

Woodbridge Junior School



English Policy



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Woodbridge Junior School English Policy - Curriculum Intent

This policy describes our practice in the teaching of English: reading, writing, phonics, spelling, grammar, punctuation and speaking and listening. It is defined by current national guidance on best practice, in-service training, staff discussion and professional judgement.

Our approach to the teaching of English is multi-faceted, incorporating speaking and listening, drama, real contexts and high-quality literature. Our priority is to create fluent readers and writers with all the skills and knowledge they need to be confidently literate in life.

We want all children to leave Woodbridge with a life-long reading habit and a love of books because reading is the key to learning in all subjects and will improve their vocabulary, inspire them creatively and improve their ability to write well.

Editorial skills needed for writing (spelling, grammar, punctuation and handwriting) are taught within real contexts wherever possible and teachers plan creative and relevant links to their class topics as a stimulus for writing. There is a balance between fiction, non-fiction and poetry with an emphasis on whole texts rather than extracts and worksheets.

Speaking and Listening

At Woodbridge, we believe that speaking and listening form the foundations of all learning in English. In formal and informal situations, we create and encourage opportunities for meaningful conversation, discussion and talk around learning. Questioning forms the basis of our teaching and we strongly encourage children to be inquisitive and to share their thoughts confidently in a supportive environment. Through speaking and listening, children learn how other people make sense of the world, how language is used to reason, how emotions and identities are expressed, and how to work together to solve problems.

What does speaking and listening look like at Woodbridge?

- Developing children's vocabulary and providing opportunities to use it.
- Listening to and participating in stories, poems, rhymes and songs.
- Use of sentence-stems to scaffold oral responses in class.
- Questioning across the curriculum.
- Reciting and reading aloud.
- Drama activities to enliven and enrich children's learning.
- Re-telling and role-play.
- Opportunities for children to talk about and discuss their reading and writing.
- Debating.
- Collaborative work and reporting back following group work.
- Presenting in front of an audience.



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Reading

At Woodbridge Junior School we aim to make all of our children love books and reading. We aim to ensure a balanced mix of approaches to reading so that our pupils achieve the skills required, a positive attitude, confidence as well as interest and a life-long love of literature.

The organisation of the classroom is essential to promoting interest, independence and enthusiasm as well as the necessary skills, concepts and knowledge to progress. To help promote this, classrooms will be organised to provide:

- An attractive, engaging reading area where pupils can read in a calm and purposeful manner.
- A range of books for the children to select themselves.
- Opportunities to see, read and write core and topic-based vocabulary.
- Four regular Accelerated Reading sessions per week providing opportunities for independent reading and practising comprehension skills.
- In Year 3 phonics sessions to consolidate Letters and Sounds Phase 6.
- A home school reading record to share with parents to comment on the child's learning.
- A wide range of fiction and non-fiction Accelerated Reader books matched to the child's individual Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) levels. These will be based in the corridors outside the classroom and will be regularly changed/updated.

What does reading look like at Woodbridge?

Most children come to us in Year 3 with the ability to decode text at an age-related level. As the children progress, we aim to build on the reading experiences already acquired. Our aim is to develop independence, fluency, self-reliance and comprehension skills while providing targeted support for those who need to become more confident decoders. A greater variety of texts are made available to allow for more depth, choice and enjoyment.

We will aim to expand the skills gained in KS1 by keeping a teaching focus on reading, drawing attention to the structure of a variety of texts, helping pupils to adapt their style of reading to suit the purpose (skim, scan, read critically).

More varied texts are available to support the widening interest shown as children progress; environmental newspapers, magazines, plays, nonfiction, poetry, CDs, dictionaries, thesaurus etc.

The teaching and learning of Reading encompasses these key areas:

1. Accelerated Reading sessions

Throughout the school there will be at least four 20-minute Accelerated Reading slots where children will read independently at their own individual ZPD level. During this session they will have an opportunity to take one of the quizzes to assess their understanding of the text once they have finished reading it. An identified target group of children will read with an adult at least once a day to enable them to make accelerated progress. Once every half-term, the class-teacher will meet with each child. Through an open discussion, the child's reading history will be reviewed using the Accelerated Reader programme.



