St Leonard's CE Primary School
English Policy

Approved by:	**QofE Committee**
Date:	**November 2024**
Next review due by:	**October 2029**

Introduction

This policy aims to give all members of the school community clear guidance with regard to the Intent, Implementation and Impact of effective teaching of English at St Leonard's Primary School.

Intent

At **St Leonard's CE Primary School**, we believe that a high-quality English curriculum is the foundation for all learning across the curriculum. Our primary intent is to nurture **enthusiastic, confident, and critical readers and writers** who possess a lifelong love for literature and language. We are dedicated to providing an ambitious, progressive, and inclusive curriculum that equips all pupils—regardless of background—with the fundamental tools to communicate effectively and flourish in secondary education and beyond.

Oracy & Spoken Language

We recognise that spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. We intend to:

- **Enrich Vocabulary:** Actively teach and discuss age-appropriate, academic vocabulary, closing the word gap for all pupils.
- **Promote Confident Discussion:** Create a talk-rich environment where pupils learn to listen actively, engage in two-way conversations, evidence opinions, and participate in group discussions.
- **Clarify Thinking:** Enable children to use verbal communication to organise and structure their thoughts before committing them to paper through oral rehearsal.

Reading

Reading is placed at the heart of our curriculum. We intend to:

- **Foster Reading for Pleasure:** Cultivate a deep engagement with literature by exposing children to a rich, diverse range of high-quality texts, authors, and genres.
- **Develop Fluency & Comprehension:** Ensure all pupils learn to decode words effortlessly through a systematic synthetic phonics programme, transitioning smoothly into fluent readers who comprehend deeply.
- **Build Cultural Capital:** Use texts to expand children's vocabulary and their understanding of the world, developing empathetic global citizens.
- **Foster Reading for Power:** Empowering children to make sense of written language to enable them to engage critically with other subject areas.

Writing Intent

We aim to develop writers who can articulate their thoughts, ideas, and knowledge clearly and creatively. We intend to:

- **Master Transcription:** Teach explicit spelling rules and provide structured handwriting practice to build legibility, speed, and pride in presentation.
- **Develop Composition:** Enable children to write with a clear awareness of **audience, purpose, and context**, mastering a variety of narrative, non-fiction, and poetic forms.
- **Build Language Mechanics:** Systematically introduce and embed grammar and punctuation rules, ensuring pupils can consciously control and manipulate sentence structures.
- **Encourage Independence:** Equip children with the skills to effectively plan, draft, evaluate, and edit their own writing.

Implementation

The planning of the curriculum is fundamentally based on The National Curriculum in England 2014 and Development Matters and The Statutory Framework for the Early Years and Foundation Stage 2021.

Speaking and Listening

We believe that *spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing and plays an important part within not only the English Curriculum, but all curriculum areas. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding of reading and writing.*

We provide children with a variety of experiences to allow them to:

- Communicate effectively, speaking with confidence, clarity and fluency
- Participate in discussions and debate in a variety of contexts
- Listen to the views, opinions and ideas of others with increased interest
- Orally rehearse complete sentences
- Articulate ideas and thoughts clearly with appropriate tone and vocabulary recognising audience
- Respond to questions and opinions appropriately
- Retell stories and poems which are known by heart
- Ask questions with increasing relevance and insight
- Adopt, create and sustain a variety of roles and respond to others in role during drama activities

Phonics

We follow the Little Wandle Revised Letters and Sounds Systematic Synthetic Phonics programme. Please refer to our phonics policy for further details.

Reading

Reading is taught using the two dimensions, as outlined in the 2014 National Curriculum; word reading and comprehension (both listening and reading).

Early Reading: Through the Little Wandle Revised Letters and Sounds Systematic Synthetic Phonics programme, we provide children with the skills to decode unfamiliar words and recognise familiar words. Once children are able to read a text with fluency, we also develop pupils' comprehension skills through high quality discussion; this leads into some written responses when children are ready. We teach reading through the Little Wandle approach in small groups in Reception and Year 1, and begin to follow a whole class approach to guided reading from Year 2. Children in Year 2 and above who are not yet able to access the whole class text continue the Little Wandle reading approach while they are developing their phonic skills. Each sequence of reading (both group and whole class) includes exploration of new vocabulary, model reading by the teacher, opportunities to echo read to develop prosody as well as paired and independent reading. Questioning is used to assess pupils' understanding of the text and challenge them to think more deeply about the characters, setting and plot.

