

## **Leopold English Curriculum Aims/Intent/Vision**

### **Speaking and Listening**

We believe speaking and listening to be fundamental to the achievement of the children at Leopold through all the activities that go on in the classroom and other learning environments: the taught curriculum, the hidden curriculum, playtimes and lunchtimes, extra-curricular activities and the whole ethos of the school. Respectful and productive relationships between all who form part of the school community are crucial aspects of this ethos. As a staff, we therefore foster good communication amongst ourselves and with our pupils, their parents and carers, and with the wider community. We place a high priority on supporting the development of good speaking and listening skills amongst our pupils.

### **Guided reading**

Planning and teaching guided reading is challenging but it is an extremely effective approach to teaching reading and a crucial component of a reading programme. In schools where guided reading is securely embedded, teachers see the benefits and rewards. These include:

- Children making progress in reading
- Children are motivated to read and discuss texts
- Rewarding teaching sessions, during which children are very focused on learning
- Other children learn to work independently of the teacher, and other adults support
- Effective differentiation, including challenge for the more able children
- Children have the opportunity to read, enjoy and analyse a range of texts. This often builds on work in other curriculum areas

Guided Reading is where children put into practise their developing reading skills and understanding in a structured situation. Small groups of children, working at a similar stage of reading acquisition, work with an adult to read an unfamiliar text that has been chosen to reinforce, challenge and further develop their independent reading strategies.

The adult scaffolds the session so the children can take the initiative and put into practise what they have learnt in other reading and literacy activities. Sets of texts are used so each member of the group has a copy. During Guided Reading the whole or a section of the unfamiliar text is read. Texts are chosen so that each member of the group can readily read and understand between 90 – 94%, i.e. at the instructional level.

### **Home reading**

At Leopold Primary school we aim to ensure that:

- Children read every night – habit, pleasurable
- Children enjoy reading
- Children bring book bags in every day (up to end of KS1) - habit
- Read variety of books – non-fiction, fiction,
- Books should be well kept and attractive to read
- Children should only read books where they can read 19/20 words without any hesitation. ( please see section on choosing an appropriate reading book below)
- Children should read books that they can read and books that extend vocab and knowledge – scheme books and real books
- Home reading should be valued

- Children can independently be able to choose an appropriate book

### **Shared Writing**

Shared writing is a powerful teaching strategy and the principal means of teaching writing. It is much more than merely scribing for pupils, writing down their ideas like an enthusiastic secretary. It has an essential place in literacy teaching because it enables teachers to:

- work with the whole class, to model, explore and discuss the choices writers make at the point of writing, rather than by correction, demonstrating and sharing the compositional process directly;
  - make the links between reading and writing explicit by reading and investigating how writers have used language to achieve particular effects and by using written texts as models for writing;
  - scaffold some aspects of writing, eg the spelling and transcribing, to enable children to concentrate on how to compose their writing, eg through the choice of words or phrases and ways of constructing sentences to achieve particular purposes or effects;
  - focus on particular aspects of the writing process, while supporting others:
    - planning
    - drafting
    - revising;
  - introduce children to appropriate concepts and technical language as a means of discussing what writers do and internalising principles to apply to their own writing;
- provide an essential step towards independent writing by helping children to understand and apply specific skills

Too often, children are expected to write without being clear about what they are trying to say. Writing should start from talking – discussion which helps to capture content and purpose. This needs to go well beyond simply providing stimulating ideas and should help children to capture the content, sequence and style of what they are about to write. Children should know, and have rehearsed, what they are trying to write and not be left to make it up as they go along. This immediately provides a lot of support.

- It helps children to keep the ‘story’ in their heads, giving them a clear sense of the overall text, particularly how it should end.
- It guides how the text should sound – its style and voice.
- It helps children to sequence and structure their writing, to know where it is going and how it should be joined together to make sense.
- It provides the crucial point of reference against which to check for sense: ‘If I know what I am trying to say, I can tell if it is clear and sensible. If I am making it up as I go along, how do I know if I am going in the right direction?’

### **Shared Writing process should be used to:**

- recall or invent the content of what is to be written so that the whole sequence is clear. It might be a retold story, an anecdote from personal experience, a recount of a class activity, captions to provide information, an instruction, a letter, a note, an invitation, an enquiry, etc. The content and structure should be made explicit. This might be done through discussion, role-play or the use of puppets. It should also draw extensively on work from other subjects

where this discussion and the capturing of it in a writing plan may be done at other times, eg as part of a cooking activity, a class visit, a science observation, a constructional activity;

- generate and rehearse appropriate language, giving special attention to the ways in which written language differs from speech. Introduction and rationale

## **Spelling**

The English language has one of the richest vocabularies in the world. Over the last 1000 years, the English language has inherited, assimilated, borrowed and coined many words from other languages. Latin, Greek, French, and German influences lie at the core of what is now the English language but as English continues to grow as a global language, it is changing and evolving.

