised with the 5-a-day principle:

- Explicit instruction – children are given clear, simple and in some cases, specifically



broken-down instructions during lessons;

- Cognitive and metacognitive strategies – e.g. learning is chunked to ensure children are not overloaded. Clear sections in lessons for vocabulary gathering, practicing a skill, all broken up into chunks for a more accessible, inclusive and high-quality learning experience;
- Scaffolding – Using sentence starters such as gap fill or word banks;
- Flexible grouping – using conference groups and working with children in a lesson who might all have the same focus to work on. These might be different each lesson or change regularly over the period of a unit of work;
- Using technology – use of word processing programmes such as Clicker 8, Book creator etc.

Children identified as having Special Educational Needs may need greater adaptation of materials and tasks consistent with that child's provision map. Liaison with the Inclusion Assistant Headteacher will sometimes be necessary. A number of intervention strategies are used to develop children's specific learning needs in English. See SEND policy for further information

### **Equal opportunities and protected characteristics**

All children will be given opportunities to participate on equal terms in all English activities and due consideration will be given to the principles of Inclusion.

It is important when planning work in English that the teacher pays close attention to equal opportunity in respect of gender, race, the needs of the most able children and those children with special educational needs. We live in a multi-cultural society. The English work done by children in school should, where possible, reflect this. Authors and texts used in lessons are chosen to reflect and celebrate diversity within our society and most will have links to at least one of the nine protected characteristics: age, disability, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

### **Assessment, Records and Reports**

Baseline assessments are made in year three. All children that are 'working towards' the expected standard are screened using the Read Write Inc assessments. These assessments are repeated half termly until the child has met the required word reading and phonics standard required to access the English curriculum. Parents are notified if their child is on the Read Write Inc intervention

All children are given regular verbal feedback in line with our Live Marking Policy. This allows them to reflect on and improve their work in the moment. Benchmark assessments are carried out 2-3 times a year.

Writing and reading Teacher Assessments are carried out at the end of each half term and results are recorded on Scholar Pack. Teachers also carry out formative assessment daily. Teachers meet on a termly basis to discuss pupil progress with the year A.H.T. and identify any needs.

Parents are informed of how progress is being made against targets at parents' evenings and through the end of year report.

### **Parent/carer involvement**

Parents/carers can support with English by regularly hearing their child read their book band book out loud, supporting them with recognising and decoding (sounding out) tricky words and asking



them questions to help check their comprehension. Please see appendix 1 for example questions parents/carers could ask their child when reading.

Many parents volunteer to listen to children read in school. DBS with children's barred list clearance is expected in order to do this.

Parents/carers can also support children with English homework tasks.

More formal involvement is achieved through:

- Parent/ Carers' Evenings
- Additional parent/ carer meetings for children on the Read Write Inc/Fresh Start Interventions
- Special Events
- Class Assemblies
- Book Fairs
- Newsletter updates – Book reviews and additional reading information

### Conclusion

This policy also needs to be in line with other school policies and therefore should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- SEND Policy
- Live Marking and Assessment Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy



## Appendix 1 – Questions to ask your child when hearing them read

*Questions to ask your child when reading - Key Stage 2*Before reading the book:

- What do you think this story will be about?
- What might happen in the story?
- What genre will this story be? E.g. fantasy, comedy, horror.
- What do we call the writing on the back of the book? (Blurb) or What does the blurb tell us?

During the reading of the book:

- What has happened so far? Is it what you expected to happen?
- What might happen next?
- How do you think the story might end?
- Who is your favourite character? Why?
- Who is the character you like least? Why?
- Find 2 sentences, which describe the setting.
- Is the plot fast or slow moving? Find some evidence in the text, which supports your view.

*Questions to ask your child when reading - Key Stage 2*At the end of the book:

- Which part of the story is your favourite / least favourite? Why?
- Would you change any part of the story? How?
- Would you change any of the characters? How?
- Which part of the story was the funniest, scariest, saddest, and happiest? Find some evidence in the text to support your opinion.
- Would you like to read another book by this author? Why?
- Does your opinion of this character change during the story? How? Why?
- If you met one of the characters from the story, what would you say to him / her?
- Find 2 things the author wrote about this character that made him / her likeable or unlikeable?