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2. Reader as a Writer - an integral part of the writing cycle

At Woodbridge, reading a quality text forms the basis of our writing cycle. We use quality, language-rich texts to teach and develop a range of comprehension skills and as a prelude to writing.

(See the “Writing” section of this policy.)

3. Developing reading skills through topic

The higher order reading skills must be taught and should not be confined to the Literacy lesson alone. The opportunity to read texts from different media, to research, investigate, to sift, select and take notes from text, to question, challenge and look for bias in texts, to scan and skim for project information and use this purposefully can be found in many different subject areas, including Science, Geography and History.

4. Using a whole-class reading text to motivate pupils’ love of literature.

Each term teachers will use a recommended, high quality text to form the basis of the teaching and learning of writing. This text will, where possible, link into the current topic. Regular reading slots at the end of the day promote reading for pleasure and give pupils an opportunity to share the reading experience as a class.

Reading homework

The expectation at Woodbridge is that parents support the school by encouraging their child to read on a regular basis at home. Pupils are expected to read on at least four occasions at home. This should be recorded in their “Reading Record” with a parental signature. This is monitored weekly in all classes and recorded on a “Fantastic Four Readers” chart. Children in the identified target group will have a written comment by an adult once a week in their “Reading Record”. Other children will have guidance as to the focus of the reading session for that particular week.

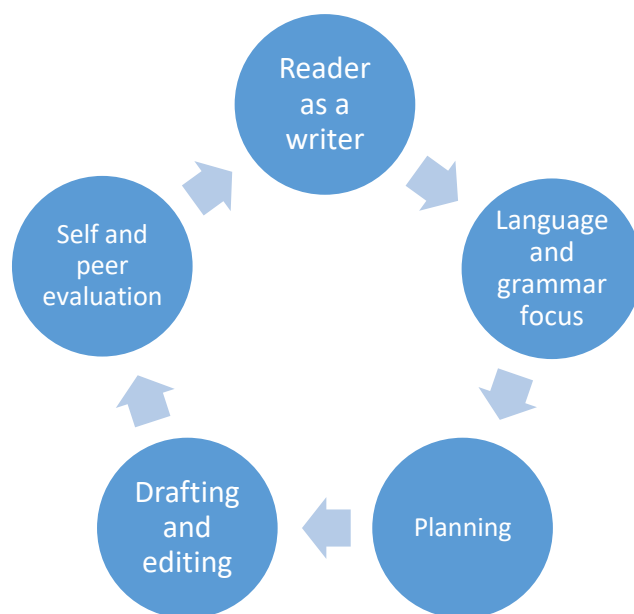
Writing

At Woodbridge, we strive to create an environment that will promote both reading and writing. In order to ensure that all pupils learn to be confident writers we encourage children to write creatively whilst teaching key writing skills explicitly and systematically. Teachers plan sequences of lessons to build towards a longer writing outcome that is linked to reading, drama and other shorter writing tasks. Wherever possible, writing is linked to the termly class topic and, therefore, the wider curriculum.

What does writing look like at Woodbridge?

Our writing cycle is **cyclical**: writing tasks develop and consolidate language and vocabulary teaching objectives. Smaller writing tasks can form part of a final independent piece. Our writing cycle broadly follows the structure below and is covered repeatedly during the block of writing for a particular genre:

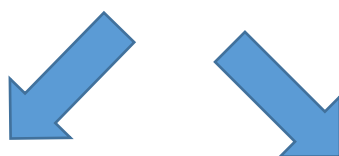
PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE



1. Reader as a writer

Reading, understanding, analysing and emulating high quality texts underpins the teaching and learning of writing at Woodbridge. Staff plan a broad range of engaging activities to ensure that pupils develop and use a progressive range of reading skills appropriate to age-related expectations.

