



Mehria Primary School

Literacy Policy

Purpose of Study:

Literacy has an important place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils, therefore, who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.

Aims :

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

Therefore we will:

- Set high expectations so our children will achieve their full potential
- Respond to our pupils' diverse learning needs in accordance with guidelines in the National Curriculum by providing a broad and balanced language curriculum
- Develop pupil's abilities and enthusiasm with an integrated programme of speaking, listening, reading and writing
- Provide pupils with opportunities to consolidate, practise and develop new English skills across the curriculum
- Encourage confidence and enjoyment in writing, reading, speaking and listening

During their education at Mehria Primary School we aim for all our children to:

- Practise, consolidate and develop English skills across the curriculum

- Speak and listen confidently and respond appropriately to different audiences. Be effective, competent communicators within a range of groups in both formal and informal contexts.
- Have an interest in books and read for enjoyment whilst developing the skills to read a range of texts fluently and with good understanding
- Read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding for a range of purposes and audiences
- Use a range of strategies to self-assess, edit and refine their own writing
- Develop their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness
- Have an interest in words and their meanings and develop growing vocabulary
- Value a range of languages in our school and the wider community
- Use ICT skills to improve and consolidate literacy
- Through the teaching of phonics develop an understanding of the spelling system
- Understand how grammar and punctuation is used, building on skills throughout school and applying this knowledge when reading and writing
- Develop a legible, fluent and cursive writing style

Teaching and Learning of English:

Much of our English work at Mehria will be text based, with children enjoying a wide and varied range of texts and genres. Key skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening will be developed and consolidated upon, before children are then stretched and challenged through a range of exciting learning opportunities.

- Teaching and learning styles will reflect and support the overall development of English with a great emphasis on modelled and collaborative writing
- A variety of teaching and learning strategies will be used to give all children the opportunity to develop their literacy skills
- Children will be given chance to work within a variety of learning situations including: whole class, guided work, independent work, group work, paired work, problem solving, hot seating, discussing, risk taking and investigating
- Differentiated and challenging activities will be given to support and extend
- Drama and role play will be used to widen understanding in English and across the curriculum
- Teaching assistants will be used to support groups and individuals of all levels

Key areas within English:

Phonics:

In order to teach all our pupils to become fluent, confident readers, who have a love of reading; it is paramount that we teach a daily phonics lesson. All pupils within t Key Stage 1 will receive phonics teaching in line with the DFE document 'Letters and Sounds'. From

Reception onwards, pupils receive a twenty minute daily phonics lesson, targeted at their current level of attainment, and are encouraged to apply this learning in their reading and writing. Pupils continue to receive daily phonics teaching until they are confident with using and applying the skills taught within phase five of the 'Letters and Sounds' Developed Jan 2013 document. Pupils within Key Stage 1 are taught in groups split by current attainment. Teachers use a range of resources from Floppy Phonics, Phonics International and *Jolly phonics*.

Discrete phonics teaching continues into Key Stage 2, and for as long as necessary, for pupils who require extra support and learning time to focus on securing their phonics knowledge. We work within all Key Stages to ensure that all pupils who would benefit from extra phonics teaching receive it. Any pupil, who has not reached the expected phonics level by the end of Year 1, as assessed by the national screening check, receives additional phonics intervention within Year 2, so that they can catch up with their peers.

Pupils at Mehria Primary School benefit from a high level of phonics knowledge by all staff, the consistent use of language throughout the school.

Reading:

We aim to foster a love of reading at Mehria and we encourage children to read a wide range of books both at school and at home. All children have access to our wonderful school library which they are able to use to extend their independent reading, as a research tool or just to enjoy a good story. We have high expectations of children and the progression of their reading skills. Therefore we offer as many opportunities for reading as we can. This may happen in the literacy lesson or across the curriculum.

Whole class reading:

Children are given opportunities to listen to, read, and comment on, books and stories during whole class sessions. This is teacher led and the children interact and respond to differentiated questions, often during English lessons but also across the curriculum. Most classes use shared texts to base their English work around.

Shared reading:

During English lessons the children are given a variety of text types as a stimulus for writing. The teacher and children share the text, and the teacher models as an expert reader, drawing out the key elements of the content.

Guided reading:

Guided reading takes place in class groups several times a week. The children are split into small ability groups, with one group having teacher input using a levelled text to encourage reading fluency and comprehension skills. Staff teaches specific reading skills which are linked to different assessment focuses (see reading objectives from the national curriculum appendix 2), and the groups work on a learning objective which will move them on to the next level. As a school we use a whole school approach to guided reading, using texts which

show clear progression across different key stages. Other groups work on independent skills to improve their English such as spelling, handwriting, grammar and enjoyment for reading.

Home school Reading:

Home school links are very important in reading and all children take home a reading book which is levelled to match the guided reading books used in school. Children share these books with parents/carers and also teaching assistants in school. They are shared at least once a week in school however some groups are heard read on a daily basis to help ensure good progress with reading and comprehension skills. We also feel this helps develop children's confidence. Any comments made during these sessions by either party can be recorded in children's reading diaries. We actively encourage parents/carers to share a good book with their children. Communication with home is essential and this is something which we actively encourage. Children all have a reading diary which staff and parents can record comments in.

