



## **John Shelton Community Primary School**

### **English**

#### **Introduction**

At John Shelton Primary School, we believe that every pupil has the right to be able to read and write effectively and to be able to communicate with others eloquently. In order to achieve this aim, the teaching of English, in all of its forms, has a high profile within the school.

#### **Aims**

We follow the National Curriculum for English ensuring that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening.

This policy applies to all pupils, regardless of their race, gender, religion or the presence of Special Educational Needs of any sort (including those who are Gifted and Talented). The curriculum is differentiated to ensure that all pupils progress in their learning at an appropriate pace supported by enrichment or reinforcement activities.

#### **Organisation**

Within the National Curriculum for English, skills are broken down into reading, writing and spoken language.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, there are five allocated English hours per week. In Nursery, children are introduced to sounds and letter formation. Reception and Year 1 follow Read Write Inc by Ruth Miskin which incorporates phonics, spelling, reading and writing activities. Pupils are taught in groups based on their reading ability and assessed on a regular basis to identify progress and gaps within learning in order for

extra support to be put in place. In Year 2, children start the year completing a transitional Read Write Inc unit before moving on to genre-focused units, as it is taught in Key Stage 2. Pupils are taught a variety of genres which cover personal interests, IT opportunities and topics linked to other areas of the curriculum.

Medium Term Planning is undertaken by class teachers to structure the whole of a unit. Pupils engage in a 'cold write' for teachers to identify targets and share with pupils. This form of assessment shapes the rest of the unit. Learning takes place over a number of weeks and leads to a 'hot write', where pupils have the opportunity to independently apply their learning.

In addition to English lessons, Guided Reading is taught during daily assembly times. This is led by a teacher or a teaching assistant and delivered to a small group of pupils with a particular focus being covered.

To address the expectations of the National Curriculum for Spelling, we have purchased Ruth Miskin's Spelling scheme; Read Write Inc. Spelling which is taught in Years 2-6. Pupils are taught spelling patterns through a range of activities in order to learn and apply them in a variety of contexts. Pupils take home a selection of words from their spelling unit and Common Exception Words (as stated in the National Curriculum) for homework on a weekly basis. These words are then tested in school.

Staff meetings are used to explore and develop the English curriculum and to ensure consistency of approach, standards and expectations. All class teachers are responsible for weekly planning, based on the agreed medium term plans. These plans identify:

- the appropriate teaching and learning strategies required;
- provide a balance and variety within the classroom – of content and organisational learning opportunities for children;
- assess and plan for the specific needs of children within their own class whilst adhering to the progression laid down in the scheme.

## **Teaching and Learning**

### **Reading**

We believe that 'reading feeds pupils' imagination and opens up a treasure-house of wonder and joy', and therefore, that all pupils should be taught to read fluently and expressively and be encouraged to enjoy reading both for pleasure and for information.

### **Phonics**

In order to teach all our pupils to become fluent, confident readers, who have a love of reading, we follow a phonics first policy. All pupils within the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1 receive phonics teaching through the Read, Write Inc programme. From Reception onwards, pupils receive a 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 set 3 of Read. Write Inc. Pupils within Year 1 are taught in groups split by current attainment.

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.

### **Individual Reading**

Although phonics gives pupils the best start in learning to read, at John Shelton Primary School, we also recognise that pupils need to practise reading regularly in order to become proficient. All pupils within the school are placed on a book band that is appropriate to their current reading attainment. They read regularly in school with an adult. As part of our home school agreement with parents, we ask that parents also support this journey by reading with their children as regularly as possible and at a minimum of three times a week.

### **Guided Reading**

Teaching of reading also occurs within 'shared reading' sessions in whole class Literacy lessons and within small group guided reading sessions. Guided Reading focuses on the comprehension of reading with specific skills being taught and practiced. At John Shelton, we use an approach of 'Reading Roles' where we assign key roles to the areas of reading to be taught. At the beginning of each session, children are introduced to the role and what the focus of their learning will be.

### **Enjoyment of reading**

By giving reading a high profile within the school and within each classroom we hope to encourage a lifelong relationship with reading, which allows our pupils to enjoy and experience a wide variety of literature from many genres, so they can escape into the world of a book or learn something new. We encourage the enjoyment of reading in a wide variety of ways that continue to be adapted in order to gain and maintain the enthusiasm of the pupils within the school. The school provides a wide variety of high quality resources to support the teaching of reading and many events to encourage reading for pleasure, for example, Year 5 and 6 children take part in an

annual 'Spooky Story' reading event and EYFS and Key Stage 1, enjoy coming back to school one evening in their pyjamas and listen to stories.

