



Pebworth First and Blackminster Middle Schools  
Federation



# English Policy

*Incorporating phonics and reading*

*Non-statutory*

## Pebworth First School

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Reviewed by: Georgia Reynolds  
Approved by: Governing Body  
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Aspiration | Respect | Community | Excellence

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## Aims from the English Programme of Study

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

The Pebworth Curriculum goes further than the national curriculum and aims to equip pupils with the English skills they need to be positive and confident learners who are well prepared for whatever path they choose, setting them up with the skills to be excellent in English. Using these aims as our core, English lessons are at the heart of supporting the development of every child and equips them, enabling them to celebrate their strengths and build their resilience.

## Curriculum Delivery

At Pebworth First School we place quality texts at the core of our English planning, allowing teachers to use these as the context to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum but also apply key reading skills to a high quality with age appropriate texts that provide meaningful opportunities for writing.

English is taught on a daily basis, for at least an hour, although teachers have the flexibility to 'block' lessons if they feel this is more appropriate. Where possible, we link our English lessons to the learning project each half term, covering a range of topics and genres and in a range of contexts. The whole class learning is based around the same text and accessible versions and differentiated tasks support pupils to engage at an appropriate level for their age and stage. As much as is practical, reading and writing skills are taught alongside each other giving purpose and application for the learning.

Discrete vocabulary, punctuation, spelling and grammar sessions are built into the sequence of learning. These build on daily phonics sessions in Foundation Stage and KS1. Bespoke support for phonics and GPS are also available in KS2 where required.

In reading lessons, a variety of hearing the teacher read, listening to others or reading in smaller groups will form part of the lesson, alongside activities using key question types to discuss and write about texts.

## Speaking and Listening

At Pebworth, we introduce new vocabulary at the start of any new learning in all areas of the curriculum. In English lessons, the vocabulary is explicitly taught using new key texts and the children are introduced to new vocabulary in context. A vocabulary lesson will allow children to write, research, define and put these words into their own sentences.

In Ruby class, when children use these words within continued provision an observation is recorded this and in Sapphire class, children will be challenged to use a thesaurus to find synonyms for new vocabulary and engage in word games and activities to deepen their lexicological understanding.

Speaking and listening opportunities to develop these skills are embedded throughout the other areas of the curriculum and pupils are also taught to understand and use the conventions of discussion and debate, taking on a role and drama.

## Reading

At Pebworth First School, we want every child have a positive experience of reading and we believe that reading is the key to unlock all learning. Teachers will read regularly to children using quality texts linked daily to their curriculum lessons but also to promote a love of books and learning.

In order to provide a wide range of text types for our children, the school uses Bug Club.

*The literacy skills that Bug Club targets and develops will underpin all other areas of learning in the classroom and the wider world. Bug Club books offer a wide range of topics and themes that will provide many opportunities for children to make links between different areas of learning, thus enriching their experience and embedding concepts and knowledge. To capture children's interest, stimulate their curiosity and secure their engagement with books and enjoyment of reading, it will help to be alert to the opportunities that the books present for making links with other curriculum areas.<sup>1</sup>*

BugClub texts are colour coded using the 'book band' system which grades books by difficulty into bands of different colours. This enables children to explore texts at an appropriate level and includes text types such as stories, traditional tales, non-fiction and information books, poems, playscripts and autobiographies and more. As children progress with their reading during their time with us, they will move along coloured bands until their reading skills enable them to access carefully chosen free-readers, which further stretch and challenge children and expose them to a range of genres, authors and subject matter.

Where children are engaging in phonics lessons, children will be issued 2 reading books – one closely matched to the sounds that they know to allow independent reading and build confidence and another to share with adults and peers to widen their experience of vocabulary and sentence structures.

Children will also have access to BugClub books online with a range of quizzes to assess each child's reading skills, phonics and comprehension. Children will have access to this at school and home. Engagement and quiz results are closely monitored by class teachers.

Children will have daily reading sessions and also regular 1:1 reading time with an adult each week. Class reading sessions will follow Pie Corbet's Reading spine quality texts and use inference questions to

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/downloadable-resource?id=227960&file=ReceptionPlanningGuide.pdf>

prepare children to discuss a variety of texts in depth, answering questions about characters, settings and feelings as well as predicting and sequencing. Where possible these texts will be closely linked to the theme of writing sessions or selected to allow pupils to make comparisons between the texts.

During the foundation stage and KS1, children will be heard read to daily. In KS2, children will be heard to read at least once per week and those identified as needing additional support will be read with daily.

