

## **Somers Park School Literacy Policy**

### **Introduction**

At Somers Park School we believe that Literacy is a fundamental life skill. Literacy develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes. Children are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as of non-fiction and media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations.

### **Aims**

- To develop pupils' abilities to communicate effectively in speech and language.
- To develop pupils' understanding of spoken and written language so that they become enthusiastic, responsive and knowledgeable speakers, readers and writers.
- To develop pupils' listening skills essential to communicating effectively in a range of situations.
- To help pupils understand how language enables them to experience and appreciate their world and the realms of the imagination through all media.
- To help pupils understand the part language plays in enabling them to express their ideas, feelings and experiences, and those of others.

### **Objectives**

These objectives are derived from the aims and should inform planning, teaching and assessment:

#### **To develop effective speaking and listening pupils should be taught to:**

- Formulate, clarify and express their ideas.
- Express themselves in a variety of situations using language which is appropriate to their needs and the intended audience.
- Listen, understand and respond appropriately to others.

#### **To develop as effective readers, pupils should be taught to:**

- Extend and develop as readers throughout their time in school.
- Read a variety of texts for purpose and pleasure, accurately, fluently and with understanding.
- Develop a range of reading skills and strategies to enable them to become independent readers.
- Understand and respond to a wide range of books and media texts on paper and on screen.
- Understand the variety of written language, and the differences between fiction and non-fiction.
- Improve their abilities to read, analyse and evaluate a wide range of texts, including literature from other cultures and traditions.
- Develop higher order reading skills, enabling the use of inference and deduction.

#### **To develop as effective writers, pupils should be taught to:**

- Express themselves clearly and precisely for enjoyment.
- Use knowledge acquired through reading to write in different styles and genres.
- Write for an increasing range of purposes, matching their language and style to the needs of the appropriate audience.
- Understand the appropriate use and purpose of an increasing range of written forms on paper and on screen.

- Develop ideas and communicate meaning to a reader, using a wide-ranging broad vocabulary and effective style.
- Write neatly with accurate spelling.

### **Progression – Principles of Teaching, Learning and Progression**

- Pupils across KS1 and KS2 to be set for daily Literacy lessons
- Literacy lessons (including guided reading) have clear focus groups identified by assessment data and daily teacher assessment
- Work is differentiated by support, expectation, task and writing frames.
- Pupil provision is related to attainment.
- Interventions are put in place for those children identified

### **Approaches to Speaking and Listening**

The four strands of Speaking and Listening: Speaking; Listening and Responding, Group Discussion and Interaction, and Drama permeate the whole curriculum.

- Some or all elements of the above will be planned for in all lessons.
- Opportunities for partner or group discussions are planned for weekly.
- Use of specific topic vocabulary is modelled and displayed.
- Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise standards.
- Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life.
- In the Early Years and Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) children should be given opportunities to use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum; they speak and listen and represent ideas orally in their activities.
- At Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2), children should learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say.
- At Key Stage Two (Years 3-6), children should learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences.

*Examples of where speaking and listening might occur within the classroom:*

- *Stories, songs & poems.*
- *Storytelling.*
- *Describing events, observations and experiences.*
- *Giving reasons for actions.*
- *Explaining ideas and opinions in discussion and responding to others.*
- *Planning, predicting and investigating in small groups.*
- *Presentation to different audiences.*
- *Reading aloud.*
- *Imaginative play and role play.*
- *Drama.*
- *Hot seating.*
- *Listening to CD's.*
- *Class council / school council.*
- *Circle time.*

### **Approaches to Reading**

Somers Park aims for all children to read with confidence, fluency and understanding; have an interest in the written word and read for enjoyment; and employ a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct.

- In EYFS (Nursery and Reception) children should become immersed in an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication.
- At Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2), children should begin to read fiction and non-fiction independently and with enthusiasm.

