

RAVENCOTE JUNIOR SCHOOL

ENGLISH POLICY

2026-2027



Date of Approval		Date of Review	
July 2026		July 2027	
Signed	Amy Wells Headteacher	Signed	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 at the heart of our connected curriculum, opening the door to all learning and empowering every child to succeed. 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 speaking, listening, reading and writing;
- To develop 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 purpose 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;
- To teach spelling, handwriting, grammar 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 via stories and characters;
- 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:

- Speak, 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;
- Develop 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;



- Develop their imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness;
- Have a suitable technical vocabulary to articulate their response.

Learning and Teaching

Oracy

Oracy is explicitly taught and embedded across the curriculum in line with the Voice 21 framework, ensuring children develop the skills to speak fluently, listen actively and engage thoughtfully in discussion. Teaching is structured around the four strands of oracy- physical, linguistic, cognitive and social and emotional- so that children are supported not only in what they say, but how they say it and how they interact with others. Classroom practice includes planned opportunities for exploratory talk, discussion guidelines, and the explicit modelling and scaffolding of high-quality spoken language. Teachers use strategies such as talk partners, sentence stems and structured discussion to build confidence and participation, while also fostering respectful listening and critical thinking. Oracy is both taught discretely and integrated across subjects, enabling children to articulate ideas, justify reasoning and develop a strong voice for a range of audiences and purposes.

Writing

At the beginning of every academic year, our writing journey starts by following the Grammarsaurus Place Value of Punctuation and Grammar (PVPG) approach, which provides a clear, progressive and engaging framework for the teaching of grammar across Key Stage 2. We then progress on to carefully sequenced units of writing, using high-quality model texts and explicit teaching of grammar and composition. Children are taught to write with increasing confidence, accuracy and creativity. Writing lessons follow a structured process of immersion, vocabulary development, PVPG, shared writing and independent application, enabling children to develop the knowledge and skills needed to write effectively for a range of purpose and audience. Opportunities for speaking, reading and editing are embedded throughout the writing journey to support children in becoming reflective and ambitious writers. Good practice is shared and modelled within whole class settings and the children also work independently or with a partner on set tasks.

Every year group explores a diverse range of narrative, non-fiction and poetry texts. Through Disciplinary Literacy, writing skills are taught and embedded through all areas of the curriculum, creating automaticity in writing to allow for the working memory to learn new concepts.

Monitoring of writing

All teachers will be responsible for ensuring that:

- Writing is taught regularly across the curriculum and children are given opportunities to write for a range of purposes, audiences and outcomes;
- Teachers use formative assessment, independent writing and moderation opportunities to assess children's attainment against year group expectations. Writing is monitored regularly by class teachers, year leads and English leaders;
- Each child produces a range of independent writing across the year to demonstrate progress in composition, grammar, punctuation and spelling. Evidence is collected in line



with the school's assessment and moderation procedures;

- Children are supported to edit and improve their writing through teacher modelling, peer discussion and self-assessment so that they develop increasing independence and accuracy as writers;
- The lowest 20%, Children Premium children, children on the inclusion register and children identified as needing additional support in writing receive targeted support and regular opportunities to practise and apply taught skills;
- Spelling, grammar and handwriting expectations are consistently reinforced across the curriculum and teachers ensure that presentation expectations are maintained in all subjects;
- Writing moderation takes place regularly within year groups and across the school to ensure consistency and accuracy of teacher judgement. Additionally, moderation across the trust and with our feeder infant schools takes place annually.

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. Children are expected to apply the school's presentation expectations across all areas of the curriculum, including correct letter formation, consistent sizing, appropriate joins and neat layout of work.

Handwriting is celebrated across the school through our handwriting awards initiative, where children are recognised for effort, improvement, presentation and pride in their work. Awards are shared regularly within classes and during celebration assemblies to promote high standards and motivate children to develop fluent, confident handwriting.

Spelling

Spelling is taught through a structured and consistent approach, with an explicit spelling lesson accompanied by two practice sessions, delivered weekly to ensure clear progression in children's understanding of spelling rules, patterns and strategies. These sessions cover the various spelling rules, enabling children to deepen their knowledge and apply them accurately in their writing. In addition, the Key Stage Two National Curriculum statutory word lists (see handbook) are taught and revisited alongside this programme to ensure coverage of age-related expectations. Children are also provided with regular opportunities to practise and consolidate their spelling throughout the week across the curriculum, including through purposeful writing tasks and targeted activities. To support learning beyond the classroom, an appendix is provided for parents and carers outlining practical and engaging strategies for practising spelling at home, promoting consistency between school and home and encouraging children to take ownership of their spelling development.

See Appendix 1 for spelling strategies

Reading

As with Writing, Reading is taught through all areas of the curriculum – Disciplinary Literacy. Once



a week there is one explicit Whole Class Comprehension lesson. During this lesson a class text is shared and explored through 'Book Talk'. Book talk gives 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. Choral, paired, guided reading and echo reading are all methods used to teach reading fluency. Teachers model how to retrieve evidence from the text to create a high-quality answer to comprehension questions. Skills learnt during whole class comprehension sessions are then consolidated in Independent Comprehension lessons, where the children read an extract from an unfamiliar text and utilise the comprehension skills learnt to write their own responses.

