

Eleanor Palmer English Policy

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

Our approach to teaching of English is multi-faceted, incorporating oracy, 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 Eleanor Palmer 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.

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.

Planning:

Lesson planning is modelled on the work of the 2014 National Curriculum, leading literacy consultants and organisations such as the National Literacy Trust and the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education.

Wherever possible, writing is linked to the termly class topic and, therefore, the wider curriculum. There is a balance between fiction, non-fiction and poetry with an emphasis on whole texts rather than extracts and worksheets. *Models and frameworks are found on the staff shared drive under the 'English' area.*

Oracy - learning to talk and learning through talk:

At Eleanor Palmer, 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 oracy, 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 oracy look like at Eleanor Palmer?

Across the school:

- 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.

Lesson planning is modelled on the work of the 2014 National Curriculum, leading literacy consultants and organisations such as the National Literacy Trust and the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education. Teachers plan sequences of lessons to build towards a longer writing outcome that is linked to reading, drama and other shorter writing tasks.

Reading

Our priority is both the teaching of reading skills and the enjoyment of literature, enabling children to become lifelong, confident readers. As children begin to read, we focus on decoding, primarily through phonics in addition to other strategies, e.g. whole word recognition, rhyme and context. As children build fluency, comprehension skills become our main area of focus and questioning looks at skills such as re-telling, inference and prediction. We believe that high-quality literature is key to motivating children to read and instilling in children a love of literature and children throughout the school are read to at the end of each and every day.

What does reading look like at Eleanor Palmer?

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|---|
| <p>The teaching of reading in EYFS:</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have a structured early learning programme. The teaching of early reading skills begins in the Nursery through daily story, rhyme and song time alongside weekly individual reading of books children have chosen to take home. • A wide selection of early reading books is available from Reception and these are banded into the PM Benchmark 'colour steps'. • Children are taught during shared and guided group reading using structured and repetitive 'big books', guided texts and short stories. • Teachers and teaching assistants also read on an individual basis with children as necessary: how often and who is based on assessment of progress. |
| <p>The teaching of reading in KS1:</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers and teaching assistants assess children's progression in early reading regularly using the PM Benchmark scheme. A percentage result and response to comprehension questions indicate whether the child is secure at that level and thus ready to move up. • Children progress through these 'colour steps' and are hopefully 'off the scheme' by the age of 7. • Once they have moved beyond this scheme, our 'free readers' are supported carefully to make good book choices and maintain their motivation. • Teachers and teaching assistants continue to read on an individual basis with children as necessary. How often and who is based on assessment of progress. • As we know the importance of all children reading well as soon as possible, we put a great emphasis on daily reading with an adult in Year 1, with the aim on securing this skill in the earliest school years. • We are flexible with our use of scheme books. If a child is 'stuck' at a level and losing motivation, we will always look for alternatives, for example read aloud plays, to re-ignite enthusiasm. |
| <p>The teaching of reading in KS2:</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers and teaching assistants continue to monitor children's reading progress through a combination of individual, group and shared reading. • To ensure shared access to high level texts and discussion, whole-class reading takes place at least twice a week across KS2. • Opportunities for independent reading are provided to encourage children to develop reading stamina and reading for pleasure. • Children and adults share their text choices and recommend books to others. • 'Buddy reading' takes place in pairs of Year 1 and Year 5 children to develop reading role models. |

Developing a love of reading:

- Opportunities for reading are provided across the curriculum: topic books, news articles, blogs, class magazines etc.
- Storytelling forms a key part of our teaching and we have a core of favourite storytellers who visit regularly.
- We have a dedicated book corner area in each classroom.
- All class teachers read a class novel at the end of every day. Much thought goes into the selection of texts to ensure exposure to high level vocabulary and exciting plotlines.
- Teachers are supported in these choices by a group called 'Tried and Tested' where staff meet to discuss good books in the summer term and at our regular Teach Meets and cluster meetings.
- We update our 'You Choose, We Choose' pamphlet of book recommendations from teachers and share this with our whole school community.
- There is of talk and discussion about reading in a variety of contexts, both formal and informal.
- 'If you liked...you'll love....' bookmarks help guide children to books or authors that are similar to something they've enjoyed previously.
- We have a bi-annual school Book Fair and always celebrate World Book Day.
- Teachers also promote reading competitions and challenges e.g. Camden Reading Road Map.