- At Key Stage Two (Years 3-6), children should read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them.
- All pupils receive daily opportunities for: Shared reading and Independent reading.
- Guided reading takes place at least 3x weekly.
- Class reading opportunities are differentiated to 3 levels either through texts or support.
- Reading material is varied to reflect Literacy units, topics, personal choice and current affairs.
- All pupils and parents are actively encouraged and supported to enjoy home reading.
- Letters and Sounds (Phonics) is taught daily in EYFS and KS1. And gaps are identified and addressed in Years 3-5.
- Letters and Sounds are taught discretely and reinforced in contextualised opportunities as part of embedded practice.
- EYFS and KS1 classrooms provide banded reading books, picture books and paperbacks for more confident readers.
- All book corners reflect current topics and Literacy units.
- Communication regarding home reading takes place between home and school in a home-link book
- All classes visit the school library in KS1 or KS2. Children are supported to choose reading material which will engage and challenge them.
- Foundation and Key Stage One children change home reading books between 3x a week to daily depending on need.
- Classrooms reflect current topics within their book corners, which are updated each half-term.

### **Approaches to Writing**

Somers Park aims for all children to have an interest in words and their meanings; developing a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms. They should be developing their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness, and have a suitable technical vocabulary to articulate their responses. By Year 6 children should understand a range of text types and genres and be able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the situation.

The opportunities, organisation and provision for EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 include:

- KS1 spelling patterns are taught through the daily phonics sessions and assessed through children's knowledge of HFW's and phases from Letters and Sounds.
- Emergent writing/mark making is encouraged and opportunities are planned for in EYFS and Year 1.
- All pupils write daily.
- Writing for a wide range of purposes - from note-taking to extended writing in paragraphs - takes place each week.
- At KS1 children should begin to write independently and with enthusiasm. They should use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.
- At KS2 children should plan, draft and redraft writing of several paragraphs for a range of purposes and audiences.
- Presentation guidelines are taught at the beginning of each year and the expectations maintained throughout.
- Literacy work is recorded in Literacy books at least 3x weekly, not including spelling or handwriting.
- Extended writing takes place weekly
- TAs work with SA and SA+ children and other groups at the discretion of the class teacher.
- Grammar is taught discretely and in context. Objectives appear in weekly planning.
- Spelling is taught weekly in KS2.
- Modelled and guided writing takes place in all year groups.

- All children have ‘next step’ cards which show the objectives they need to develop in order to achieve the next sub-level (see below)
- Handwriting takes place in discrete lessons twice weekly.

### **Breadth and Balance**

Teachers will have a clear idea of the knowledge and skills to be taught in the four areas of speaking, listening, reading and writing, which incorporate composition, handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Year groups will have a termly overview of objectives which need to be covered, incorporating fiction and non-fiction genres. Teachers are able to decide how to teach these and choose appropriate texts, to enhance learning, purpose and enthusiasm.

### **Variety**

The Literacy session will ensure that children will be engaged in a variety of activities appropriate to their specific needs. Child initiated activities, storytelling, talking about their own experiences and ideas, drama and improvisation provide a sound base at EYFS and are developed throughout Key Stage 1 and 2.

Teaching and learning styles incorporate direct instruction; group collaboration; paired work; practical activity; performance; individual research and investigation with other appropriate strategies all encourage effective learning through language.

### **Cross-curricular skills and themes**

Language pervades all aspects of our lives and culture. It is the driving force behind learning and across all aspects of the curriculum. As a school we recognise and identify the aspects of language and language use which occur and encourage effective learning, across all studies, topics or subjects. Language makes a valuable contribution to cross-curricular elements in the development of key concepts, skills values and attitudes. Extended writing is planned for in other curriculum subjects on a weekly basis.

