

# English Rationale

## **Lister Infant English Rationale**

### **“Respect for all, Learners for Life”**

Our school motto is the motivation behind our school and what makes our school curriculum unique. It is our core belief that entwines and leads the curriculum at our school.

#### **Vision**

To create a safe, happy, caring and inclusive school where children, staff, parents and visitors feel valued, are encouraged to succeed, are treated with respect, love learning and actively work together to be the best they can be.

#### **Intent**

The Staff and Governors of Lister Infant School aim to offer a stimulating curriculum and environment that allows all pupils to fulfil their potential regardless of race, creed, gender or ability and to develop a sense of their own worth and respect for others. We aim to support our pupils in becoming independent, resilient, lifelong learners with a positive attitude to school and life.

Lister Infants teaches an English curriculum based on the 2014 National Curriculum for primary schools. We have worked hard to develop our own curriculum model and methods for teaching this important subject to suit the needs of our children. English is coherently planned and sequenced towards sufficient knowledge, understanding and skills for future learning.

The three areas of English: reading, writing and spoken language have a key place in the education of pupils here at Lister Infants. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for accessing the whole curriculum. Fluency in English is an essential foundation for success in all subjects. Its mastery will prepare the learner for independent learning, most aspects of everyday life, and eventually for the world of work.

At Lister Infant School we aim to provide a culturally, rich curriculum through exposure to a range of authors, text types and using curriculum enrichment opportunities. We enrich our children's learning experiences with author visits, theatre productions of quality texts and actively enrolling all children from Reception to the local library. We feel this is very important for our children as they might not experience this outside of school.

As well as teaching the skill of reading, we aim for pupils to have a love of reading. We encourage reading for pleasure throughout our school day. Pupils are encouraged to become independent readers who see reading both fiction and non-fiction as a pleasurable activity. Reading drives the curriculum at Lister Infants and is often used as a stimulus to teach a range of subjects and topics. We find using key texts for units of work drives learning and

engages the children in their work. Our English curriculum holds meaning for our pupils with strong links to class topics and we ensure all writing has a purpose.

At Lister Infants, we place reading high on the school agenda. The Simple View of Reading provides the rationale for the structure of reading provision at our school. The Simple View of Reading, which is the conceptual framework that underpins reading in the new National Curriculum, sets out a model of reading that has two dimensions: word-reading and language comprehension.

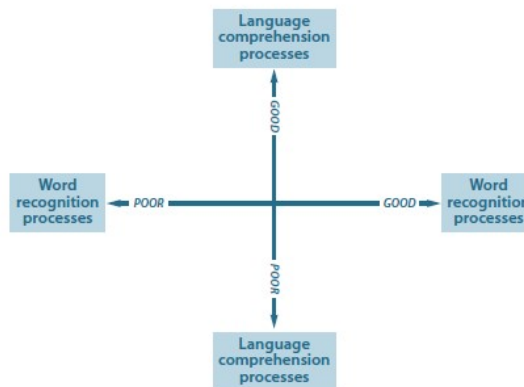


Fig 1- The Simple View of Reading

### **Word-Reading**

Skilled **word reading** involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words.

*(Rose review of the teaching of early reading, DfE, 2006)*

### **Comprehension**

Good **comprehension** draws from linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills develop through pupils' experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction.

*(Rose review of the teaching of early reading, DfE, 2006)*

### **Comprehension skills**

- Recalling and retrieving
- Predicting
- Activating and building prior knowledge
- Summarising
- Inferring
- Drawing conclusions
- Empathising

Our aim is for our children to be fluent readers, to have good language comprehension processes and word recognition processes.

## **Writing**

Writing is divided into two interrelated areas: composition and transcription. It is our aim that all pupils who attend Lister Infants leave us able to write clearly, accurately and coherently, with the ability to adapt their language and style to a range of contexts, purposes and audiences. Expectations with regard to handwriting and presentation are high. Writing is taught through the same text-based units of work as reading, with children given the opportunity to carry out an extended piece of writing each week. The expectation is that the next piece of writing a child produces will be of higher quality. Feedback is given throughout the writing process, so children can act on advice and have the chance to learn from what they are being told.

## **The Writing Process**

At Lister Infants all pupils are supported to develop written work of the best quality that they can. Pupils have an opportunity to encounter high quality language, both from written texts and teacher interaction. Grammar, punctuation and other specific language elements are taught within the context of both reading and writing. There are four stages to the writing process:

- Planning
- Writing
- Editing
- Redrafting (year two)

## **Key drivers:**

- To provide an exciting and engaging English curriculum that is accessible to all pupils.
- To provide a culturally rich English curriculum, relevant to our children so they have breadth of experience.
- To ensure there is breadth, depth and progression in teaching and learning across the English curriculum, within and across year groups to increase pupil's knowledge, skills and understanding.
- To have high expectations of all our pupils by providing challenge.
- To foster a love of reading and to make every child a reader.
- To develop pupils speaking and listening skills and wider understanding of language with a focus of enhancing vocabulary. We aim to provide a language rich school by

exposing our children to a wealth of vocabulary to deepen understanding and positively impact all aspects of English.

- To use a balanced and engaging approach to developing reading, which integrates both word reading and comprehension skills.
- To develop our pupils ability to communicate effectively in speech and writing.
- To be able to read a range of materials fluently for enjoyment and information.
- To encourage our children to persevere and aspire to be their best.
- To expose our children to a multitude of enrichment through trips, visitors, enhancements, themed weeks and days to inspire our children and switch them on to learning and achieving.

## **Implementation**

The English curriculum is organised into;

- Formal learning of reading and writing
- Informal learning which goes on throughout the school day and throughout all curriculum areas.

## **The Spoken Language: Speaking and Listening**

At Lister Infants, oracy has a central place in our curriculum, reflecting the vital importance of spoken language in our pupils' development. Pupils are supported to speak in Standard English at all times whilst at school. There are opportunities to talk right across the curriculum as this is recognised as being a key way in which pupils develop their learning. Pupils are supported to talk about their ideas, helping to consolidate their learning. In addition to making presentations and participating in debates, pupils are challenged to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas.

At Lister Infants we introduce new vocabulary to our children using 'Word of the Week' which have been carefully selected to support our topics. We also have a progression in vocabulary for all subjects so the children are continuously exposed to rich language they can apply in their speaking and writing that will deepen their learning.

The school feels that speaking and listening are important life skills and closely linked to self-esteem. Pupils need to be taught how to adapt the way they talk depending upon the purpose and the audience. As well as teaching these skills in English, the school will provide opportunities for speaking and listening across the curriculum and through activities.

We provide a wide range of opportunities for children to talk and listen in formal and informal settings such as

- The use of role play
- News sharing, where pupils are encouraged to speak to their assembled classmates.
- Daily Pie Corbett storytelling where children learn a story off by heart and recite it each day to broaden their vocabulary and internalise the language.
- A regular story time session where the class teacher reads aloud to the class.
- Discussion and questioning during shared and guided reading, shared and guided writing and word and sentence level work within literacy lessons.
- Discussion during topic work.
- Children performing for a wider audience – whole school, parents etc. E.g. the Nativity performance, reciting Pie Corbett stories in assembly
- The use of listening centres.
- Philosophy debates
- Circle time
- The use of 'Talking Partners'- a programme, which promotes positive speaking and listening.

## **Reading**

Reading is the building block for life and ensures limitless expectations. As well as being taught discreetly through one to one reading, shared reading and guided reading, reading is also taught throughout the school day and across the curriculum. It is the vehicle that drives our curriculum and we place very high importance on it. We have many opportunities to develop the children's word reading and comprehension skills. We aim to foster a love of reading and ensure our children are exposed to a range of high quality reading materials including, stories, poems, rhyme and non-fiction. English units of work are based around high quality texts that drive the learning forward.

Pupils have many opportunities to read including one to one reading, shared reading, guided reading, book browsing sessions, outdoor reading and during story time. A wide range of books are also available in the class and whole school library.

## **School Reading Books**

Children begin formal reading in Reception when they have built up a bank of high frequency words. Teachers are skilled in knowing when a child is ready to begin reading in this year group. As a past Reading Recovery School, we predominately use PM reading books to teach reading as this allows children to build a range of reading skills working on visual, meaning and structure cues. We also have a range of reading schemes organised into book band levels to deepen learning in a range of different contexts. Books are organised into book bands and further sub divided using reading recovery book band levels. This ensures children progressively move through the book bands at the appropriate level. Teachers are skilled in choosing books to support the child's reading needs and both word

reading and comprehension skills are developed through one to one reading. Children take a reading book home appropriate to their reading level at least once a week and families are asked to complete the pupil's reading card. In addition, families can access Active Learn which is an online resource where teachers allocate books to the children at their appropriate reading level. This ensures families have access to books at home every day.

### **Phonics**

At Lister Infants, Phonics is taught through discrete phonic sessions on a daily basis, through the four part lesson. Phonics promotes the development of speaking and listening skills alongside the daily teaching of phonics as a discrete activity. It offers teachers and practitioners a systematic 'revisit and review-teach-practice-apply' sequence within each daily session. We also embed phonics knowledge in the other curriculum subjects. (Please see Phonics Rationale).

### **Guided Reading**

In KS1 guided reading offers another opportunity for children to apply their word reading and comprehension skills. We take a whole school approach to guided reading by timetabling it at the same time across KS1. This is to ensure the children see the importance of reading and it creates a calm, reading friendly atmosphere in KS1. Children are grouped by reading levels and complete guided reading activities daily. Pupils are expected to develop a range of specific comprehension skills, ranging from straightforward retrieval of information to quite sophisticated inference. Children progress through texts of increasing challenge.

### **Daily Storytelling**

In order to develop vocabulary we use Pie Corbett stories throughout our school to teach the children six different stories per year group. Each half term the children are introduced to a new story and practise learning the story by reciting it each day. When the children have their class assembly, we share our stories with families, friends and people from our local community. The children become familiar with the structure of a story and it helps to broaden the children's vocabulary and internalise high quality language which they can use in their writing and spoken language.

### **Home School Readers**

We understand the importance of having books in the home so all children are able to take advantage of the Home Reading Scheme, where children have free choice of a fiction or non-fiction book to take home and share with their family. Children normally choose their home reader book on a Friday and return the book the following Thursday.

### **Firm Foundations**

Firm Foundations, is a programme designed to support Communication, Language and Literacy in the early Foundation Stage. It aims to ensure that nursery children have the opportunity to experience a range of activities to promote looking, good listening, remembering and sequencing using familiar and motivating materials. In order to promote the scheme, parents are invited in on a rota basis to join in with nursery routines and child initiated play. On leaving the session, parents take with them a firm foundations pack to complete with children.

### **Chatter Bags**

In order to encourage talk and develop language, we use Chatter Bags and Communication Friendly Bags for our two year old children to share with families. This is a great opportunity for our children to develop key language and to develop and broaden their vocabulary.

### **Author Focus**

In addition to English lessons, guided reading and phonics, children at Lister Infants have the opportunity to read independently and listen to books read to them by an adult. This supports their comprehension, develops their vocabulary and helps them to enjoy reading and lose themselves in a story. Each half term each year group has a focus author to read during story time. The children read a range of texts by that author exposing them to high quality texts. Having an author focus and being exposed to high quality, rich texts prepares our children for KS2 where they will go on to read class novels.

### **Story Time**

Story time is a valuable part of the school day at Lister Infants. All classes finish the school day with a story read to the children. Children hear stories, rhymes, poems and nonfiction to develop pupil's vocabulary, language comprehension and to develop their love of reading. The children see this a real pleasurable activity to end the school day.

### **Vocabulary**

We know the correlation between vocabulary and knowledge and aim to ensure we provide plenty of opportunity for our children to acquire new vocabulary. Lister Infants has a Word of the Week for each year group to develop key vocabulary appropriate to the children. These words have been carefully selected from speech and language key word lists for the younger children, words to support curriculum vocabulary or words to develop the children's wider vocabulary. This develops the children's knowledge of language and supports their development in speaking, reading and writing.



## **Reading Corners**

All classrooms have beautiful library areas with comfortable couches or seating, a range of books and resources to support story telling. We ensure there is a range of high quality reading material including stories, poetry and non-fiction. To ensure all children can access reading materials, we also have phonics books and a range of sentences that progressively increase in difficulty that focus on the high frequency key words. In addition, each class has a basket with their author focus books, a range of traditional tales and topic related books. We also have the class' current Pie Corbett story telling book along with resources to bring the story to life and make connections to other stories. To support independence, the reading corner also has reading strategy prompts and the class word of the week book.

## **Other opportunities for reading**

- We ensure all continuous provision areas provide opportunities for children to read whilst learning such as the science area, construction area, role play, art and small world.
- Children have the opportunity to read during play and lunch with outdoor reading areas.
- All classrooms have the opportunity of using story sacks in school. Through the use of story sacks, we aim to encourage children and parents to see reading as a pleasurable activity which can be shared to their mutual benefit.
- We encourage family and friends to come into school during our 'family reading sessions' and share a book with their child in the classroom environment.
- We provide the opportunity for all our pupils to enrol and visit the local library.
- The school participates in a range of local, national and international book events and competitions to raise the profile of reading to our pupils, parents and community.
- The school invites members of the community to share books with our pupils to show everybody is a reader.
- We provide workshops and courses for parents and the community to receive training and learn new skills to support reading.
- We work with parents in the foundation stage to develop communication friendly space to develop language and share books together.
- We have a Book Club at Lister Infants where the children meet to discuss texts and help to support driving reading in our school through events and links with other schools.

## **Assessment**

Reading is assessed in many ways. All children in KS1 are base lined at the start of the year and at the end to get a standardised reading age. Additionally they are benchmarked to ensure they are reading the correct book level. Teachers in all year groups regularly complete running records throughout the year to ensure the children are on the correct book level which they read at instructional level.

Assessment is also carried out in daily guided reading sessions with a particularly focus on comprehension reading skills. In Years 1 and 2 pupils sit a standardised reading comprehension reading paper in the summer term to validate teachers' judgements.

A rigorous intervention plan following pupil progress meetings ensures children who struggle with reading receive further support in all year groups.

Our reading approach ensures pupils have sufficient practise in reading and pre reading books that matches their ability at home and in school.

## **Writing**

At Lister Infants we ensure opportunities to practice reading and writing are built in across the curriculum. Reading and writing drive the other curriculum areas under the umbrella of half-termly topics. The genres to be covered over the course of each year are mapped to the topics to which they are most appropriate. This supports the use of reading and writing for real purposes and increases time for children to explore and deepen their understanding of different topic areas. Teachers ensure coverage of core English skills in order that children are equipped with the necessary skills to write successfully in each genre. English lessons are organised into units of work driven by high-quality texts. The texts children read in lessons provide the stimulus for much of their writing work. We have clear expectations of our pupils and ensure all children are challenged and supported at their appropriate level. We have devised a progression in writing document to ensure consistency in writing expectations across the school.

We believe firmly that all children can be and are writers. This is fundamental to the children becoming confident and successful writers. The teachers in the early years provide the children with learning experiences about the purpose of writing and experiment with the writing modelled by their teacher during shared writing experiences. As the children progress through the school writing is developed through a wide range of contexts. Opportunity for shared and guided writing is planned for. Our school places high importance on the teaching of punctuation, grammar and spelling within the English lesson and throughout all curriculum areas.

## **Spelling**

Spelling is developed through phonic, word and sentence level work. Spelling across the school builds on the patterns children learn earlier in the school, both for phonetically plausible words and common exception words. It is addressed in phonic lessons and within the English lesson. It forms an integral aspect of English lessons and other curriculum lessons. In key stage one, pupils are given spellings to learn each week and tested the following week. Staff support spelling through use of word books, word banks and the

encouragement of dictionary use. Formative assessment is used to address spellings daily. (See marking policy)

### **Handwriting**

Pupils are taught to write legibly, fluently and at a reasonable speed. Children must be watched closely to ensure that every letter starts in the right place and that errors can be corrected before they become habit. Precision teaching may be used to support children who need extra practice. The school follows Penpals progression in handwriting to teach correct letter formation and onto beginning to join letters. This prepares our pupils for KS2 where they develop their joined up handwriting further.

### **Assessment**

Assessment in the form of high quality oral feedback and interactive marking enables children to improve their work, building towards the production of quality written outcomes. Each term, children produce an independent piece of writing as a summative assessment. Additionally all children complete storytelling writing following their Pie Corbett story. This is recorded in a storytelling book which tracks each child's writing as they progress through the school.

### **Inclusion**

Our school is an inclusive school and in each class there are children with a range of additional needs including ADHD, Dyslexia, Speech and Language, ASD and moderate learning difficulties. Our school recognises that children, with these different needs, benefit from an adapted lesson to allow all children to be successful and access activities at a level appropriate to their skills and needs. Resources are used to cater to the needs of individuals and support provided by staff as necessary. Any pupils with special educational needs are identified and teachers ensure lessons are catered to suit to every pupil's needs through adapting tasks, using resources and staff as necessary. We want all our pupils to apply what they know with increasing fluency and independence.

### **Family links**

Parents have a considerable contribution to make to a child's success in school. They are strongly encouraged to be fully involved in their child's education. Parents are invited to review their children's school books (during open afternoons and parent evenings) and to support their child in responding to their teacher's feedback. Parent comments are added to topic books to share their view on progress, enjoyment and attainment. Parent workshops are held to inform parents how to support their child with English at home and these are always well attended. Regular family story sessions are held to encourage parents to read with their child and to promote a love of reading. Lister Infants shares learning through Twitter and the school website which is a great way for our families to access what the children are experiencing in the classroom and to continue that learning at home.

## **Impact**

Reading and writing are given high priority at Lister Infants and we are proud to continually achieve higher than the national average reading scores and national writing scores. Our staff are experts in the teaching of early reading, which ensures all of our pupils make progress in their reading and writing. We expect all pupils to make progress which we see as knowing more and remembering more of the intended curriculum over time. We hold ambitious endpoints for our children and the majority of our pupils leave as fluent readers with a love of reading. We expect all children to acquire at least good reading and writing skills whilst at our school though we continually strive to improve on this.

Assessment is key to driving pupil learning forwards and to ensure we cater to every child's needs by identifying the next steps in their learning journey. Feedback contributes to every child achieving the progress and attainment they are capable of.

During the Foundation Stage and KS1 teachers complete ongoing informal assessment to support each child's learning and development and identify the next steps in their learning. Opportunities include teacher observation, questioning, child discussions and marking and oral feedback against the learning objective and assessment criteria for the lesson. Teachers share these next steps with pupils to support children in moving their learning on.

Children are assessed formally by their class teacher at the end of each term and the data is logged onto the school system and used by the English Lead, Assessment Coordinator and Senior Management team who track pupil progress. Year group staff meet with the school Senior Leadership Team to discuss pupils each term and identify those at risk of not meeting targets. These children will then receive additional support through interventions, direct teaching or precision teaching to ensure the gap is narrowed and that they catch up quickly.

In order to ensure consistency in assessing, we complete whole school moderation as a whole staff each term and we also ensure moderation is completed with the local authority and with our school network. This robust system ensures assessment is a fair judgement.

At the end of each year teachers complete summative assessments against EYFS and National Curriculum level descriptors. Teachers must make a judgement as to whether the child's learning and development is best described by:

- the description of the level of development expected at the end of the year (expected);
- not yet at the level of development expected at the end of the year (emerging);
- or beyond the level of development expected at the end of the year (exceeding).

(See assessment policy for further details)

The school implements a termly programme of prioritised monitoring, review and evaluation which includes:

- Book scrutiny
- Lesson Observations were appropriate
- Pupil Voice
- Learning walks

The coordinator feeds back to the Senior Leadership Team each term by completing a termly report monitoring data for all children including specific groups. As a result of analysing data, actions are shared with staff and monitored by the co-ordinator. Additionally a learning walk takes place where lessons, books and pupil voice are triangulated to ensure high quality learning is happening.

At the end of each year, a subject action plan is devised, monitored throughout the year and reviewed at the end of the following year.

We ensure all staff receive regular CPD in order to provide the highest quality of education to our pupils. Staff who have attended CPD training feedback to other members of staff at staff meetings to ensure good practice is implemented by all. We also invite experts into school to lead whole staff training and the subject lead attends meetings throughout the year with the Local Authority.

Our school has been recognised for its English programme receiving the Gold Reading Quality Mark when the awards was first introduced and we are currently working on the Writing Quality Mark. (Please see our school list of awards).