

English Policy – September 2020

1 Aims and objectives

1.1 The study of English at **Sylvester Primary Academy** develops children's abilities to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes and audiences, so using language to learn and communicate ideas, views and feelings. It enables children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as non-fiction and digital texts. Children at **Sylvester Primary Academy** gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking, reading and writing across a range of different subjects. Our specific aims for speaking and listening, reading and writing are as follows.

1.2 Speaking and Listening

It is our aim for the children to:

- be encouraged to develop a wide range of vocabulary and the ability to use language in different situations: recounting, describing, reporting, discussing and presenting
- be encouraged to listen attentively and improve aural discrimination
- use language to create, adapt and sustain different roles through drama
- listen, understand and respond to others asking relevant questions where appropriate

1.3 Reading and Writing

We aim to enable every child to:

- experience success from the earliest possible stage
- be interested in books and read for pleasure
- be able to orchestrate a full range of reading clues (phonic, syntactic, graphic, and contextual) and to monitor their reading, correcting their own mistakes
- read for meaning using inference and deduction, looking for meaning beyond the literal
- understand the sound spelling systems and etymological root of words, using this to read and spell accurately
- use their reading skills to retrieve information as part of their learning throughout the entire curriculum
- read more challenging literature, broadening their reading horizons
- study language usage and use models of good writing to develop their own skills
- value their own work and that of others
- discuss their writing with peers and adults
- write for a variety of audiences and purposes, using a range of genres and standard formats in fiction, poetry and non-fiction
- know how written Standard English varies in degrees of formality



1.4 Handwriting

We aim for children to:

- form letters correctly, leading to a fluent, legible and individual style
- write legibly in both joined and printed styles with increasing fluency and speed
- use different forms of handwriting for different purposes

2 Teaching and learning approaches

2.1 At **Sylvester Primary Academy** we use a variety of pedagogic approaches in English lessons. Such approaches include direct, inductive, experiential, enquiry and problem solving approaches. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding of English. We do this through a daily lesson that has a high proportion of whole-class and group teaching. During these lessons children experience a whole-class shared reading or writing activity, a whole-class focused spelling, punctuation or grammar activity, a guided group or independent activity and a whole-class session to review progress and learning. They have the opportunity to experience a wide range of books and digital texts and use a range of resources such as dictionaries, thesauruses, spelling dictionaries, letter fans and phonic games to support their work. Children use ICT in English lessons where it enhances their learning, as in drafting their work or presenting their work, and using multimedia to study how words and images are combined to convey meaning. Wherever possible we encourage children to use and apply their learning in meaningful tasks across other areas of the curriculum.

3 English curriculum planning

- 3.1 Our English lessons incorporate the statutory requirements of the new National Curriculum Framework for English.
- 3.2 The school has a long term English plan which incorporates the books to be covered in each particular year group in reading and writing lessons as well as the grammar, punctuation and spellings objectives to be covered. The objectives are progressive and linked directly to the National Curriculum Framework.
- 3.3 Our medium term and short term plans follow the Reading to Writing model of teaching English. Our English plans follow The Literacy Tree recommended texts and objectives. Each English unit consists of reading, speaking and listening (Talk For Writing) and writing activities. Each phase incorporates clear objectives and learning outcomes taken from the new National Curriculum Framework for English.
- 3.4 As well as five dedicated English lessons each week, each class also receives three guided reading lessons. These lessons are based upon the texts and activities recommended by Literacy Leaves.

4 Differentiation



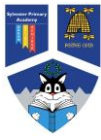
- 4.1 There are children of differing ability in all classes at **Sylvester Primary Academy**. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies. Children are organised into ability groups for most English lessons. Ability groups are provided with differentiated input, activity or outcome. For example, in some lessons we cater for different abilities through differentiated group work, while in other lessons we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We ensure that classroom assistants support all children at some point during an English topic, which further ensures all work matches the needs of, and stretches the abilities of, all individuals.

5 The Foundation Stage

- 5.1 We teach English in reception classes as an integral part of the school's work. The format for the daily lesson is similar to that used in the rest of the school. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the English aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. We give all children the opportunity to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and extend their range of vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore, enjoy, learn about, and use words and text in a range of situations.

