

Green Lanes School

Literacy Policy

Revised - Autumn 2012

Policy Statement

At Green Lanes School we encourage and support all children to develop respect for and pleasure in the English language in its written and spoken forms. We focus on the development of effective communication skills in both speaking and listening and in reading and writing; teaching our children to be responsive, engaged, enthusiastic and knowledgeable in this essential curriculum area.

We recognise Literacy as a core subject in the National Curriculum and as a pre-requisite for educational and social progress, empowering children to communicate creatively and imaginatively.

We aim to provide a positive ethos and environment for language development, which stimulates developing minds and is characterised by high expectations of success, so that the fullest potential of each and every individual may be realised.

We wish each pupil to become a competent speaker, an active and sensitive listener, a reader who accesses books for pleasure, information and instruction, and a writer who is able to respond to differing demands and audiences. We focus on the delivery of a robust and varied curriculum to encourage and sustain this.

We strongly feel that this takes place best in an atmosphere of encouragement, support and respect for the achievement of every pupil in our care, and we strive to achieve this at all times.

Aims and Objectives

Using the National Curriculum Guidelines and the Primary Strategy as a basis, Green Lanes focuses its teaching of Literacy on the following key areas:

- Building on and extending the language experiences which pupils bring from home;
- Ensuring that pupils have access to a full, broad and balanced Literacy curriculum;
- Developing and strengthening presentation skills including the use of the agreed cursive handwriting style to ensure expectations and standards are high across the curriculum;
- Developing a progressive understanding of the elements underpinning language, syntax, grammar, punctuation and so forth, and to develop correct use of linguistic vocabulary;
- Creating a stimulating and exciting environment that will ensure enthusiasm and enjoyment in learning and a positive attitude on behalf of both pupils and teachers;
- Promoting an understanding of language across all subjects in the National Curriculum;
- Developing speaking and listening skills in a wide range of situations and contexts;
- Developing pupil's use and understanding of language through practical tasks, presentations, drama and real life situations.

Organisation

Literacy is taught daily in all classes, both within subject specific lessons and through other curriculum areas.

Phase One - Foundation and Year One: In the two Foundation classes, Literacy is presented as part of the Early Years Curriculum. This is phonics based and delivered through 'Letters and Sounds', 'ReadWrite Inc' resources and 'Jolly Phonics' actions. Two new phonemes are introduced each week and there is a carousel of other activities (guided reading, follow-up phonemes and an active outside activity). There are Literacy opportunities available during Child Initiated Learning, both indoors and outside.

Year One continue to build on existing phonic knowledge through daily phonics sessions. The Year One objectives in the Primary Framework are used as a basis for planning with the addition of handwriting, guided reading and creative writing.

Phase Two - Years Two and Three: These years continue to extend and develop phonic knowledge and understanding and secure application of these skills through daily Phonics and spelling lessons. We use a combination of Letters and Sounds, Read Write Inc and Support for Spelling when planning and delivering these sessions.

In addition, Literacy lessons take place on a daily basis. We use the primary framework as a basis for our planning, adapting it to suit our topic based approach to learning where necessary. Wherever possible, cross curricular opportunities are exploited. In addition to this, guided reading and handwriting sessions take place on a regular basis in every class.

Phase Three - Years Four to Six: Focus on extending and securing skills across the literacy breadth; actively looking for areas of the Primary curriculum in which reading and writing skills can be effectively employed to add context and meaning to the development of their knowledge. The Phase focuses on cross-curricular application to ensure that the pupils are able to use their skills effectively for a wide range of purposes and that they understand that reading and writing skills are necessary and meaningful for creative and effective communication. Handwriting is practised two to three times weekly and modelled by the teacher at all opportunities. Spelling is taught in line with the *Support For Spelling* resources and leads on from the teaching and securing of phonics skills in the lower Phases.

Whole School Approaches to Teaching and Learning

We follow the key elements of the teaching sequence outlined by the Primary Framework both within Literacy lessons and in other curricular areas. These are as follows;

- Shared learning outcomes and expectations;
- Shared, modelled and guided reading and writing;
- Phonics and Spelling;
- Speaking and listening opportunities;
- Vocabulary, punctuation and grammar skills;
- Guided or independent group tasks;
- A Plenary to review, reinforce and extend learning.

The following approaches to teaching and learning in the subject are present in all literacy (both specific and cross curricular) activities:

- A high profile of interactive teaching;
- Collaborative work between pupils;
- Differentiation for pupils relating to a common theme;
- A flexible approach to planning to best meet the objectives laid down for each year group.
- Modelling by the teacher;
- Active pupil participation;
- Discussion between pupils, teachers and supporting adults and between pupils themselves, through Talk Partners and group work;
- Appropriate main focus for work, either shared text, practical experiences or interaction with visitors;
- Consolidation of skills taught and cross-curricular opportunities to put these into practice;
- Whole school focus on EPOW skills as defined by the Marking Policy; focusing on and encouraging the development of high presentation expectations and standards.

Pupils are encouraged to:

- Discuss their work with each other and with the teacher;
- Reflect on their own and others' learning and how they might improve through self and peer assessment and formative feedback from their teachers;
- Communicate effectively in speech and writing, adapting to a varied range of outcomes and developing a wide range of vocabulary;
- Listen and respond to others effectively;
- Read with increasing accuracy using decoding and comprehension skills, demonstrating enjoyment and understanding in their reading;
- Apply grammar, punctuation and spelling skills to every piece of writing;
- Develop a neat style of joined handwriting and secure presentation skills;
- Work purposefully, with enjoyment, knowing what they are doing and why they are doing it.