From Year 2: We focus on developing fluency for all pupils prior to building comprehension skills: retrieval, inference, comparison and summarising. Key new vocabulary is explicitly taught prior to the children being exposed to it within a text and pupils have the opportunity to develop effective prosody through teachers modelling reading, echo reading, drop ins and repeated reading.

Our literature spine has been carefully chosen to engage, challenge and inspire our children. Children have many opportunities on a weekly basis to read or be read to in a variety of contexts and situations, these may include: guided reading, shared reading, teacher-led reading, 1:1 reading with an adult, independent reading and class story time.

We also aim to foster a genuine love of reading for its own sake, through our school library and holding frequent author visits, book fairs, parent reading sessions and whole school reading events. All classes have an allocated 'book club' slot in the school library each week and are encouraged to borrow books to read for pleasure at home. Class book corners are presented as 'mini libraries' with selections of books rotated to reflect the current reading interests of children and the topics covered in school.

Writing

In EYFS, children are encouraged to make marks and give meaning to their marks. They are taught to use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They are also taught to write some irregular common words. The children are taught to write words, phrases and simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible.

In KS1 and KS2, Writing is taught using the two dimensions, as outlined in the 2014 National Curriculum; transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas, structuring them in speech and writing, evaluating and revising their writing).

Teachers select rich texts and media as stimuli for writing opportunities based upon current issues, long term progression and children's interests. Learning units follow three distinct phases (developed by Oxfordshire and Hampshire County Council):

Stimulate and Generate	**Capture, sift and sort**	**Create, refine and evaluate**
Exploring rich stimulus (text, media and/or first-hand experience) to develop a reason to write.	Exploring grammatical structures, vocabulary and spellings in detail to develop the skills needed to write.	Planning, writing, evaluating and editing final outcome. This often involves 'publishing' writing for the purpose it was intended.

Spelling

In Year 2, children move onto the Little Wandle programme of spelling to introduce the spelling rules as outlined in the National Curriculum English Appendix. This is taught through daily sessions involving reviewing prior learning, exploring the bridge between phonics and spelling and then moving onto the spelling units which provides full coverage of the National Curriculum requirements.

From Year 3, pupils are taught the spelling rules as outlined in the National Curriculum English Appendix; we follow the Vocabulary Ninja sequence to ensure cyclical coverage. Through three 30-minute sessions per week pupils revisit prior learning, explore new rules and exceptions, have significant opportunities to practise and finish with the application of the spelling rule in a dictation activity.

Handwriting

Children are taught handwriting skills throughout the school, following the Little Wandle Handwriting programme in EYFS and Year 1 (with this revisited in Year 2 for pupils who are not ready to join) and moving onto the Nelson Handwriting Scheme from Year 3 (and for pupils in Year 2 who are ready to begin to learn to join). The following is a guideline to the stages of development in handwriting:

- Mark making
- Letter-like forms
- Letters formed correctly (Little Wandle letter formations, leading into the Nelson handwriting scheme)
- Joined handwriting to include break letters where appropriate (Nelson handwriting scheme)

Children will be praised for their efforts in handwriting from their own individual starting points. From KS2, the majority of children are taught to join their writing (unless specific individual needs show that this is not in the best interest of the child for example, a significant fine motor skill difficulty). As a school, we use the Nelson style of handwriting and teachers model this style both discretely and in their own writing (for example, in marking or when modelling writing). Handwriting lessons are taught using a consistent format across school with well-established routines in place for getting ready to write, warming up and learning new formations and joins.