6 Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas

- 6.1 The skills that children develop in English lessons at **Sylvester Primary Academy** are linked to, and applied in, every subject of our curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work in school.
- 6.2 **Mathematics**
English contributes significantly to the teaching of mathematics in our school. Children in the Foundation Stage develop their understanding of number, pattern, shape and space by talking about these areas with adults and other children. Children in Key Stage 1 read stories and rhymes that rely on counting and sequencing. Children in Key Stage 2 are encouraged to read and interpret problems in order to identify the mathematics involved. They are asked to explain and present their work to others; and they communicate mathematically through the developing use of precise mathematical language.
- 6.3 **Computing (ICT)**
The use of ICT is intrinsic to the teaching of English at **Sylvester Primary Academy**. All classrooms are equipped with Smartboard technology which is used as a stimulus in English lessons. The stimuli are many and varied such as: e-books, apps, enlarged texts, literacy software, video clips, DVD clips, musical extracts, etc. The use of ICT is central to ensuring that English is attention grabbing and interactive. The use of ICT also enables children to use and apply their developing skills in Computing in a variety of ways. Here



are some examples. Children use the Internet when searching for information about topics. Children use the planning and proofing tools in a word processor when checking their draft work, and use word processing programs to redraft and present their work. We encourage all children to use ICT as a resource for learning, whenever they feel it is appropriate.

6.4 The Creative Curriculum (Topic Work)

Whenever possible, teachers at **Sylvester** aim to relate English units very closely to class topics. This helps to give children the opportunity to put into practise their current learning and write for a real purpose. For example in Year 5 the Non-Chronological Report unit is centred solely around the topic Endangered Species, while in Year 6 the Flashback Stories unit is linked to the Year Six topic on World War Two.

6.5 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

English contributes to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. We encourage younger children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues. In their science work they talk about things that improve their health and about rules for keeping them safe around the school. Older children research and debate topical problems and events. They discuss lifestyle choices and meet and talk with many visitors who work within the school community. Planned activities within the classroom encourage children to work together and respect each other's views.

7 Teaching English to children with special needs

7.1 At **Sylvester Primary Academy** if a child is performing significantly below national expectations in English, it is the responsibility of the teacher to inform the SENCo and Subject Leader. We teach our pupils with special educational needs appropriately, supporting their learning and providing them with challenges matched to their needs, through using a range of teaching strategies. Pupils with special educational needs for English are set appropriate English targets on a Personal Provision Plan. Planning in English takes into account the targets set for individual children in their Personal Provision Plan (PPP). At Sylvester, teachers also provide help for children with special educational needs through:

- using texts that children can read and understand;
- using visual and written materials in different formats;
- using ICT, other technological aids and taped materials;
- using alternative communication such as signs and symbols;
- using translators and amanuenses.

7.2 Gifted and Talented

At **Sylvester Primary Academy** it is also the responsibility of the class teacher to identify any pupils who show a real gift or talent in English, and are subsequently far exceeding national expectations in the subject. It is the responsibility of the teacher to inform the Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator, who will then place the pupils on the school's Gifted and Talented register. We teach our pupils with special talent in English



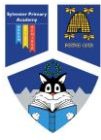
appropriately, supporting their learning and providing them with challenges matched to their needs. Such pupils are set appropriate English targets on a termly basis. Pupils who are placed on the Gifted and Talented register for English are eligible for any provision or activities aimed at Gifted and Talented children in the local authority.

8 Marking

- 8.1 At **Sylvester Primary Academy** we have a clear, informative marking policy for English. All children are aware of the policy and it is displayed in every classroom. Marking is both constructive and informative. The marking policy focuses on written grammar, punctuation and text structure. It consists of a number of letters and symbols. The emphasis of the policy is on the children interpreting the symbols and then independently improving their own work.

9 Assessment, recording and reporting

- 9.1 Assessment at **Sylvester Primary Academy** is an integral part of the planning and teaching of English. Teachers assess children's work in English in a wide variety of ways. Firstly, teachers carry out short-term daily assessments. Daily assessments are focussed upon assessing children's learning against teaching objectives. These form a part of every lesson and help teachers adjust or determine their future daily plans. Each year group carry out summative tests in Reading and SPAG three times a year (NFER) assessments. These assessments give teachers an accurate gauge as to a child's attainment each term. These assessments are then compared to previous assessments and national targets to inform the next step in a child's English provision. During each half-term teachers will also assess children's writing. This assessment will include a piece of short or long writing (related to topics covered that half-term).
- 9.2 At **Sylvester Primary Academy** we believe that self assessment plays a crucial role in the development of confident, independent, young writers. As part of Sylvester's Assessment For Learning programme, during each English unit, children are given the opportunity to assess their writing using a whole school agreed format – marking ladders. Marking ladders are differentiated and contain success criteria agreed at the outset of a writing lesson or unit. Children self assess their work and then it is assessed by a teacher or peer against the same criteria. These assessments inform pupils and teachers as to the next steps to be taken in a pupil's writing development.
- 9.3 At **Sylvester Primary Academy** teachers will hold a meeting with the parents/guardians of each child in both the Autumn and Spring term. At these meetings, teachers will report the child's progress in reading, writing and SPAG. Furthermore, a written report on each child's achievements in these areas will be sent to parents as part of an overall report on the child's progress in the July of each academic year. Parents will then have the opportunity to discuss their children's progress in all subject areas, including English, at a further meeting at the end of the academic year.