Children are expected to read every night at home. In younger classes, children write in their reading diaries to share ideas about books and to keep a record of what they are reading. Adults can communicate in the diaries so that parents are aware of what books children are reading and how they are responding to texts at school.

Writing:

At Eleanor Palmer, 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, broadly following the structure below:



Wherever possible, writing is linked to the termly class topic and, therefore, the wider curriculum. There is a balance between fiction, non-fiction and poetry with an emphasis on whole texts rather than extracts and worksheets. *Models and frameworks are found on the staff shared drive under the 'English' area.*

What does writing look like at Eleanor Palmer?

Across the school:

- A purpose and audience for each piece of writing is decided from the outset.
- Writing is displayed and celebrated all over the school.
- We provide stimulating first hand experiences, e.g. trips, storytellers and drama.
- Writing is taught as a carefully sequenced activity.
- Teachers provide regular helpful feedback through marking - *see Appendix 3 - Steps to Success*
- Time is planned into lessons for children to respond to literacy marking and feedback.
- Writing is, in the main, linked to class topics to promote engagement.
- We ensure progression in complexity of tasks and expectations year on year.

- We build stamina for writing by providing opportunities to write independently and for extended periods.
- Editing and reviewing form a large part of lesson time - with age-appropriate strategies for green-pen response marking used across the school.
- Peer marking is encouraged as an additional way for children to respond to writing.

Spelling:

Understanding how to spell correctly is important in supporting children to organise their thinking around language. Knowing how to apply spelling rules and recognising 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.

What does spelling look like at Eleanor Palmer?

The teaching of spelling in EYFS and KS1:

- From Nursery, children are introduced to the concept that words are broken down into sounds. In Nursery and Reception, visuals are available on tables showing images to remind children of trickier digraphs they want to write.
- Children in Nursery and reception sort objects from bags, identifying those that start with the daily focus.
- Children in EYFS and KS1 have short, focused phonics sessions at least three times a week which build slowly from learning single letter sounds to digraphs (two letter sounds such as 'sh' and 'oa') and split digraphs (the impact of magic 'e' on earlier vowels as in 'hop' to 'hope').
- This knowledge is applied in children's reading and writing.
- Children learn sounds, actions and letters through games and activities that support sounding out, segmenting and blending.
- Children having a go at writing by sounding out words and recording the sounds they hear.
- A 'sound table' for young children to add things to beginning with the sound of the day or week.
- From Year 1, children applying phonic knowledge to read real and 'alien' words.
- From Year 1, children are actively encouraged and taught to proof read their writing for spelling errors.

The teaching of spelling in KS2:

- Our spelling lessons are based on the No Nonsense Spelling units that follow clear patterns to aid understanding.
- Throughout KS2, a spelling rule or new letter sounds are introduced weekly and relevant spellings are taught, e.g. through mnemonics, word sorting and spelling games.
- Key word banks, high frequency words, dictionaries and word pattern visuals scaffold children as necessary.
- When writing, children are encouraged to 'wobble' underline words they are not sure of to check in a word bank or dictionary to avoid interrupting the flow of their writing.
- Spellings are identified by adults using the EP Editing Code (*See Appendix 2*) and children practise spelling corrections in their literacy books as part of their response to marked work.
- Where additional spelling support is needed, children work in small groups with an adult to re-inforce spelling patterns, alongside their whole-class word lists.
- Every child has a spelling journal or purple SPAG book where new words are recorded and these words are taken home to be learnt.

Grammar

An understanding of how to use grammar correctly, use relevant meta-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.

What does grammar teaching look like at Eleanor Palmer?