## **Writing**

At John Shelton Primary School, we believe that being able to write coherently not only enables pupils to communicate effectively, but also allows them to experience the joy of crafting their own texts. It is important that pupils learn to write independently from an early stage and this is encouraged through emergent writing within the EYFS. During Key Stage 1 the teaching of phonics, spelling and handwriting complements this process and is used systematically to support writing and to build up accuracy and speed. We know that for pupils to become successful writers they need to:

- experience a wide range of written texts, which is the primary source of knowledge about the written word and how it 'sounds'
- orally tell and retell stories and other texts
- experience both shared and guided writing, where the teacher focuses attention explicitly on the technicalities of writing
- regularly practise writing independently.

Therefore when planning English activities we ensure that all pupils have access to these experiences. Within Year 1, pupils writing work is based on the Read, Write Inc scheme of work developed by Ruth Miskin. Every half term, a writing week is planned which links to current interests or themes where the children learn how to shape a piece of writing linked to a particular genre. In Years 2-6, we ensure that pupils encounter rich and engaging texts and become confident writers of different genres. In order to ensure effective teaching of writing, there are regular planned opportunities for: talk for writing, planning writing, modelled writing, shared writing, supported composition and guided writing.

## **Handwriting**

Handwriting and presentation of work within our school is important in all areas of the curriculum (see Presentation Policy). Pupils are taught handwriting from Reception using Read Write Inc and pupils in Year 1 onwards use Nelson's Handwriting. Pupils begin learning letter formation and in preparation for later joining are taught where to start each letter. As the pupils become more confident in recording letters they are taught to join their handwriting in the school style. As they progress through the school they are supported in generating an individual style which is both efficient and neat. Children are awarded a pen licence once their handwriting has become regular, fluent and joined in line with Nelson's Handwriting Scheme.

## **Spelling**

In order to become confident writers, pupils also need to become proficient at spelling. In EYFS and Key Stage 1, spelling is intrinsically linked to reading, as the pupils learn to use phonics for both of these activities - see phonics section for further details. Pupils are encouraged to apply their phonics to spelling throughout the curriculum. Pupils in Year 2-6 receive spelling teaching in line with the National Curriculum for English, through the use of Read Write Inc Spelling by Ruth Miskin. Pupils receive a minimum of 1 hour spelling teaching each week. This spelling work is supported by homework either to learn spelling lists or to practise the rules they are learning in the classroom.

Pupils requiring additional support with their spelling may take part in a programme run by the SEN team to improve their spelling of high frequency words.

### **Grammar**

We also recognise that pupils need to be taught to write grammatically accurately and therefore pupils at John Shelton Primary School receive grammar teaching through their literacy units. There is a focus on learning the grammar through a variety of word and sentence level activities and then applying it when writing. Some grammar will be taught discretely across some year groups, where appropriate.

### **Spoken Language**

At John Shelton Primary School, we recognise the importance of being able to communicate orally and to understand what others are saying. We teach pupils to use language precisely and coherently. This involves giving pupils opportunities to experience a rich language environment to develop their skills in expressing themselves, and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

They should be able to listen to others, and to respond and build on their ideas and views constructively. Pupils are given opportunities to participate orally in groups and in the whole class, including:

- using spoken language to develop and clarify ideas;
- identifying the main points to arise from a discussion;
- listening for a specific purpose; discussion and evaluation.

Pupils are also given opportunities to speak in front of a wider audience during assemblies and whole school productions.

### **Assessment**

Effective assessment is essential to quality teaching and learning. Assessment for Learning (AfL) is a tool utilised by the school to raise attainment and accelerate progress. Good assessment practice ensures lesson planning is relevant and is based on a sound knowledge of the pupils' learning styles, attainment, progress and the

next steps in their learning. To this end, teachers annotate their weekly plans to assess progress by groups within the class – to record achievements and to highlight areas of concern for the future.

The pupils at John Shelton Primary School take summative assessments in line with statutory requirements. They take part in a phonics screening test in Year 1; reading SATs in Year 2 (which supports the teachers' overall assessment of their attainment); Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar, and reading tests in Year 6 (as well as their writing attainment being assessed by their teachers, from ongoing work).

Throughout the year, pupils also take reading tests and spelling tests appropriate to their age which is used to identify gaps in knowledge and prepare for future teaching.

Reporting procedures are in line with DfE regulations. Parents receive an annual written report and are invited to two parental interviews throughout the academic year.