### **Phonics**

Phonics is taught throughout the school from Reception to Year 5, both as whole class teaching and therapy groups using PiXL resources for pupils requiring this. This is the method used to teach children to read by linking sounds (phonemes) and the symbols that represent them (letters and groups of letters, known as graphemes). Each lesson children will revisit previously taught GPC'S (grapheme-phoneme correspondance) and then learn, use and apply a new GPC.

At Pebworth First School, children are taught phonics using BugClub which breaks down *Letters and Sounds*, a phonics scheme published by the Department for Education and Skills in 2007.

See Appendix 1 for a break down of the reading coloured bands into units that correspond with phonic level.

## Writing

At Pebworth First School we treat children as writers, from the earliest stage, who have ideas that they will want to communicate, building on writing skills they have acquired and their knowledge of print from their environment. We promote a love of telling stories beginning with drawings and mark making and progressing to writing. Children will be encouraged, by their classroom teachers, to discuss their English skills with their peers and with the whole class before beginning their written work. During each half term children will be introduced to a new rich fictional text and a non-fiction focus with a model for this (in the form of a letter, diary etc.)

Our writing lessons follow Pie Corbets Talk4Writing approach; an engaging teaching framework based on the principles of how children learn<sup>2</sup>. Writing sequences of learning follow the below structure:

- **Baseline assessment and planning - 'cold' task**  
Initially children are given an interesting and rich starting point to engage children into the new topic. There is no initial teaching and the aim of this is to see what the children can do independently, drawing on prior learning. Teachers will provide an assessment of childrens writing that aims to identify what the learning will be for the whole class, different groups and adapt the model text and plans. Targets are set at this stage and by the end of each unit another independent writing 'hot task' will take place to show each childs progress.
- **The imitation phase**  
The teaching begins with some sort of creative 'hook' which engages the pupils, often with a sense of enjoyment, audience and purpose. Writing challenges, such as writing a detective report for the three little pigs destroyed houses or writing a list of evidence of dragons provide a sense of purpose. Children are introduced to a model text which is pitched to challenge reading skills

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<sup>2</sup> Pie Corbett, Talk4Writing

and provide transferable structures and language patterns that children will refer back to throughout the process. The class will work together, with support, to create a 'text map' and actions to strengthen memory and help children internalise the text. Activities such as drama are used to deepen understanding of the text. Once students can 'talk like the text', the model, and other examples, are then read for vocabulary and comprehension, before being analysed for the basic text (boxing up) and language patterns, as well as writing techniques or toolkits. All of this first phase is underpinned by rehearsing new vocabulary, key spellings and grammatical patterns. Short-burst writing is used to practise key focuses such as description, persuasion or scientific explanation.

- **The innovation phase**

Once students are familiar with the model text, then the teacher leads them into creating their own versions. The teacher then leads children through changing elements of the original text and retelling new versions. Children will work together to 'box up' each section of their slightly edited story together. For older children the teacher demonstrates how to create simple plans and orally develop ideas prior to writing and this is done with increased independence. Shared and guided writing is then used to stage writing over a number of days so that students are writing texts bit by bit, concentrating on bringing all the elements together, writing effectively and accurately. Feedback is given during the lessons, as well as using some form of visualiser on a daily basis, so that students can be taught how to improve their writing, make it more accurate, until they can increasingly edit in pairs or on their own.

- **Independent application and invention - 'hot' task**

In this third phase, children are ready to apply independently what has been taught. Children are still guided through the planning, drafting and revising of their writing but will write with increasing independence. Younger children may only make a few simple changes but older students should be adding, embellishing, altering and manipulating the original structure. Writing will take place over a week and the teacher will continually refer back to the targets set at the beginning of the process with these being displayed clearly in their books. With non-fiction, students should apply what they have been taught during learning project lessons. The final piece is used as the 'hot' task, which clearly shows progress across the unit.

This is a chance for children to flourish as writers and become increasingly skilled as independent writers. Children in Early Years are given plenty of opportunities to play at making up stories, acting them out enables them to become familiar with them for future writing.

- **Final assessment - building on progression**

When the children are first taught a text type, they will co-construct the toolkit to help them understand the ingredients to consider. As they progress up the school, these toolkits should travel with them so that, year-on-year, they are refined as the pupils develop their skills. Over time, they should internalise these toolkits so they select appropriate features automatically and no longer need a visual support to scaffold their writing.