Activities are planned and resourced using TWO main areas of staff professional development in the teaching of reading comprehension:



**Fischer Family Trust/
Fischer Education Project**

**Jason Wade Education
Text Detectives**

A range of skills and strategies, fundamental to making children better readers, are taught during these sessions. These include:

- Using prior knowledge to support understanding
- Asking questions to improve understanding
- Skimming and scanning
- Using strategies to locate or infer meaning
- Annotating texts
- Visualising understanding

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- Making predictions
- Summarising understanding
- Adapting reading strategies
- Teaching new vocabulary

Whole school approaches and common activities establish consistent practice across the school. Progression within the objectives ensure that tasks involve sufficient challenge.

Teaching common question types in reading exercises

Throughout the school we ensure that pupils are familiar with a range of question types to develop their reading comprehension skills. We plan a variety of activities using age appropriate texts. Each half-term, there is a whole-school focus on one particular question-type:

Autumn 1	Skimming and scanning: Underline/highlight the important information Find and copy
Autumn 2	Matching – linking information together
Spring 1	True or false – deciding whether a statement is backed up in a text
Spring 2	Multiple Choice – selecting the correct response from a range of options
Summer 1	Fill the gap – completing a sentence or phrase with information
Summer 2	Sequencing – putting events/information into a chronological or other order

Identifying genre features

Pupils will confidently identify the text genre and identify key genre features, giving examples to support their learning. Using the “Boxed Up!” sheet, pupils will record the genre and language features under the headings: “Bare Bones (Structure)” “Effects” and “Techniques and Examples”. This will be displayed on the Working Wall.

2. Language and grammar focus

An understanding of how to use grammar correctly, use relevant language and identify word classes and sentence types is taught both in the context of a piece of writing and explicitly in whole class work. Linked to the National Curriculum guidelines for year groups, grammar is taught and planned to fit in with relevant genres of writing.

Using the chosen text, pupils will identify word cases and grammatical structures. Age-appropriate skills will be explicitly taught using a variety of techniques. These will be consolidated later in independent writing.

Teaching Grammar and Punctuation

Grammar will be taught via Jason Wade's Rainbow Grammar 2 structure (refer to Appendix 1). Every year group will plan one and two grammar lessons per week. This will be reinforced in 'Do Now' activities in every alternate lesson.

In Rainbow Grammar structure 2, black bold writing is compulsory to teach in those specific year groups. Black writing are additional objectives which will help with future rainbow grammar sessions. Red writing is vocabulary that should be used and taught and this is the vocabulary that the children should be using themselves.

Rainbow Grammar will be evidenced on classroom working walls as some examples of that lesson's work in the children's English books.

"Do Now" lesson starters

These 15 minutes Grammar and Punctuation fluency based activities are at the beginning of every alternate English lesson. These practise skills being taught and also consolidate prior learning. Work is recorded in the back of the literacy book. Pupils write in pencil (or pen if they have a licence). Any work completed with adult assistance or as a whole class is written in purple pen. Pupils mark their own work.

Vocabulary - Woodbridge Wow Words

At least one lesson will be allocated to developing and broadening pupils' range of vocabulary. Pupils will be given a word bank of relevant, challenging and aspirational words to use. They will identify shades of meaning and compare alternative words.

3. Planning

It is important to provide stimulating first hand experiences, e.g. trips, storytellers, drama, visitors, practical activities etc. where the children can acquire confidence, a positive attitude and a real purpose for their writing. (e.g. a persuasive presentation to parents on a topical issue; reciting their own poem to an audience etc.) A planning frame may be used and pupils will refer back to the "Boxed Up!" and "Woodbridge Wow Words!" sheets as a reference point. Checklists will be available to guide children on what to include in their writing.