Across the school:

- We start with the basics of sentence construction including full stops and capital letters.
- Children begin to identify word classes early on (noun, verb, adjective and adverb) and use this understanding in their writing.
- We have created 'Grammar Grove' with grammar related characters (Nicky Noun, Anita Adverb...) to hook children into the language of grammar. This is embedded across the school and develops in complexity. *See Appendix 1*
- We follow the 2014 National Curriculum as guidance as to what is taught in each year group and, from this, have devised a specific structure for our school detailing expectations year by year. *See Shared Area.*

Handwriting

We place value on children taking pride and care over their work and handwriting is a key part of this. In the 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 both upper and lower case letters.

What does handwriting look like at Eleanor Palmer?

Across the school:

- We use the Nelson 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 - at least 2 X 15 minutes in Key Stage One and at least once every week in Key Stage Two.
- We use cursive script and encourage children to join their writing as soon as they are forming their letters correctly from Year 2.
- We award handwriting marks out of 10 for every piece of writing (out of 5 at Key Stage 1) so that children are constantly focussed on developing the habit of neat writing.
- Extra handwriting groups occur in classes throughout the school where the class team feel that additional handwriting support is needed.

Assessment

We firmly believe in the power of immediate, personalised feedback, so much marking is done 'pen-in-hand' by teachers during lessons. Being next to a child and having a conversation *in the moment* about their work has far more impact than lengthy written feedback in many instances, so adults create classrooms where this dialogue is possible and powerful. Regular written feedback is still given, following the EP marking policy, after extended pieces of writing.

See Assessment Policy for more information on whole school monitoring and evaluation, tracking and work sampling.

| Reading | |
|---|---|
| Formative Assessment | Summative Assessment |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In Nursery and Reception, children are assessed in their early literacy development against the 'Development Matters' goals.• From Year 1 onwards, teachers regularly set guided group reading targets and related objectives that are shared with children in this context.• Starting in the Reception year, teachers carry out 'Running Records' to assess children's reading levels. The school uses the PM Benchmark books to carry out these assessments.• The support teacher at Key Stage 2 continues to carry out running records using the PM Benchmark system on children if their progress as a reader gives cause for concern. Appropriately levelled books are then provided until a child can make appropriate independent choices. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• At the end of Reception, children are assessed against the EYFS profile and results are shared with parents.• Year 1 take the end of year Phonics test in June.• Children in Year 2 and Year 6 take end of Key Stage national tests that examine a range of reading comprehension skills.• Suffolk Reading tests are carried out across the whole school. Children are tested at the beginning of school year. Tests are diagnostic, providing children with a reading age which takes into account their actual age at the time of testing and a standardised score with '100' being our goal for every child, i.e. their reading is at an age appropriate level. Pupils giving cause for concern are tracked and re-tested in the Spring Term. All pupils are retested in the Summer Term. Full data sets are kept in the Head's Office and analysed against national patterns. |

Writing Assessment

Formative Assessment

- First and foremost, pen-in-hand immediate marking takes place throughout lessons to move children's learning on.
- Children also decide or are given differentiated 'Steps to Success' that they can use to help them reflect on the structure and language features of their own writing.
- At the end of a piece of extended writing, the teacher marks each child's work according to the learning objective. The teacher highlights two sentences in yellow where the child has been successful.
- The teacher then highlights one sentence in green. This may identify where the child needs direction towards improvement using a known technique. Children are given structured time to respond to their feedback and reflect on their learning.
- Years 1-6 take part in *Assessing Primary Writing*, an annual national comparison of writing standards, which feeds into teacher assessment and planning.

Summative Assessment

- Teachers compile examples of unscaffolded, independent writing at regular intervals across the school year.
- Every child meets one-to-one with their teacher each term to conference on their writing next steps.
- Assessment of these writing samples may be used to provide over-arching targets for each child.
- Writing at the end of KS1 and KS2 is teacher assessed. There is no external assessment of composition, however we routinely ask our Local Authority consultant to moderate our levels. As we do termly assessments, these, along with the children's literacy books, help to form a profile for final teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 and 6.
- Suffolk SWIST spelling tests are carried out across the whole school. The assessment format is the same as for the Suffolk Reading test, giving diagnostic evidence of each pupil's spelling age.
- Externally set and assessed Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar ('SPAG') tests takes place in Year 2 and 6.