### **Planning**

- Lessons are planned using the termly overviews with objectives specific to the genres covered. The Foundation Stage is linked to the Foundation Stage Profile.
- Teachers ensure that a variety of genres are taught within each term. This is evident in the termly overviews for each year group. Where possible teachers try to ensure the texts chosen relate to other areas of the curriculum being taught.
- All KS1 and KS2 teachers use the agreed weekly planners to ensure consistency in planning.
- Subject monitoring is undertaken regularly through scrutiny of books, lesson plans and lesson observations. The Headteacher, Deputy Head and Literacy Subject Leader will lead and discuss strengths and areas for development.

### **Differentiation and Special Needs**

The development of children’s language necessitates a variety of differentiated texts and approaches across the four language modes (speaking, listening, reading and writing). Careful planning will ensure that these resources and approaches are appropriately matched to individual pupils, including the more able and those children with particular learning needs, across year groups.

### **Equal Opportunities**

Children of all ethnic and cultural groups, races, genders, sexual orientation and abilities, have equal access to the English Curriculum. Positive images in terms of all groups are promoted throughout the school, both in the use of language and in the provision of resources.

### **Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

Assessment in English is continuous, to inform planning and diagnose strengths and areas for development.

- We make short-term assessments which we use to help inform our short-term planning. These are closely matched to the teaching objectives and will often be made from day to day observations, work or discussions.
- In speaking and listening this involves observing children using a variety of spoken language for different purposes.
- In reading, this involves formal and informal observation and close monitoring of children's developing use of strategies and responses to texts.
- In writing, it involves effective marking which is positive, instructional and offers a 'next step' for development. Feedback to children about their progress in English is through verbal comment, discussion and the marking of work (see below for further details) where next steps are identified in order for the children to make further progress.
- Summative assessment in writing and reading is gained through December and May QCA/SATS testing. This is moderated by head- teacher, deputy head-teacher and Literacy Coordinator.
- Level descriptors are used and highlighted throughout the year and go with the class throughout their school life.
- Children's progress and targets are reported to parents verbally in Terms 1 and 2 and as a written report in term 3.
- There is opportunity for children to self and peer-assess (as often as daily) in accordance to the marking policy.

## **Extended Writing: Marking, Annotating, Thinkabout grids and Target Cards**

### **Marking**

- A positive comment is written at the end of each piece of writing
- Two next step development points- these are closely linked to the annotating within the work and are realistic and achievable within the short term
- Level descriptors are used to find next steps
- All teachers have high expectations for presentation and handwriting
- Children are given time to read comments written in the following lesson and act on any corrections

### **Thinkabout Sheets**

Thinkabout sheets are used for every piece of extended writing throughout KS1 and KS2. These are:

- Differentiated
- Used across the whole school in both sets
- Used alongside target cards (target cards are general targets- thinkabout sheets are specific to a particular piece of writing)
- Can be genre specific targets

### **Annotating**

Teachers annotate work in various ways- these should be target/piece of work specific- a child's work should not be covered in red pen but the important elements of the task set or common errors should be identified. This includes spelling, punctuation, grammar, paragraphs etc. As well as possibly asking questions to focus a child on how to improve their work.

### **Target cards**

Target cards are used throughout KS1 and KS2:

- Targets must be achievable, next step so that they can be updated and changed regularly.
- Reviewed and updated regularly to keep progressing the child.
- Level descriptors are used to help set targets.

### **Cross-Curricular Literacy Opportunities**

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. They will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through Literacy lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

### **ICT**

Children should be actively engaged in developing their English skills through the use of ICT both in and out of the classroom.

### **The Role of the Subject Leader**

The subject leader will be responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in Literacy through:

- Taking the lead in policy development.
- Monitoring the delivery and coverage of the English Curriculum.
- Monitoring and evaluating pupil progress and the quality of the Learning Environment.
- Keeping up to date with developments in English and disseminating information to colleagues as appropriate.
- Purchasing and organising resources.

### **Parental Involvement**

Parents receive an annual written report and are invited to two parental consultations during the school year. Teachers in EYFS and KS1 write in home-link books to communicate reading progress and reading homework and parents are invited to write comments in response. Teachers also keep parents informed at other times as necessary.