## Handwriting

At Pebworth First School we use cursive handwriting from Year 1 to Year 5. As soon as children in Reception are confident with ball and stick notation we begin to support them to join. Children will be introduced to cursive writing in stages and at their own pace in line with their phonics and fine motor skills. During the foundation stages this includes pattern practice and motor skills.

Our aim is for all children, by year 5, to have a fluent, joined, cursive handwriting style. To attain this, pupils will be taught how to form letter shapes for both lower and upper case, through weekly modelled and guided practice. Teaching is based upon the Nelson handwriting resources which teaches the letters and joins progressively. HandwritingforWindows (HfW) font is used as much as possible on pupil facing resources to reinforce this.

Examples of cursive letters are displayed in both classes for the children to refer to and as a teaching tool. We encourage the children to adopt an effective pen grip, and check their posture is correct when writing. Good presentation of written pieces is expected across the curriculum. Pupils are also given opportunities to present their work using ICT. Children begin writing in pencil and then work towards achieving a pen license as and when their fine motor skills and joining style are sufficiently developed.

## Assessment

Assessment in Reading will be carried out through BugClub and children will be assessed regularly as they progress through the process. In Years R-2 a reward system will be used when a child reaches a new reading colour band. In Sapphire class, individual rewards are issued to children to support motivation to read where this is required.

In writing children are assessed against the national curriculum aims during the 'cold task'; when they will write independently about a pre-taught subject but in a new text type, and during the 'hot task' when children will write an independent piece of writing once they have learnt the new text type.

Please see our Assessment policy for further information on how children are assessed summatively and formatively.

## Cross-curricular links

At Pebworth First School we strive to deliver a broad, holistic curriculum with English skills at the core of this. Our learning projects aim to deliver a memorable experience for the children and the skills acquired during English lessons allow children to express themselves with increased clarity. During Mathematics lessons, children will also apply their English skills; learning new mathematical vocabulary and during discussions and in reasoning about their ideas.

We strategically choose the programmes and resources that we use so that they also aim to provide, where possible, a cross curricular approach to learning in English.

## Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed yearly by the subject leader. The subject leader and school leader will monitor teaching and learning in English, ensuring that the content of the national curriculum is covered and that the high expectations of our Teaching and Learning policy are applied effectively. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all teaching staff and members of the governing body.

# Appendix 1

BugClub phonics units broken down into individual sounds and decodable words

Reception-Year 1

<i>Phase</i>	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Focus</i>	<i>Not fully decodable words (Irregular words)</i>
2	1	s a t p	
	2	i n m d	
	3	g o c k	to
	4	c k e u r	the, no, go
	5	h b f, f l, l l s s	l, into
3	6	j v w x	me, be
	7	y z, z z q u	he, my, by
	8	ch sh th ng	they, she
	9	ai ee igh oa oo (long) oo (short)	we, are
	10	ar or ur ow oi	you, her
	11	ear air ure er	all, was
4	12	Adjacent consonants (cvcc, ccvc, ccvcc, cccvc, cccvcc)	said, have, like, so, do, some, come, were, there, little, one, when, out, what

Year 1-Year 5 (in phonics lessons and for Years 3-5 accessible through Pixl therapies)

Phase	Unit	Focus	Not fully decodeable (Irregular words)/ High-frequency words
5	13	zh wh ph	oh their
	14	ay a-e igh/ey/ei (long a)	Mr Mrs
	15	ea e-e ie/ey/y (long e)	looked called asked
	16	ie i-e y i (long i)	water where
	17	ow o-e o/oe (long o)	who again
	18	ew ue u-e (long u) u/oul (short u)	thought through
	19	aw au al	work laughed because
	20	ir er ear	Thursday Saturday thirteen thirty
	21	ou oy	different any many
	22	ere/eer are/ear	eyes friends
	23	c k ck ch	two once
	24	ce/ci/cy sc/stl se	great clothes
	25	ge/gi/gy dge	it's I'm I'll I've
	26	le mb kn/gn wr	don't can't didn't
27	tch sh ea (w/a o	first second third	
6	28	Suffix endings: -ing, -ed (morphemes)	clearing gleaming rained mailed
	29	Suffix plurals: -s, -es (plural morphemes)	man/men mouse /mice foot/feet tooth/teeth sheep/sheep
	30	Prefix morphemes: re-, un-	vowel consonant prefix suffix syllable

Phonics linked to Book Band colours

Letters and Sounds Phase	Book Band
Phase 2	Pink
Phase 3	Red
Phase 4	Red–Yellow
Phase 5	Blue–Orange