Our approach to teaching literacy skills adapts to the needs of each individual pupil and the context in which they are learning.

Reading: Every pupil in the school works through the Reading scheme, which is based upon the National Curriculum Book Banding Levels and incorporates an extensive range of fiction and non-fiction titles and focuses. The pupil's progress throughout the scheme is assessed and monitored through both formative assessment and regular summative assessment opportunities which use National Curriculum levels to indicate a pupil's comprehension levels, and through the twice yearly application of decoding tests to indicate a pupil's reading age.

Our scheme is monitored by the school Librarian and Literacy Co-ordinator to ensure that it is fresh, broad and meets the needs of the generation. Pupils are expected to read daily both in school and at home and time is earmarked in the daily timetable to ensure this happens. Reading Records are provided to ensure the children keep account of their reading and to allow effective communication about reading development with parents and carers. Children are encouraged to make their own observations and comments about their reading alongside their parent or carer's contributions.

Both Guided Reading and individual reading is promoted extensively within the school. One-to-one and small group reading with a teacher, Teaching or Learning Support Assistant or trained adult helper can provide valuable help with specific reading skills and follows the objectives set out by the National Curriculum and

Primary Framework. Adult helpers discuss expectations and work under the guidance of class teacher and are given a copy of the Green Lanes advice for listening to children read before working with pupils.

Emphasis is placed on “shared reading” and parents/carers are encouraged from the very beginning to become involved. We want them to share our pleasure in the children’s progress and to realise how valuable their help is. Reading Workshops are held periodically to support parents and carers to play an active role in their children’s reading development.

A highly extensive range of books are available to the pupils through their classrooms, the Library, Guided Reading and Reading Scheme. All pupils belong to the school Library and are provided with regular opportunities to visit the Library and select their own reading materials.

SEND: All pupils are monitored through the school’s assessment timetable and criteria, and pupils requiring additional support are identified and planned for in collaboration with the SEND department and their parents. Interventions available to support specific needs include:

- Early, Additional and Further Literacy Support programmes;
- Read/Write Inc programme;
- Kit’s Quest;
- TRACKS;
- Soundworks

(This is not an exhaustive list)

Interventions are delivered by Teaching and Learning Support Assistants and by the SEND Co-ordinator and Assistant Co-ordinator, who liaise regularly with class teachers to review and assess progress.

Resources

Across the school Phases, an extensive range of resources is employed by the teaching staff to provide the pupils with a broad and enriching curriculum. Resources are continuously under review and revision to ensure their relevance and quality, and Literacy skills, particularly in the Upper Phases, are frequently taught through other curricular areas; for example non-fiction report writing through Science or Letters and Diaries through History. At Green Lanes, our emphasis is on the application of skills wherever possible, to ensure our children are truly independent learners.

A wide variety of extra language support is readily available in our classrooms including dictionaries and thesauruses, alphabet strips, word pyramids, grammar posters and so forth. The Literacy and SEND Co-ordinators take responsibility for ensuring that resources are provided and updated regularly.

Planning

At the beginning of every term, medium term plans are prepared by each year group teacher. Copies are made available to the Headteacher and the Literacy Co-ordinator for monitoring and evaluation.

Pupils throughout the school have individual reading and writing targets based on their specific needs and developmental stages, which are regularly reviewed and discussed with the pupil and their parents. Where pupils are working significantly below age related expectations, a specific individual education plan will be used outlining targets, agreed by the SEND Co-ordinator and class teacher working with the child’s parents.

Detailed weekly plans are prepared by each class teacher and handed to the Headteacher at the end of the week with assessments and comments for future planning included on the reverse – *see example attached at appendix 3*. These will follow the medium term plans and give details of the activities to be followed and where these link with the objectives outlined in the medium term plans. Differentiated work, links with homework and other curriculum areas and the Teaching Assistant role will be identified.

Assessment and Record Keeping

The Literacy Co-ordinator monitors and evaluates all Literacy medium term plans and feeds back any comments and suggestions to fellow teachers. Work scrutiny, pupil interviews and monitoring also is done over the course of the year by the Co-ordinator and fed back to staff.

Pupil progress tracking takes place at the end of each term to ensure that all children are making expected progress, with interventions put in place for pupils raising concerns.

Foundation Stage

At KS1 the following formal assessments take place:

- Spelling age assessment – Autumn term
- Reading age assessment – Spring term
- National Curriculum tests in reading and writing (Year 2 only) completed January – May each year.

At KS2 summative assessment tests using QCA optional test materials in years 3-5 and KS2 SATs are completed in May and results analysed to help form the focus of school improvement work in English.

Assessment for learning takes a key part of literacy sessions and teachers evaluate the progress of pupils within lessons and adapt planning to reflect this. Pupils are also encouraged to make their own assessment of progress. At Foundation this will be mainly oral, but should occur in written forms of self and peer evaluation through the Tickled Pink and Green and Hit/Miss/Maybe systems at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage Two.

When marking, teachers take into consideration the age, ability and personality of the child. Comments are positive, helpful and relevant and follow the procedures set out in the Marking Policy. They should be relevant to the learning objective wherever possible and point out how a pupil might practically improve their work. Consistent mistakes and weaknesses should be noted and extra support given in future lessons.

Parents receive information about the progress of their child through consultation evenings and the child's Annual Report.