Writing:

We aim to foster a love of writing as soon as children enter Mehria Primary. This is achieved through many different teaching and learning strategies.

Key Stage 1:

Clear assessments for the early years teacher allows for a smooth transition into key stage one where children continue to develop their love of writing.

- Explicitly taught and planned English sessions following the guidance and objectives of the statutory English curriculum (Sept 2014)
- Extended opportunities for discussion of writing, e.g. role play, pair talk, drama and hot seating to prepare children for the writing process
- Shared and modelled writing examples
- Opportunities for children to write for and share their writing with different audiences
- Songs, rhymes and games to develop English skills
- Spelling and grammar work building on and deepening key skills across different year groups
- Text level work using a range of genres and texts which will develop comprehension skills and understanding and enjoyment of books, helping to promote a love of writing
- ICT work that complements and supports work in English, helping children to develop skills learnt through quality first teaching
- Immersion in a print rich environment that promotes a reading culture and develops children's oral and written communication

Key Stage 2:

- Explicitly taught and planned sessions following the guidance and objectives of the statutory English curriculum (Sept 2014)
- Experience of a wide range of genres used in reading and writing
- Grammar, spelling and punctuation work led by quality texts to develop grammatical awareness and key punctuation skills building on and deepening key skills across different year groups. (Using the Alan Peat sentence types)
- Text level work reading a range of genres to develop comprehension skills and support writing. Also making cross curricular links where possible to help promote sustained composition
- Spelling and grammar games and activities to familiarise children with key skills
- Extended independent writing opportunities to apply the skills learnt when writing within different genres. Also the opportunity for children to draft, edit and refine their own work alongside that of others
- Immersion in a print rich environment that promotes a reading culture
- Extended opportunities for discussion of writing, e.g. role play, pair talk, drama and hot seating to prepare children for the writing process
- Shared and modelled writing examples
- Opportunities for children to write for and share their writing with different audiences
- ICT work that complements and supports work in literacy, helping children to develop skills learnt through quality first teaching

Speaking and listening:

Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language which pupil's hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing.

Children need opportunities to:

- Talk to others
- Talk with others
- Talk within role play and drama
- Talk about talk

At Mehria we believe children should have the opportunity to access the following:

- Book Talk - understanding and responding to what children read or have read to them
- Eliciting and extending responses and encouraging critique of books and writing
- Language development – acquiring new words, ideas and knowledge of the world and having the opportunity to talk about them
- Storytelling – retelling well-known and familiar stories to assimilate the rhythms and patterns of story language
- Story making - creating 'new' stories orally and/or as a preparation and rehearsal for writing

- Talk for Writing - exploring ideas and gathering the content for writing - what to write about.
- Creating characters and settings, exploring characters' feelings, sequencing and role-playing the order of events – knowing your story or organising information before writing it down
- Rehearsing what is to be written – composing sentences orally and refining them
- Preparing for and taking part in debates
- Opportunities to rehearse and learn different texts
- Presenting information to different audiences

Handwriting and Presentation:

At Mehria we take great pride in the presentation of all our work. Within English we believe handwriting is an essential skill and we believe that the children's ability to write fluently for the rest of their lives depends on a good foundation of taught handwriting in the early years of their education. We believe that handwriting is a developmental process with its own distinctive stages of progression from readiness for handwriting, through to letter joins, practising speed and fluency and higher presentation skills. A flexible fluent and legible handwriting style empowers children to write with confidence and creativity.

Handwriting is an important skill to learn, as it enables others to read the work done and for children to feel a pride in their sense of achievement. We feel that fluent and cursive handwriting should be learnt as early as possible.

Aims:

Teachers will:

- Expose children visually to a cursive script and pre-cursive letter formation in the foundation stage alongside regular print
- Teach children to write using pre-cursive letter formation in The Foundation stage, leading onto handwriting in a joined script which is both legible and fluent
- Help achieve this through regular, purposeful and guided practise

Children will:

- Develop fine motor skills
- Understand the importance of correct posture and paper position whether right or left handed.
- Hold and use a pen/pencil effectively
- Learn how to start and finish letters correctly
- Form letters of consistent size and shape
- Use and understand the language of writing and how to use the correct terminology
- Use regular spaces between words

- Form upper and lower case letters correctly
- Join letters correctly
- Be able to write legibly in both joined and printed styles
- Be able to use different styles of writing for different purposes
- Understand the importance of neat and clear presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively
- Develop greater control and fluency as they become increasingly confident

A cursive script is introduced in the Foundation Stage and is developed with Key Stage One.

Within Key Stage Two children are cursive and confident, therefore able to develop their own style in upper Key Stage Two.

All children follow use this cursive script which is known as the school script.

Handwriting is taught as an explicit lesson in most classes and children have the opportunity to practise and refine their handwriting skills though all areas of the curriculum. In Year Five children have the opportunity to apply for a pen licence. This requires children to write in the agreed school cursive style and have their work assessed by the class teacher. If it meets standards then they receive their pen. A copy of the assessed work is kept in their books as evidence.