10 Resources

10.1 Learning resources

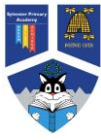
At the **Sylvester Primary Academy** a very wide range of resources are used to support the children's learning in English. Learning resources are differentiated to match the ages and needs of the pupils. All classes have class sets of fiction and non-fiction books which are used to support learning in English and guided reading lessons. They also have dictionaries, thesauruses and a range of other published learning resources. The school has a large, varied selection of guided and individual reading books to support children's reading development in class. These books come from a variety of published reading schemes and are categorised into phonics levels. The school also has a large selection of home reading books to support the work carried out in class. All classrooms have a small library containing a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts. There is also a central library, of which all children are members. This library has a vast range of new fiction and non-fiction books for the children to borrow to read in class, take home or to research a topic.

11 Monitoring and review

11.1 Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the English subject leader and the SLT. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, leading professional development based upon current developments in the subject and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The subject leader carries out an annual review of the subject and gives this to the headteacher. The subject leader and the headteacher annually review the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, and indicate areas for further improvement. The subject leader then provides an action plan for subject development. The leader has specially-allocated regular management time in order to enable him/her to review samples of the children's work and undertake lesson observations of English teaching across the school.

12 Remote Learning

12.1 At **Sylvester Primary Academy**, we are committed to ensuring, as far as possible, that pupils who cannot attend the school for any specific length of time are offered the chance to continue their education remotely. We are also committed to ensuring this provision is of a very high quality and matched as closely as possible to the lessons the children are missing by not attending school. To ensure we provide pupils with quality English lessons at home we have invested heavily in a digital English resource called Reading Eggs. This program offers teachers the opportunity to set children quality remote learning lessons covering: phonics, word recognition, reading, reading comprehension and spelling.



13 Roles and responsibilities

13.1 It is the role of the Governors to:

- have a strategic overview and agree the English policy, ensuring the policy is known to staff and parents
- monitor English targets and ensure that they take account of national and local targets
- monitor the teaching and learning in English including the standards attained at the end of each Key Stage
- ensure the English action plan is a feature of the school improvement plan

13.2 It is the role of the Headteacher to:

- oversee monitoring and evaluation procedures
- provide support for the Subject Leader(s)
- be accountable to governors so that they can fulfill their monitoring role

13.3 It is the role of the Subject Leader(s) for English to ensure that:

- teachers have secure subject knowledge of English
- English resources are adequate and accessible
- there is equality of opportunity with regards to race, culture, gender, physical abilities and learning needs
- initiatives and information are disseminated to staff
- methods of assessment, recording and reporting are effective and in line with school practice
- the English policy, scheme of work and guidance material are updated
- they are the lead professionals in monitoring and exemplifying standards and practices
- they evaluate the teaching of English in the school and use this analysis to identify effective practice and areas for improvement
- create an annual English action plan and review it each July with the headteacher

13.4 It is the role of teachers to ensure that:

- medium and short term plans are readily available and set out in accordance with an agreed format
- where applicable, learning support assistants are involved in English planning and training sessions and are fully briefed prior to the lessons
- homework is set on a regular basis
- issues pertaining to low/exceptional achievement in English are communicated to the subject leader and Special Needs /Gifted and Talented Coordinators as appropriate
- English is taught according to the learning styles of the children in the class
- regular and appropriate assessment and recording is undertaken
- they keep up to date with current thinking, informing Subject Leader(s) of training requirements

14 Equal opportunities

Equal Opportunities issues are a cause for national concern in the area of English. Girls tend to achieve higher in Reading and Writing than boys, and given the central importance of English to the development of other areas



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of the curriculum, this is of serious concern. At **Sylvester Primary Academy** we are committed to ensuring, as far as possible, that there is equality of opportunity in all areas of the curriculum, including English. Gender issues are closely monitored in relation to English.

Signed:

Date: