

# Dean Field School

## English Policy



Reviewed September 2020

**Aims:**

We aim to develop pupils' abilities within an integrated programme of Speaking and Listening, Reading and Writing. Pupils will be given opportunities to:

- Communicate for a range of purposes, listen effectively and show an understanding of what they hear.
- Read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding.
- Use a range of spelling strategies and apply them in their independent work.
- Experience a range of text types and genres.
- Develop the powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.
- Enjoy using language in different contexts and have the confidence and ability to do so.
- Enable children to be articulate speakers and good responsive listeners in a variety of situations.
- Develop a fluent, legible handwriting style and take care with presentation of their work.

**How do we teach English at Dean Field?**

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is followed to ensure continuity and progression from the Foundation Stage through to the National Curriculum. Currently in Key Stage One and Two we have a more creative way of planning our Literacy lessons, working from the objectives outlined in the New National Curriculum 2014. This ensures lessons are creative, imaginative and relevant to the needs of the children at Dean Field. Lessons are linked to the classes' current topics and may be cross-curricula when suitable.

English lessons are undertaken daily in Years 1-6 with Foundation Stage incorporating their English teaching within their topic time and often short morning sessions too. In addition to daily English lessons, all children in Y1 take part in daily Read Write Inc lessons (for approximately 40 minutes) which are suitable to their reading ability. Children in Y2 and KS2 receive a daily Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPAG) lesson in which spelling, grammar and handwriting skills are taught. Interventions, including RWI, are in place for children in Y2 and KS2 who need more support with phonics. At least once a week there is a focussed reading comprehension session in which children work with the class teacher/TA to develop higher order thinking skills. During this time, children also take part in activities to widen their understanding of vocabulary.

**Speaking and Listening:**

We give children a range of purposes for speaking and listening. We encourage pupils using a variety of different sized audiences to contrast purpose. Speaking and listening will sometimes be taught discretely, but more often it will be taught within other areas of the National Curriculum, and as the new National Curriculum 2014 highlights, such activities will be embedded throughout teaching and learning.

All classes deliver half termly assemblies to the rest of the school and examples of where speaking and listening might occur within the classroom are as follows:

- 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 tapes and CD's.
- Class council / school council.
- Circle time.
- Use of Talk Partners

### **Reading:**

We believe children need to have the skills and confidence to deal with printed language critically and should also be encouraged to read for pleasure.

At Dean Field we aim to:

- Provide children with experience that will lead to a rich and varied language development.
- Help the child develop visual perception and discrimination of the written word.
- Teach the child skills necessary to become a fluent reader.
- Encourage the child to understand the deeper meaning of texts.

The discrete teaching of reading skills is undertaken daily in EYFS and year 1 in RWI sessions and weekly in KS2 during the reading comprehension session, as well as frequently featuring in our text-based English lessons.

### **Accelerated Reader:**

The Accelerated Reader program (AR) is used successfully in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. This program allows the teachers to clearly measure reading progression and identify groups of children who require intervention. Data such as a child's reading age, how they are performing compared to other children nationally and % understood of a text is easily available for teachers to assess reading at Dean Field. Teachers track reading progress weekly by looking at AR reports. They use the reports to identify pupils that need intervention and put the necessary interventions in place.

#### **What does it do? The 5 steps to reading success:**

- It's all about practice. AR encourages substantial differentiated reading practice to create strong readers. Based on each student's independent reading level, AR helps teachers set personalised goals for each student, and guide students to books difficult enough to keep them challenged, but not so difficult to cause frustration.
- In addition, AR helps teachers monitor students' vocabulary growth, literacy skills development, and other reading skills.
- **Determine reading level.** First, a student's optimal reading level is determined through the STAR Reading assessment. This assessment provides information on a student's overall reading ability and suggests a range of book levels for each student called the "zone of proximal development", or ZPD. An entire class can be screened in approximately 20 minutes. Therefore, teachers are reassured that children are reading a book at the necessary level with the right amount of challenge.
- **Set practice goals.** Teachers then meet with each student to set three individualized reading practice goals based on reading quantity, quality, and difficulty and monitor progress toward those goals. Teachers also discuss reading progress with pupils during their daily reading sessions in the morning.
- **Personalise practice.** Personalised reading practice means students read books of interest at their own reading level. AR BookFinder makes it easy to find the perfect book.
- **Students take an AR Quiz.** AR offers more than 150,000 quizzes of five types on both fiction and nonfiction titles. Students have to achieve 85%+ in order to pass a quiz – this shows the teacher that the child has understood the text read. It also highlights children who are falling behind or not reading frequently.
- **Receive instant feedback.** AR provides teachers with immediate information, helping them monitor the comprehension skills of each student and inform further instruction or intervention. Students and parents get instant feedback to help motivate success with the use of the TOPS Report and [Renaissance Home Connect](#).

### **Shared reading:**

Shared reading is where the teacher works with the children to model fluent, expressive reading; the use of effective reading strategies and to encourage response to texts. Shared reading enables children to access and enjoy rich, authentic texts which are slightly beyond their independent reading level. All classes will also have a class novel which is read aloud by the teacher, either during the English lesson or at the end of the day.

### **Reading Buddies Peer Mentor Program:**

At Dean Field we incorporate a reading buddy peer mentor program in upper key stage 2. Such intervention has proved successful across the world and adds +6 months to a child's reading ability. It involves a tutor (more able reader) and a tutee (less able reader). Each program lasts approximately

10 weeks and involves 10 children from each class (children are specifically chosen by the class teacher for reasons such as: doesn't read often at home; poor understanding of texts; low confidence; below age expectation level etc). Children read together during the morning reading session.