Appendix 1 - Grammar Grove

GRAMMAR GROVE

At Eleanor Palmer, we have devised a set of characters to help all children to understand the basics of grammar more easily, all beautifully illustrated by past EP parent Kellie Strom. You may well have heard your child talking about these characters at home. This document will help you to learn a little more about Grammar Grove and the characters that your child is learning about. Of course there is much to build on in grammar once the basics (below) are established and progression and complexity then builds through the school. Once rules are learnt, the children will see how to experiment and play with them (even break them!) to make their writing more engaging for their reader!

Grammar Granny

Grammar Granny is the matriarch of Grammar Grove and she loves grammar! When children impress her with their grammar knowledge, she grabs her handbag and says, "Ooh, get you!"

Nicky Noun

Nicky Noun is a toddler who likes pointing at and naming things. Nouns are often called naming words because they name people, places and things. Nouns can be classified in many different ways, for example as common/abstract (boy/love), proper (Spain, Wednesday) countable or non-countable (sausages/water) or collective (a herd/a flock).

Detective Adjective

Detective Adjective uses her magnifying glass to find more details to describe. We sometimes say that adjectives are 'describing words' e.g. the shiny, red ball. However, adverbs describe verbs and other types of words can also be descriptive so we have to be specific and learn that **adjectives describe nouns!**

Victor Verb

Victor Verb is always busy **doing things**. He is very sporty and you might spot him riding on his bike or running! Verbs are doing or being words (He stirred the chocolate mix, The teacher was happy). For a sentence to make sense, it must contain a verb!, Critical learning is how to write in a consistent tense and to make sure the subject and verb agrees (he was, she is, they are etc.).

Aneeta Adverb

Aneeta Adverb is Victor Verb's girlfriend. She **describes how, when or where the verb is performed** (He ran slowly, He moved suddenly, He was outside). We begin with adverbs which describe how a verb is performed - these are often -ly words. In the Juniors, children then learn about adverbial phrases (With her heart beating, she stepped forward).

Chris Conjunction

Chris Conjunction is a joiner by trade! He loves joining two sentences together and extending sentences. There are two main types of conjunction:

- Co-ordinating conjunctions link words or phrases as an equal pair (James bought a bat and a ball).

- Subordinating conjunctions are used when one part of a sentence relies on another for meaning (Joe can't go outside because it's raining).

Princess Pronoun

Princess Pronoun is very self-obsessed! She's all 'me, me, me!' You use pronouns in place of a noun. She, him, they, them are all examples of pronouns.

Preposition Puppy

Preposition puppy is so full of energy! She is always moving under, over and next to things. Prepositions describe locations or directions.

Santa Clause and Subordinate Elf (Clause)

Santa Clause is the main clause in a sentence and Subordinate Elf (Clause) is the subordinate clause in a sentence; they work together. The subordinate clause in a sentence relies on the main clause to make sense, and adds information about the main clause (Deep in the woods, the trees whispered). The main clause in this sentence is The trees whispered and the subordinate clause is deep in the woods.

Mary Mechanic

A key character in Grammar Grove, Mary works hard to check, spot, repair and fix any problems. Missing punctuation? The wrong tense? Mary's on hand to do any vital repairs.

Appendix 2 - Editing Code



EP Editing Code



| | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|--|
| sp | Spelling mistake in this line | <i>Find and correct in green pen</i> |
| C | Capital letter mistake in this line | |
| P | Punctuation mistake in this line | |
| ^ | Word or words missing here | <i>Re-read aloud and correct in green pen.</i> |
| ? | This doesn't make sense! | |
| // | Paragraphs needed. | |
| ✓ | Great word choice | <i>Feel proud!</i> |
| ✓✓ | FANTASTIC word choice! | |

Appendix 3 - Steps to Success

| Steps to Success for <i>Eagle Hunter Narrative</i> | |
|---|--|
| I have... | |
| 1. used precise, ambitious adjectives to describe people and things. | |
| 2. used conjunctions to link ideas and scenes. | |
| 3. used adverbial openers which match the mood and say HOW, WHEN and WHERE action occurs. | |
| My target this time: | |
| Green for growth: | |
| Next Steps: | |

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