German, Italian, Spanish, Finnish, Polish, Greek and Welsh children learn to read and spell quickly because their speech sounds follow a simple alphabetic code. English, however, has 44 speech sounds yet only 26 letters in the alphabet. This means the alphabetic code English children are taught to decode is much more complex. Everyone uses the same 44 sounds to speak all English words, but the way we write these sounds differs, therefore the key to good spelling is to remember how to spell different sounds in different words.

The process of learning to spell is cumulative, it improves throughout our lives and requires lots of practice. Research shows that the practice of learning decontextualized lists of words and being tested on them has had mixed results with some children getting spellings right on the day but forgetting them only hours later and other children getting them wrong and becoming demoralised.

At Leopold Primary, we believe in systematic teaching, continually practised and reinforced and matched to each individual child's need will assist our children in committing spellings to long term memory.

At Leopold Primary, we have adopted Oxford's Read, Write, Inc. Spelling. The programme supports the aims of the National Curriculum (2014) to ensure that children:

- spell new words correctly and have plenty of practice in spelling them...including exception words and homophones
- spell words as accurately as possible using their phonic knowledge and other knowledge of spelling, such as morphology and etymology are supported in understanding and applying the concepts of word structure
- spell words that they have not yet been taught by using what they have learnt about how spelling works in English

The spelling programme is for children who have completed Read, Write, Inc Phonics, usually in Y2 and above but some children may start the programme earlier. During the programme:

- Children are assessed using the pre-programme activities so teaching is tailored to their needs
- Children are taught for 15 minutes each day using the online activities and practice book
- Children log the words they need to work on at home in their log books
- Special focus pages test the children at regular intervals
- Children complete an online Consolidation session after every two units to revise key concepts and vocabulary

Each half term, children complete an online Practice test which will inform teaching for the following half term

## **Handwriting**

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the teaching of handwriting in our school. Here at Leopold we are very proud of our pupil's handwriting and take particular care in our cursive/joined-up handwriting style. We use Letter-join as the basis of our handwriting policy that covers all the requirements of the 2014 National Curriculum.

Handwriting is a basic skill that influences the quality of work throughout the curriculum. At the end of Key Stage 2 all pupils should have the ability to produce fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy joined-up handwriting, and to understand the different forms of handwriting used for different purposes. We aim to make handwriting an automatic process that does not interfere with creative and mental thinking. It is our belief that introducing children to cursive script on school entry will help establish correct formation from their first writing experiences. Learning cursive script from the very beginning will ensure that the flow and speed are a natural progression.

All members of staff (including teaching assistants, supply teachers and students) are provided with appropriate handwriting models and are expected to promote the agreed handwriting style by their own example. As a catalyst to speedy handwriting, we also encourage parents and carers to use the Letter-join resources at home. Handwriting will also be closely linked with spelling so that the teaching of common letter strings will be taught in the context of handwriting.

## **Read, Write, Inc. Phonics**

Read, Write, Inc. Phonics is an inclusive literacy programme for all children learning to read. Children learn the 44 common sounds in the English language and how to blend them to read and spell. The scheme includes both a reading and a writing focus. Reading is the key that unlocks the whole curriculum so the ability to efficiently decode is essential. The R.W.I sessions are expected to occur each day, as the continuity and pace of the programme is key to accelerating the progress of children's reading development.

## **Aims and Objectives.**

To teach children to:

- apply the skill of blending phonemes in order to read words.
- segment words into their constituent phonemes in order to spell words.
- learn that blending and segmenting words are reversible processes.
- read high frequency words that do not conform to regular phonic patterns.
- read texts and words that are within their phonic capabilities as early as possible.
- decode texts effortlessly so all their resources can be used to comprehend what they read.
- spell effortlessly so that all their resources can be directed towards composing their writing.

## **Library**

### **Aims and Objectives**

The aim of the library policy is to create a unified approach across the school in the provision and maintenance of book collections in the main school library and classroom collections.

#### **Aims of the library /classroom collections**

- To raise standards of pupils' achievements across the whole curriculum to develop independent learning skills
- To support personal reading for pleasure

#### **Aims of the school library**

- To provide a core collection of non-fiction books for teacher reference.
- To provide core collections for children to learn information skills, such as using books effectively for research.
- To provide opportunities for children to read for pleasure
- To teach children how to use, handle and respect books
- To promote libraries as places which provide enjoyable and exciting activities
- To provide opportunities for children and their families to take part in literacy related activities, such as book clubs and shadowing book awards
- To provide opportunities to access relevant information online about books, research and authors
- To provide fiction suitable for the entire age and ability range, to include series by well-known authors, joke books, books for reluctant and advanced readers, dual language books etc