

# Summercourt Academy ENGLISH POLICY

## Introduction:

At Summercourt Academy we recognise the importance of the English language in preparing children to be confident in all aspects of their lives. We believe that improved performance in reading, writing and spoken language will enable our pupils to deal more successfully with other curriculum subjects, while enriching their lives beyond school. At Summercourt Academy we encourage all children to become independent learners and be confident in all strands of learning.

Our approach to teaching English incorporates oracy, drama, real contexts and high-quality texts, developing children's vocabulary, language, reading and writing skills.

We want all children to leave Summercourt Academy with a life-long reading habit and a love of books because reading will improve their vocabulary, inspire them creatively and improve their ability to write well.

## Spoken Language

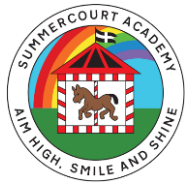
The four strands of spoken language: speaking, listening, group discussion and drama are embedded throughout the whole curriculum. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise reading and writing standards. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life. We aim for children to be able to speak clearly, fluently and coherently, to be able to listen attentively with understanding, enjoyment and empathy and contribute to group discussions effectively.

We achieve this by:

- Giving our children confidence in themselves as speakers and listeners by showing them that we value their conversations and opinions. We also encourage a respect for the views of others.
- Being aware that as adults, we provide a model of speakers and listeners in our day-to-day interactions with them and with other adults in our school.
- Helping them to articulate their ideas and provide purposes and audiences for talk within a range of formal and informal situations and in individual, partner, group and class contexts.
- By providing opportunities to perform to a larger audience, in assemblies and productions, where children's efforts and skills are acknowledged by staff, parents, carers, visitors and peers.
- By providing a range of experiences where children can work collaboratively and participate in opportunities to reflect on talk and explore real and imagined situations through role play, hot-seating, drama and discussions.
- By developing the children's ability to listen with attention and understanding in all areas of the curriculum and where necessary, asking and responding to questions appropriately.

## Approaches to Phonics

At Summercourt, Phonics is taught through daily Read, Write Inc sessions. These comprise of learning different graphemes, focussing on oral phonological skills and sight vocabulary. During these sessions children are also explicitly shown how to apply their developing skills to their writing. All children are grouped in accordance to their individual needs.



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## Approaches to Reading

Our priority is both the teaching of reading skills and enjoyment of literature, enabling children to become lifelong, confident readers. As children build fluency, comprehension skills become our main area of focus and questioning looks at skills such as retelling, inference and prediction. All children will complete a 'DERIC' task weekly, which focuses on a different resource (such as blurbs, videos, pictures and texts) and children answer a 'Decode', 'Explain', 'Retrieve', 'Infer' and 'Choice' question for each of the resources.

In EYFS and KS1, children are given Read Write Inc book bag books which are matched to the sounds that they are learning in their phonics sessions. When children are ready or when they have finished the phonics programme, children then move onto Accelerated Reader. Within AR the children quiz regularly on the books that they are reading and move through sub-levels that are closely matched to their reading level.

Home reading is encouraged and is an integral part of the child's development. In order to have strong communication between teachers and parents/carers, each child has a reading record where both the staff and parents can write comments about how the child is progressing with his/her reading.

## Developing a love of reading

At Summercourt we recognise the importance of children learning to love to read and enjoying the books that they choose to read:

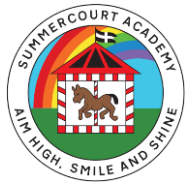
- Storytelling forms a key part of our teaching based on high quality texts – much thought goes into the selection of texts to ensure exposure to high level vocabulary
- We have a dedicated whole school library
- All class teachers read a class novel to the children daily
- All children are given a book or audible CD as a Christmas gift
- We have an annual school Book Fair

## Approaches to Writing

We aim to develop the children's ability to produce well structured, detailed writing in which the meaning is made clear and which engages the interest of the reader.

To develop our children as writer 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.
- Provide experiences for children to acquire confidence and a positive attitude towards writing.
- Develop and sustain writing skills by providing opportunities for children to write for a range of purposes and audiences.
- Use guided writing sessions to model writing skills, teaching children how to compose, amend and revise their writing.



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- Teach children to become critical readers of their own writing by using self-evaluation and checking their work independently for sense, accuracy and meaning. This is evident in pupils' books during purple pen response time.
- Teach grammar and punctuation in the context of children's own writing, as well as through discrete lessons.
- Teach children to develop their ability to organise and present imaginative and/or factual writing and poetry in different ways.
- Teach strategies for spelling to enable children to become confident and competent spellers.

## Handwriting Approach

In Early Years, 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 lower case letters. When children start KS1, they focus on correct formation of upper case letters and move to pre-cursive handwriting, where they are taught the pre-cursive ascenders and descenders and the diagonal and horizontal lines used to join letters. In KS2, or when pupils are ready in year 2, children move to cursive handwriting, where they are encouraged to join their writing, continuing to use the correct ascenders and descenders. Teachers will model their year group's expected handwriting style when recording on the board, on displays around the classroom and when writing in children's books. As a school we use 'Twinkl' as an additional support when teaching handwriting skills.

## Cross-Curricular Links

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. They will plan for pupils to practice and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through literacy lessons to other areas of the curriculum. When appropriate, extended writing is produced in Topic and Science to showcase the children's transferrable literacy skills.

## Approaches to SPAG

The school follows the 'No Nonsense' spelling programme from year 2 – year 6 which enables the children to recap on the previous year's spelling patterns and then introduces new patterns and sight words. This programme is in line with the National Curriculum for spelling and focusses on the statutory spelling requirements. In EYFS and year 1 pupils have spelling practice incorporated into their Read, Write Inc sessions.

Grammar and punctuation is taught in the context of the children's own writing, as well as through discrete lessons. Skills match that of the National Curriculum.

## Parental Involvement

Parents can play a vital role in the development of English skills. We aim to foster a strong home-school partnership regarding reading, using reading records as a tool for communication between school and home. Parents provide support for spellings that are set as weekly homework.