



## English at Gravenhurst Academy

### Intent

At Gravenhurst Academy our intention is to enable all children to become fluent, confident and enthusiastic readers and writers. We want our children to become enthusiastic readers who:

- Take pleasure in reading stories, poems and rhymes, plays and non-fiction texts.
- Read to learn; developing subject knowledge as well as enquiring minds.

We want our children to become confident writers who:

- Readily write stories, poems, plays and non-fiction while being aware of the audience and purpose for their writing.

Our intention will be met through:

- The systematic teaching of phonics; to allow children to learn all the grapheme-phoneme correspondences needed for efficient and fluent reading and writing.
- Providing a variety of opportunities for children to practise and develop their reading skills through paired, guided and individual reading; reading aloud to an adult or a wider audience.
- Opportunities to listen to stories, poems and rhymes, plays and non-fiction texts at a level greater than that which they can read by themselves.
- Using quality texts as a starting point for high quality teaching of writing to include spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPAG).
- Teaching children to write in a cursive style once they have mastered the correct formation of individual letters.

### Implementation

#### **Phonics**

Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) is taught following Twinkl Phonics which is a government approved scheme. Children are introduced to the first sounds in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) through daily phonics sessions. This continues into years 1 and 2 with the intention that children will have completed Level 6 of Letters and Sounds by the end of year 2. In years 3, 4 children are taught in 3 spelling groups: Level 6 (catch up programme), year 3 and year 4 according to the National Curriculum Appendix for spelling. Years 5 and 6 are also taught spelling patterns for their age range in line with the National Curriculum objectives.

The children are given spellings weekly which are linked to the Common Exception Words and the sounds they have covered in phonics sessions. These are tested weekly.

### **Reading**

Our children have access to a wide range of reading opportunities. Each child is given a reading book appropriate to their stage from our Reading Scheme books which follow the National Book Banding System. We have a wide range of books but the core is sourced from Oxford Reading Tree, Twinkl Rhino Readers and Collins Big Cat. Children also have opportunity to take home a book from our well stocked school library as well as reading books available in each class library. The children's ability to infer and gain understanding from what they read is developed in a variety of ways: discussion with the teacher/adult when reading one to one, shared reading with discussion and through writing answers to questions about a text they have read. The children are encouraged to use a 'thinking aloud' strategy to become active readers who ask their own questions. We have a whole school long term plan on developing inference skills which is followed by each class.

### **Listening and Vocabulary Development**

Good listening skills and a developing vocabulary are vital for our children to become active readers and therefore efficient writers. From day one in the EYFS and throughout the school, children listen to a wide variety of stories and books. Through listening, questioning and discussion they develop and widen their vocabulary. Children are taught to become 'word collectors' expanding their knowledge and understanding of the wealth of words available to them.

### **Writing**

In the EYFS, we teach emergent writing; children are encouraged to 'have a go' using their knowledge of sounds learned during their phonics lessons. As their writing progresses the children write sentences with increasing confidence and as they move through the school the teaching of grammar and punctuation allows them to use an increasing variety of language devices to develop their writing for different purposes. Children are taught to edit their work for punctuation, spelling and grammar. By the end of year 4 and year 6 they are expected to re draft their writing to reflect the improvements made through editing. From the beginning of KS2 (year 3), children are also taught to critically self-assess and review their own writing and that of their peers.

### **Handwriting**

Our children are taught how to form each letter of the alphabet correctly in order to be able to write words and sentences legibly so that they can read their work to themselves or others. Once they have mastered the correct formation of initial letters, children are taught how to lead in from one letter to another to form a neat cursive script. Handwriting is taught alongside phonics lessons so children see the pattern a word makes which also helps to embed spellings. For those children with weak fine motor control, handwriting intervention is given to enable them to achieve.

## **Impact**

The impact of English teaching at GHA will be apparent in the enjoyment and understanding the children demonstrate in their English lessons. Children readily listen to stories and poems, happily read to their teachers and peers, engage in a variety of writing tasks, are enthusiastic word collectors and eagerly read their writing to an audience.

Where possible, marking within the lesson and oral comments gives the children immediate feedback and allows them to respond and develop their understanding as close to the point of learning as is possible and helps address any misconceptions before they become embedded.

Intervention support is given to individuals or small groups within the lesson to provide the additional help they may need.

The progress that pupils make over time is clear evidence of the impact of the teaching and learning. To measure this progress, teachers use a combination of formative assessment (gathered during discussions, questioning, resourced activities, paired and independent tasks) and summative assessment (final piece of writing, in which children are encouraged to apply all the success criteria taught in the unit of work) and spelling tests.)

This informed teacher assessment is compared against age-related expectations for each term of the academic year. Demonstrable solid understanding of the National Curriculum objectives for English will meet age-related expectations for that stage of the year. Through the internal assessment process, gaps in understanding can be identified and addressed and parents can be informed of their child's progress over the course of the year to date.

Joy Mead     January 2020

Reviewed and updated     October 2022