

The Grove School

Literacy Policy

Rationale

Literacy is a curriculum area that covers many different aspects of communication learning such as Speaking and Listening, Reading and Writing. Within these areas there are more specific skills of communication, interaction, articulation, phonics - decoding and encoding, comprehension, drama and fine motor skills. As a special school we want to develop the necessary skills for expressive receptive and comprehensive communication, reading and writing but we also endeavour to foster and stimulate enjoyment and a love of literature in as wide a form as possible.

Literacy in our school is embedded in real life contexts, based on individually motivated activities as well as focused learning.

Aims

Programme delivery is individualised and progress that is made will vary on an individualised basis. The targets that are set and progress that is made may look very different across a particular cohort of pupils.

Our aims in teaching Literacy are that pupils will develop skills in the following areas:

- Have an interest in books and read/listen to stories for enjoyment.
- Read a varied selection of texts whilst gaining an increased level of fluency and understanding
- Develop a range of reading strategies for approaching reading: using and applying phonological, contextual, grammatical and graphic knowledge
- Use reading as a means to gather information to support their learning throughout the entire curriculum
- Read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding, orchestrate a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct
- Write in different contexts and for different purposes and audiences
- Write with increasing awareness of the conventions of grammar, punctuation and spelling
- Have an interest in words, their meanings and be developing a growing vocabulary in the spoken and written forms

- Form letters correctly, leading to a fluent and legible handwriting style
- Develop their oral/communicative abilities at their own level

We aim to provide opportunities across the Literacy curriculum that will enable all pupils to develop their skills in this and to enable them to maximise progress made. These approaches may look very different from class to class. We recognise the important role computing skills have to play in our school in the development of Literacy skills. This can be found primarily in Maple and Willow with technology such as Eye-gaze, Etran board and ACC (Alternative Augmented Communication) switches.

Statutory Requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in 'The National Curriculum in England Framework Document for Teaching, December 2014 and 'The Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, December 2014'

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils should be given the opportunity to:

- Use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum
- Become immersed in an environment rich language, print and possibilities for communication
- Develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves and to speak and listen in a range of situations
- Be able to represent their ideas in their activities
- Link sounds and letters to begin to read and write
- Access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, other written materials and computer based texts) to ignite their interest

At Key Stage One, pupils should be given the opportunity to:

- Learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say
- Ask questions to deepen their understanding
- Use spoken language to organise their thinking and support their writing
- Read for pleasure, understand what they have read and begin to read with expression
- Read and write independently and with enthusiasm
- Use and adapt language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds
- Use their knowledge of phonics to support reading and writing

- Be encouraged to use correct spelling, grammar and punctuation in their written work

At Key Stage Two, pupils should be given the opportunity to:

- Learn to speak clearly and convey ideas using Standard English whilst being able to adapt their vocabulary for all purposes and audiences
- Ask questions to check their understanding
- Use spoken language to clarify thinking and organise for writing
- Read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them
- Develop an enjoyment of reading and exploring different types of texts
- Explore the use of language in literacy and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works
- Write extended pieces using correct grammar, punctuation and spelling
- Use their reading and writing skills across the curriculum
- Complete writing that includes narratives, explanations, descriptions, comparisons, summaries and evaluations

Approaches to Spoken Language and Listening:

Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing and helps pupils develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear is vital for developing their vocabulary, grammar and their understanding of reading and writing.

Foundation Stage - Pupils will be taught to listen attentively in a range of situations. They regularly listen to multimedia stories, discuss key events and respond to what they hear. Pupils will be taught to give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately. Pupils begin to develop good communication skills such as: taking turns and making eye contact. This is continued and developed throughout the school.

Key Stage One - Pupils in Key Stage One continue to practice and develop their communication skills. They have frequent experiences to encounter new words through an environment that is rich in vocabulary. They also experience new vocabulary different contexts across the curriculum. Pupils have the opportunity to listen to a variety of multimedia fiction, non-fiction and poetry and they are encouraged to link what they hear to their own experiences.