Individual Reading:

We use **SPARX Primary Reader** to help our children build positive, regular reading habits and develop a love of reading. Every child is individually assessed on their reading fluency, vocabulary, retrieval in inferential comprehension, levelled books are matched to the children's reading abilities. We have a rich, diverse range of high-quality texts that promote reading for pleasure and interest. We encourage autonomy and reading for pleasure at this stage of their reading journey. We teach and encourage:

- **Proactive Choice & Interest-** Selecting books based on personal interest, curiosity, or enjoyment;
- **Self-regulation-** Managing their own pace, setting reading goals (e.g., "I will finish this chapter today"), and monitoring comprehension;
- **Use of Reading Strategies -** Independently applying reading strategies, such as using context clues, scanning, skimming, or using a dictionary to figure out difficult words;
- **Critical Thinking-** Reflecting on the content of the text and articulating personal opinions about it, rather than just reciting facts;
- **Problem-Solving-** Identifying when they are "stuck" and knowing how to seek help appropriately (e.g., from peers, dictionaries, or the teacher) rather than giving up.

Three times a week, children read their physical book and the SPARX Silver Reader app is used to record the pages read and set questions about key events. These questions help to check understanding and encourage careful reading. The class teacher will listen to each child fortnightly and facilitate the above reading skills and strategies.

Story time is timetabled for 10 minutes every day. The class teacher reads to the class, modelling fluency and prosody and developing children's language, vocabulary and comprehension. This is a time for the children to immerse themselves in the story.

Reading for pleasure is promoted throughout the school throughout all curriculum areas. 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 alongside sharing texts that they have from home or a local library.

Read Write Inc. and Fast Track

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:

- SPARX reader records school 'reads' and tracks the children's progress with their reading rate and comprehension responses. Ravenscote handbooks are checked once a week. The number of home reads is monitored by class teachers, year leads and literacy leads;
- Every child reads their SPARX 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%, Children 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 both formative and summative assessment: SPARX Primary Reader assessments are carried out three times a year and Benchmarking can be used for a more in-depth assessment where appropriate;
- Each child has both their reading book and their Ravenscote handbook on their desk every morning and takes this home every day.

Technology

Opportunities to use technology to support teaching and learning in English will be planned for and used as appropriate. SPARX Primary Reader is used as a platform to promote, log and encourage positive reading habits. Now Press Play is used to bring stories to life as an alternative source of storytelling.

Inclusion in English

In English 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 offer:

- 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

At the start of Year 3, all children undertake baseline assessments. All children that are 'working towards' the expected standard are screened using the Read Write Inc assessments. Further Phonological Awareness assessments are made where needed. These assessments are repeated half termly until the child has met the required word reading and phonics standard 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. SPARX Primary Reader assessments are used to support teacher assessment in levelling the independent reading book. Benchmark assessments are carried out for further, in depth reading analysis.

Writing and reading Teacher Assessments are carried out at the end of each half term and results are recorded on Arbor. Teachers also carry out formative assessment daily, supported by the writing assessment framework. Teachers meet on a termly basis to discuss children progress with the year A.H.T. and identify any needs. Spellings are assessed half termly, both National Curriculum spellings and the spelling rules.

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

Parent/carer involvement

The development of positive reading habits is most successful when there is a strong partnership between school and home. Parents and carers play a vital role in fostering a love of reading by creating opportunities for children to engage with texts that are meaningful, enjoyable and relevant to their interests. We strongly encourage regular reading at home. The children in years 3-5 are advised to read a minimum of three times a week and children in year 6, five times a week, with an



adult as part of their weekly home learning.

Reading at home is a shared experience, where children are supported to explore a wide range of texts, including fiction, non-fiction, poetry, comics, magazines and digital materials. This approach reflects the understanding that children are more likely to develop sustained reading habits when they are able to exercise choice and engage with texts that reflect their own preferences and experiences.

Parents and carers are supported in identifying appropriate and engaging texts through monthly reading recommendations in the newsletter and signposting to external organisations such as BookTrust, Scholastic book fair and The Reading Agency. Families are also encouraged to make use of community resources, including Surrey Libraries, to further extend children's reading experiences.

Home-school communication is an important aspect of supporting reading development. Reading records and other communication tools are used to share information about children's reading, including their interests, progress and areas for development. Parents and carers are encouraged to contribute to this dialogue, ensuring that each child's reading journey is understood and supported holistically.

Please see *Appendix 2* for tips to support reading at home.

Skills taught in school are consolidated through our home learning. Children have the opportunity to embed and build upon what they have learnt through Century Learning pathways and weekly spelling practice, linked with handwriting in lower KS2.