4. Drafting and editing

Short writing tasks should preferably be linked to the topic and consolidate grammar skills. They could build up to be part of a "Big Write" at the end of the cycle as long as they are independent. If this is the case, they must be written directly into the Independent Writing book. At the end of the cycle, pupils must complete the "Big Write" independently, using all the support tools at hand. They will need time to talk through their planning, draft and edit their work. This may take one or two days, depending on the task. Pupils need time to improve their writing before completion. Pupils need not publish their writing in neat unless it is to go on display in classrooms.

5. Evaluation

Pupils will self-assess their writing using the checklist. Peer-assessment is an important part of the learning cycle and involves identifying positive elements ("Stars") and areas for future improvement ("Wishes"). The class teacher will complete the age-related writing checklist at

the back of the independent writing book. (Pupils in Upper KS2 will begin to complete these grids for themselves after direction from the teacher.)

Spelling

Understanding how to spell correctly, apply spelling rules and recognise key words is empowering for children. Spelling plays a significant part of standardised assessment and is taught throughout the school. We use the 2014 National Curriculum as a guideline as to which spellings should be taught in which year group.

How do we teach spelling at Woodbridge?

In Woodbridge we use the “No Nonsense Spelling” programme. This was devised to offer teachers a comprehensive progression in the teaching of spelling. Guidance is provided on how to teach the strategies, knowledge and skills pupils need to learn.

The focus of the programme is on the teaching of spelling, which embraces knowledge of spelling conventions – patterns and rules; but integral to the teaching is the opportunity to promote the learning of spellings, including statutory words, common exceptions and personal/topic-based spellings.

The programme:

- Delivers a manageable tool for meeting the requirements of the 2014 national Curriculum
- Has a clear progression through blocks of teaching units across the year
- Comprehensively explains how to teach spelling effectively

When do we teach spelling?

Spelling will be taught at the beginning of the literacy lesson in a 15-minute slot on alternate days. The work will be teacher-lead with opportunities for investigatory activities for pupils to complete in pairs. There will be no formal exercise books for pupils to record written work as most of the activities will be practical or whiteboard-based.

Teachers must not feel constrained to stick religiously to the scheme as it is set out. Within our time constraints, there is no time for sessions dedicated to copying out words; nor will spelling tests form part of this allocated time. The scheme provides plenty of resources to actively involve pupils in learning and consolidating age-appropriate spelling conventions. Teachers will use their judgement to identify key learning areas appropriate to the children in their class.

Part of the Literacy Working Wall (or another suitable display area) should be used to display the spelling strands currently being taught. Where appropriate, this could also be linked in with handwriting sessions.

Spelling homework

Spellings will not be formally assessed in weekly spelling tests. However, an age-appropriate spelling booklet will be provided to support the learning of spellings at home. This will also be available on the website under the “Homework” section for each year group.

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Handwriting

We place value on children taking pride and care over their work and handwriting is a key part of this. There is a big emphasis upon fine motor skills and we use a range of resources to practise these basic skills. This moves into correct letter formation with a focus on both upper and lower case letters.

What does handwriting look like at Woodbridge?

Across the school:

- We use the “Penpals for Handwriting” scheme as the basis for our teaching, which links handwriting to common spelling patterns.
- We take the view that handwriting should be taught little and often – 3 X 15 minute sessions per week.
- We use cursive script and encourage children to join their writing as soon as they are forming their letters correctly from Year 3.
- Extra handwriting support may occur in classes throughout the school where the class team feel that additional handwriting support is needed.

Pen Licences

Pupils begin the academic year writing in pencil and strive to attain a pen licence which allows them to write using a handwriting pen. Pupils must demonstrate that they can use fluent, cursive handwriting in their writing across the curriculum.