Teaching staff throughout the school will be expected to model a cursive script in their own writing, on boards, in books and through displays and lettering. Computer fonts and wall friezes will be available in each classroom.

Planning:

Planning at Mehria reflects a learning journey through a unit of work. Like all journeys, the plan should have a specific destination and journey time. There may be detours, hold-ups or opportunities for acceleration which arise from Assessment for Learning, but the acquisition and application of skills provide the driving force. Teachers work from a medium term plan which then feeds into a weekly plan. The weekly plans have a focus around a specific text which can be narrative, non-narrative or poetry based. Often planning links closely with a class novel or a text that runs over several weeks. Links may also be made with other areas of the curriculum.

Within our planning sequences we focus on five main sections: Writing outcomes, opportunities to respond to the text, sentence level activities, speaking and listening opportunities, punctuation, grammar and spelling focus. The planning usually begins with a WOW experience for the children to help hook them into the text.

As a whole staff we have agreed on an effective planning format which is a flexible working document. We have agreed various non-negotiable on the plan but an effective plan is linked closely to each classes needs.

It will show:

- The unit outcome/s
- The teaching sequence
- The skills to be taught and applied in each lesson, translated from the learning objective
- The differentiated success criteria for those skills
- Differentiated independent activities – (start at more able ability and differentiate down)
- References to teacher modelling/sharing
- The guided group focus
- Annotations and evaluation notes and modifications arising from AfL

Assessment:

Day to Day assessment:

The basic principle of Assessment for Learning (AfL) is that whatever day to day judgements are made by the teacher about a child's attainment, go onto inform planning, teaching and learning. These judgements are made through talking and listening to the children, marking, observations, and occasional tests. This is known as formative assessment. The children are central to AfL and should be involved in their own progress. They should have a good awareness of themselves as learners and what their next steps are. In this way, AfL is not about being right or wrong, but about being at a certain stage of learning with identified areas for development. Children should know and understand their 'next steps' through discussion with the teacher, marking and learning targets. All children have individualised learning targets.

We also encourage children to self and peer-assess their own and others work. We are currently developing a children's marking policy.

Key Elements of AfL:

Within the lesson:

- Sharing the Big Picture with the class-where the learning journey will take them
- Clear objective
- Differentiated Success criteria
- Differentiated activities
- Plenary to review learning/assessment opportunities

Involving children:

- Quality questioning
- Interactive learning
- Talk for thinking/writing
- Self/peer evaluations
- Learning environment
- Support learning
- Motivate children

- Celebrate learning

Feedback and Marking:

- Specific links to objective and success criteria
- Balance of oral and written-using green and purple pens
- Children self-correct using orange pens
- Support next steps learning

Formal/summative assessment:**Reading:**

- Daily/ Weekly reviews of children's work against individual targets and learning objectives on CM
- Annual optional and statutory SATs in Year 2 and KS2.
- Annual review and assessment against expected levels of attainment in Reading and writing
- Termly pupil progress meetings with each teacher
- Moderation of children's skills and knowledge

Writing

- Daily/ Weekly reviews of children's work against individual targets and learning objectives on CM
- Annual optional and statutory SATs in Year 2 and Year 6
- Annual review and assessment against expected levels of attainment in writing
- Termly pupil progress meetings with each teacher
- Moderation within the school

Staff record their assessments termly (this may differ from class to class). Assessments are then discussed at the pupil progress meetings with the head teacher and members of the SLT.

An annual report is given to parents each July which includes information about the curriculum in English and an individual assessment of strengths and areas for development. Parents are informed as to whether their child is working within, below or exceeding expectations for their age and year group.

Parents meeting are also held in the Autumn and Spring Terms, giving feedback on progress in English.

Marking

Quality marking is essential so that children make good progress during each lesson, unit of work and over the school year. Marking in literacy follows the school marking policy

Children are also encouraged to self-mark their own work and also to peer mark each others work. This can be done in a variety of different ways:

- Green and purple pens
- Editing and refining work (orange pens)
- Self and peer assessment notes

Inclusion and equal opportunities

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their progress in order to close the gap. This will be done in discussion with the class teacher at pupil progress meetings. This information will then be shared with the SLT, SENCO and parents if required. Gifted and talented children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided to deepen and strengthen their skills in English.

Mehria has high expectations for every child, whatever their background or circumstances. Children learn and thrive when they are healthy, safe and engaged. Our school motto is 'Putting children first'.

In order to engage all children, cultural diversity, home languages, gender and religious beliefs are all celebrated. Our curriculum includes a wide range of texts and other resources which represent the diversity and backgrounds of different children.

We recognise that parents play a large part in the education of their children. At Mehria Primary School parents and staff work together in partnership to encourage the qualities, attitudes, knowledge, understanding and competences which are necessary to equip children for adult life.

This policy will be reviewed every two years or in light of changes to legal requirements.

Adopted in June 2024

Review Date Summer 2026