Key Stage Two - As pupils progress through the school, they are encouraged to ask more questions to deepen their learning. Pupils in Key Stage Two continue to

have many opportunities across school to develop their communication skills such as weekly assemblies and discussions in class.

Approaches to Reading

Teachers model reading strategies during shared reading sessions. We use a range of reading schemes to ensure that there is a book scheme to match both the interest and age of the pupils. We also ensure that we have schemes that cover different types of learners, our pupils learn to read in different ways, they may be sight vocabulary learners, therefore we have schemes that are based on this way of learning, or they may be phonetic learners and we have schemes that are appropriate to these learners.

We will ensure that we provide:

- A high quality systematic synthetic phonics programme (using Jolly Phonics)
- A rich and varied selection of reading material that inspire and challenge all pupils, this will be in classrooms and around the school
- A plan for each pupil's sequential progress in reading based on accurate assessment
- Appropriate intervention programmes for pupils whose progress is slower than expected from their baseline
- A partnership planning model that includes the multi-professional team within our school and parents
- An environment that fosters a love for reading
- Regular monitoring and review of provision to ensure it is effective and takes steps to improve performance when necessary

Provision

Phonics

The school bases its synthetic phonics provision on 'Jolly Phonics' incorporating other resources to help provide the means of supporting pupils. Pupils will have daily phonic lessons. Pupils will continue to have phonic lessons depending on their ability rather than their chronological age.

The reading environment

Each classroom ensures that there are books available, this may be boxes of books or a reading area. For some classes they have access to the reading books

on our library shelves along the back corridor. We ensure that children are encouraged to use books for information and enjoyment.

Reading stories in class

Staff will read to children on a regular basis, some classes will have a class reader that may take a few weeks to read, others will use bag books and box books to share stories with their class.

Hearing reading

Individual reading

All pupils will have their reading heard individually on a regular basis, where possible this will be daily and will be recorded in their reading record

Reading schemes

Pupils will have reading books selected for them by an adult these will be chosen with the knowledge of the type of learner the pupil is, are they able to learn to read phonetically or do they require a sight vocabulary based scheme of reading. The school does not have one main scheme but instead utilises the best from a variety of schemes so a pupil's learning journey can be flexible. (See our Reading Scheme spreadsheet)

Special events

Staff and pupils take part in literacy/story based events each year. The type of event varies each year to ensure that there is a good cross section, we have celebrated World Book Day and World poetry day, there are many others that we are also involved in. The purpose of these days are to ensure that pupils have a rich experience of learning and literacy, with an emphasis on enjoyment.

Approaches to writing

Inclusive writing

We use some of the following to include our most complex learners in writing:-

- Objects of reference
- Life quilts and life history boxes
- Personal storytelling
- Sensory stories & multimedia stories
- Cause and effect software
- Photo albums and scrap books
- Picture books & stories
- Graphic facilitation

- Reading icons and symbols
- Talking books
- Early conventional reading skills
- Simple conventional books
- Drama and role play
- Simple software for computer
- Television and films
- Navigating websites (eg: Eastenders)
- Still photography to create books
- Film-making

Writing programmes and events

The programme is used throughout school for the development of early imaginative writing. We ensure that pupils are exposed to writing in different forms through cross curricular learning as well as more structured writing lessons. Staff look for opportunities to use writing in practical ways and in different genre's, we have literacy days when pupils are involved in poetry writing and other writing tasks.

Handwriting is taught following our handwriting programme in our Language programme.

Approaches to Speaking and Listening

We ensure that we follow The Communication Bill of Rights, this means that we find different ways to ensure pupils have their voices heard, we find ways to enable this to happen which include:-

Augmented Alternative Communication Aids

Technology to support communication

Speech and Language Therapist support if needed

Talk Boost programmes

Environment

We ensure that our classes are communication friendly environments through thinking about:-

- Space, light and layout
- Noise levels
- Using visual support
- Clear and consistent routines

- Planning new opportunities for support of communication throughout the day

Supporting listening

Many of our staff are Elkan trained, we ensure that we follow ideas and strategies that are recommended through this training. We consider the way that pupils learn to listen and how we can support this using the following:-

- Elkan programme
- Listening programme
- Circle Time