Assessment of English

- Teachers use developmental feedback in order to identify where children have included elements of the success criteria (which are highlighted in pink), set next steps targets (which are highlighted in green) and to give children the opportunity to revisit their work in order to make improvements.
- Pupils must complete TWO pieces of independent writing per half-term. These will be assessed against the age-related skills sheet which is at the back of the literacy book. These assessments will inform future planning.
- Summative assessment is used three times a year in order to assess the children’s writing against the school’s ARE grids.
- Summative assessment is used three times a year to assess children’s performance in Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling against the school’s ARE grids.
- Reading ages will be assessed four times throughout the year using the Accelerated Reader scheme.
- Year 6 pupils undertake SATs in May.

Draft Exemplar teaching cycle for English – Autumn 2019

This is ONE example of how a teaching cycle **could** work for a narrative text in Autumn 1.

This should NOT be followed as a model for each teaching cycle. Each teaching cycle should be rigorously planned according to the text, next steps in learning for the children and the learning intended.

The reading/writing cycle is NOT rigid; teachers have the flexibility to adapt it to suit their children. A genre cycle should take approximately three weeks. At the beginning of a cycle there will be more of a reading focus, particularly identifying genre features. This will not need repeating further in the cycle. Short



writing tasks should preferably be linked to the topic and consolidate grammar skills. Short writing tasks could build up to be part of a “Big Write” at the end of the cycle as long as they are independent. There should be TWO assessed pieces of independent writing completed each half-term. These should be written in the pink independent writing book, which will track pupils’ progress across the four years.

The plan below is a basic idea of a typical genre block. As you can see there is one lesson not planned for. This allows for flexibility. E.g. Any GaPS teaching that needs more practice could be used during this.

In the next genre, different reading activities should be used to develop a variety of different skills.

Genre: Narrative – descriptive settings			
	Learning Focus	Lesson starter	Main activity
1	Reader as a Writer	Spelling	Prediction – what do we think this text is about? Write ideas around the title in one colour – amend as the cycle progresses. Skimming and scanning – use topic sentences to scan for individual words.
2	Reader as a Writer	“Do Now!” – underline the adjectives in these sentences.	Read the opening page. “Visualise” – draw the house as it’s described.
3	Reader as a Writer	Spelling	Identify AF2 (Literary retrieval) information with boxes (skimming and scanning) Identify AF3 (Inference) information with bubbles
4	Language and grammar focus	“Do Now!” – Link with Lesson 2 – repeat if didn’t understand or adapt if achieved	Woodbridge WOW Words – share a word bank of descriptive words. Change underlined word – which alternative word fits in? Sentences to complete.
5	Language and grammar focus	Spelling	Read another part of the text – what is the purpose? Which techniques are used? How can we change the meaning by varying the word?
6	Planning and drafting	“Do Now!”- Use 3 adjectives in 3 sentences to vary meaning	Innovation – change the description of the house to suit a different purpose. Teacher modelled to start with Pupils continue.
7	Drafting and editing	Spelling	Continue with the writing from yesterday – edit and write the next paragraph independently.
8	Reader as a Writer	“Do Now!” – identify verbs in a sentence (ready for the metaphor and personification)	Read a different section. What is the purpose? Which techniques are used? (Metaphor and personification) Sentence stems to complete.
9	Language and grammar focus	Spelling	Personification– use visuals to create a bank of effective metaphors. Share as a class for tomorrow’s lesson.
10	Language and grammar focus	“Do Now!” – linked with metaphor	Innovation – teacher to model writing based on a description using personification.
11	Planning and drafting	Spelling	Show a video clip of a room/setting. Pupils identify features to use to create a checklist. Plan ideas. Talk through ideas verbally, draw pictures etc. for Inspiration.
12	Drafting and editing	“Do Now!” – linked with metaphor and personification	Big Write – Part One. Talk through writing with a partner. Write a sustained piece.
13	Drafting and editing	Spelling	Big Write – Part Two. Read back and edit any changes following teacher’s suggestions. Continue writing and reading back.
14	Peer evaluation	“Do Now!”	Evaluate in pairs. Tick off checklist. Teacher assess and complete the ARE writing grid.
15		Spelling	

This will be reviewed by teaching teams during the 2019-20 academic year.