<u>Organisation</u>

	Speaking and Listening	**Reading**	**Writing**	**Phonics / Spelling**	**Handwriting**

Nursery	Daily speaking and listening activities Ongoing interactions facilitated/enhanced by adults	Daily stories	Mark making tables accessible daily	Daily Phase 1 phonics sessions	Squiggle
Reception	Daily speaking and listening activity Ongoing interactions facilitated/enhanced by adults	Daily story Individual reading weekly 3 sessions of LW guided reading	Writing Table (inside and outside) available for child led activities daily Adult supported writing activity weekly Daily writing element in phonics sessions	Daily phonics sessions	Squiggle (Autumn Term) 3 discrete handwriting sessions per week
Year 1 and 2	Daily class story Oracy games and activities built into the curriculum.	3 sessions of LW guided reading (Y1 and Y2 pupils who did not pass the phonics screening) 3 sessions of whole class guided reading (Y2 pupils who passed the phonics screening) Specific children complete group reading sessions	4 sessions of writing weekly	Daily LW phonics sessions (Y1 and Y2 pupils who did not pass the phonics screening) Daily Year 2 LW spelling (pupils who passed the phonics screening)	4 discrete handwriting sessions per week
Year 3 and 4	4 sessions of class story Oracy games and activities built into the curriculum.	3 sessions of whole class guided reading or LW guided reading (if needed)	4 sessions of writing weekly to include grammar skills taught in the context of the unit of work.	3 spelling sessions weekly – one linked to a handwriting session.	Handwriting interventions 4 discrete handwriting sessions per week

				Focus on spellings when editing writing.	Daily practise linked to Word of the Day
Year 5 and 6	4 sessions of class story Oracy games and activities built into the curriculum.	3 sessions of whole class guided reading or LW guided reading (if needed)	4 sessions of writing weekly to include grammar skills taught in the context of the unit of work.	3 spelling sessions weekly – one linked to a handwriting session. Focus on spellings when editing writing.	4 discrete handwriting sessions per week Daily practise linked to Word of the Day

Equal Opportunities: Pupils with SEND and other vulnerable learners

~~SEND children~~ Pupils with SEND and other vulnerable learners are supported in English sessions through pre-teaching, scaffolded resources, differentiated work, visual prompts or adult support as necessary. Additional support is provided to enable them to access the work and, where relevant, is related to their profile. Specific areas of difficulty will be highlighted and children may be involved in intervention groups to support their knowledge and understanding.

Children with the potential to work at Greater Depth within the Expected Standard will be identified and provision will be made for their needs within the classroom through adding layers of challenge or task design.

Impact

Internal Assessments

Children in the Early Years are assessed on a regular basis through observations and AfL These assessments are used to track development in each area of learning recorded using our internal tracking document. Attainment and progress are reported termly in Pupil Progress Meetings.

Children from Year 1 to Year 6 will complete PiXL assessment papers in Reading and pupils in Year 2 to Year 6 will complete PiXL assessment papers in Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling - in line with the PiXL assessment calendar. Year 1 complete two assessments, Years 2-5 have three assessments and Year 6 have four assessments. Pupils' writing is assessed through reviewing skills used in written work over time using the PiXL writing descriptors for Year 1, 3, 4 and 5 and the Teacher Assessment Framework for Years 2 and 6. The results of these assessments are used diagnostically to identify support needed to raise attainment. They form the basis of pupil progress meetings which occur at least once each ~~half~~ term.

Statutory Assessments

Pupils in EYFS complete the Reception Baseline Check in the first six weeks of the Autumn Term and are assessed against the ELG in the summer term.

Children in Year 1 sit a phonics screening check in Term 6 each year alongside those children in Year 2 who did not meet the standard in Year 1.

Children in Year 6 sit Statutory Assessment Tests (SATs) in Reading and GPS each year in Term 5; writing is teacher assessed and moderated within school and with other local schools to ensure accuracy in judgements.

Leadership and Management

The English Leadership Team consists of:

- English Leader

- Phonics Leader
- EYFS Leader

Their roles are to:

- Develop and update the English policy to ensure that it reflects best practice
- Take responsibility for the purchase of resources to support English sessions
- Give support to colleagues, including advice on training courses
- Provide or organise training for TAs
- Keep up to date with developments in English and attend relevant courses, including feedback to staff
- Monitor Reading, Writing, Spelling and Phonics teaching within school, in line with the SDP
- Monitor planning
- Scrutinise English books on a termly basis and give feedback to staff
- Analyse data from termly progress assessments, SATs results and Phonics Screening Test results
- Manage the library
- Prepare agendas and lead meetings of the English and EYFS Steering groups
- Organise events to promote reading, writing, spelling and phonics within school and in the wider community