### **Assessment:**

The main source of reading assessment is Accelerated Reader. Children complete a STAR reading assessment at the start of each academic year and at the end of each term and are continually completing book quizzes on the books they have read at school and at home, providing teachers with up-to-date and accurate assessments of reading. Children will be tested termly on STAR reader if this is necessary to monitor progress in underachievers. To add to this overall reading assessment picture, children are tested three times a year using NFER assessments and are also assessed using optional SATs (Standard Assessment Test) at the end of the year. In addition to these assessments, teachers keep an ongoing record for each child, on target tracker, in relation to National Curriculum expectations. These records are used along with the tests in order to form an overall judgement.

Teachers must aim to listen to every child in their class reading at least once a week and it is advised that teachers record this in the pupils' Reading Records in order to ensure good communication between home and school. Teachers must also identify the children that do not read at home and prioritise reading with them. TAs must also follow this practice.

### **Resources:**

All teachers will provide a language rich environment for their pupils. In order to promote and create a love for reading we have a vibrant, well-resourced library which all pupils can visit. Teachers are also encouraged to take their classes into the library for whole class reading sessions. Half termly book orders are also completed and books and resources are borrowed half termly from the Calderdale Library Service.

### **Writing:**

Children are taught writing skills in daily English lessons and are given regular opportunities to apply and practise these skills through our creative curriculum. We develop the skills of:

- Write in a variety of contexts including in discreet literacy lessons, through the creative curriculum, through topics and cross-curricular writing.
- Study language through shared texts.
- Learn compositional skills.
- Learn the importance of planning and drafting writing.
- Develop children's spelling, punctuation and grammar skills.

Sometimes writing is planned so that children can follow the process through incorporating modelling, scaffolding, independence, re-drafting and producing a final draft.

As well as being taught separately, SPAG skills are incorporated into writing sessions.

### **Modelled Writing:**

Teachers at Dean Field model the writing process regularly during English lessons so that children can learn how to write. Teachers and teaching assistants model how to structure sentences, use SPAG effectively, think imaginatively and write for different audiences and purposes using the cursive handwriting script – providing children with an outstanding writing example to learn from. This approach to writing raises standards and children's confidence in writing and forms a WAGOLL for children to unpick. In some cases a WAGBOLL and WABOLL are used to aid teaching and learning of writing.

### **Assessment:**

When marking a piece of writing, feedback is thoughtful and provides children with next steps to progress. Children are given the opportunity to act on this feedback at the start of the next session to show impact. Children are provided with a target bookmark that has their unique target on it. This bookmark is transferable so children can move it onto the page they are writing on. When children provide enough evidence of achieving their target, teachers set them a new one to ensure continuous progress.

When assessing writing half termly, teachers use the assessment tick lists which are in line with the new curriculum and end of key stage expectations. Teachers update their assessment information and judgements are recorded each term on target tracker.

Every year group moderates children's writing across a range of subjects and writing tasks to assess the progress and judgement made during that half term.

### **Moderation of Writing:**

Every term teachers moderate writing samples in staff meeting sessions, led by the senior leadership team. A variety of anonymous writing samples, covering different text types at different levels, are assessed in conjunction with colleagues using the writing assessment ticklists. Strengths and areas for development of the writing sample are discussed and a writing judgement is agreed. This allows the staff at Dean Field to show consistency and accuracy with the way they assess children's writing. SLT file these samples for the teachers and student teachers to refer to when necessary.

### **Spelling:**

Spelling is incorporated into our daily RWI lessons or SPAG sessions with spelling rules and key words being taught specifically. Class teachers are responsible for ensuring all children receive the correct spellings to learn, with most children working on spellings and rules from the age-appropriate curriculum. Children are set spellings weekly for homework on a Friday and are given opportunities to practise these spellings during the week. Children learn spellings in different ways e.g. Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check and the visual spelling strategy. Spelling lists link to the NC word lists or NC spelling rules and interventions are put in place for children who struggle to learn and remember spellings.

From the Foundation Stage children engage in daily phonics lessons using RWI. This continues until Year 2 and into Year 3 if necessary, as pupils are grouped in RWI according to their phonic knowledge.

Year 1 Phonics Check – preparations for the phonics check begin early in the year, with pupils' knowledge of their sounds being assessed on a daily basis during RWI. Practise tests and pseudo words are used throughout the year in the build up to test check. Teachers in year 1 and 2 meet termly to discuss the phonics check and the progress their children are making towards it. Provision is put in place for Year 2 pupils who did not take or pass the check when they were in Year 1. Extra provision continues for children in Y3 who did not pass the phonics screen in Y2.

### **Resources:**

- . RWI – various resources
- . Dictionaries / thesauruses
- . Individual word spelling tests
- . SPAG aids - including Alan Peat sentences
- . No Nonsense Spelling scheme

### **Handwriting:**

Here at Dean Field, children are taught cursive handwriting. All adults model the correct use of cursive handwriting when using the whiteboard and each class displays a 'Handwriting at Dean Field' poster for the children to refer to. Children are awarded a pen licence in Y3 once their teacher thinks they are ready to use pen. This licence is celebrated with the children but can always be revoked if handwriting deteriorates.

### **Vocabulary**

At Dean Field we place great emphasis on ensuring our pupils are given access to high quality vocabulary at an age appropriate level. All classrooms have word walls and we are currently researching strategies to increase our pupils' ability to access, retain and use ambitious and interesting vocab both orally and written. All classrooms have working walls for English as well as all other core subjects and these all feature a vocab section.