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



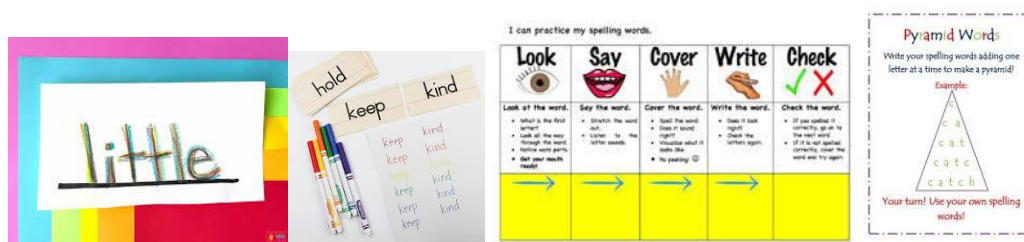
Appendix 1

Top Tips for supporting spelling at home

Supporting your child to learn their spellings can be both effective when approached in a variety of ways. Children learn best when they engage with words regularly and through different senses. Encouraging short, frequent practice sessions throughout the week is more beneficial than one longer session, helping to build confidence and long-term retention.

Multi-sensory approaches are particularly effective in supporting spelling development. Children might practise writing words in sand, shaving foam or with finger paints to engage their sense of touch, or use magnetic letters and letter tiles to physically build and break apart words. Saying words aloud, clapping syllables, or using rhythms can help reinforce patterns through sound. Visual strategies such as rainbow writing (writing words in different colours), tracing over words, or creating word posters can also support memory. Additionally, encouraging children to spot spelling patterns, prefixes, suffixes and root words helps them understand how words are constructed.

Other helpful strategies include practising spellings in short sentences, mnemonics, playing games such as word searches or look-cover-write-check, and encouraging children to proofread their own writing to identify and correct errors. Most importantly, maintaining a positive and supportive approach will help children to feel confident and motivated in their spelling journey.



Appendix 2

Top Tips for supporting Reading at home.

At our school, we believe that reading at home plays a vital role in developing children's confidence, fluency and enjoyment of reading. The following guidance is intended to support parents and carers in creating positive and meaningful reading experiences.

Children benefit from regular opportunities to read, even for short periods of time. Establishing a consistent routine, such as sharing a book at bedtime or reading after school, can help to build positive habits.

Children should be encouraged to read a wide range of materials, including books, comics, magazines, instructions, and digital texts. Allowing children to choose what they read helps to foster independence and a genuine interest in reading.

It is important that reading is seen as a shared experience. Even when children are able to read independently, they continue to benefit from reading aloud, being read to, and discussing what



they have read.

Tips for Supporting Your Child with Reading

- Create a quiet, comfortable space for reading where possible.
- Read regularly with your child, aiming for short, frequent sessions.
- Encourage your child to sound out unfamiliar words and praise their efforts.
- Re-read favourite books to build confidence and fluency.
- Model reading by letting your child see you read for pleasure.
- Talk about books and share opinions—there are no right or wrong answers.
- Visit local libraries, such as Surrey Libraries, to access a wider range of texts.
- Make use of recommended reading resources from organisations such as BookTrust and The Reading Agency.

Supporting Early Readers

When children are at the early stages of reading, they benefit from:

- Practising phonics to decode words
- Re-reading familiar books to build confidence
- Talking about pictures to support understanding
- Encouragement and praise for effort as well as accuracy

If your child makes a mistake, allow them time to self-correct. If needed, gently guide them by encouraging them to look at the letters and sounds, or by reading the word together.

Comprehension Questions to ask your child/ren:

When using these questions:

- Focus on **discussion rather than testing**
- Encourage children to **justify their answers using the text**
- Accept a range of responses where appropriate
- Keep conversations **positive, supportive and child-centred**

The aim is to develop children's confidence as readers and deepen their understanding, while maintaining reading as an enjoyable and meaningful experience.

At our school, we use vocabulary, inference, prediction, explanation, retrieval and sequencing/summarising) to support the development of reading comprehension.

The questions below are designed to help parents and carers engage in meaningful discussion with their child and develop a deeper understanding of texts.

These questions may be adapted depending on the child's age and stage of development.



Vocabulary: *Understanding the meaning of words in context*

- What does this word/phrase mean?
- Can you find a word that tells us...?
- Which word tells you that the character is feeling...?
- Can you think of another word that means the same?
- Why do you think the author chose this word?

Inference: *Using clues from the text to understand more than what is written*

- How do you think the character is feeling? Why?
- What can you infer about the character from their actions?
- Why did the character do that?
- What does this tell you about...?
- Can you find evidence in the text to support your idea?

Prediction: *Using evidence to suggest what might happen next*

- What do you think will happen next? Why?
- How do you think the story will end?
- What clues suggest what might happen next?
- Has anything happened so far that helps you predict?

Explanation: *Explaining preferences, opinions and authorial choices*

- Why do you think the author wrote this?
- Why is this part important?
- How does this part link to what has already happened?
- Why do you think the author chose this setting/character?
- Do you agree with the character's actions? Why?

Retrieval: *Finding information directly from the text*

- Who is the main character?
- Where does the story take place?
- What happened at the beginning/middle/end?
- Can you find where it tells you...?
- What is the key fact you have learned?

Sequencing / Summarising: *summarising main ideas*

- Can you retell the story in order?
- What happened first, next and last?
- What is the main idea of this paragraph/page?
- Can you summarise the story in a few sentences?



- Which events are the most important?

