

## LEOMINSTER PRIMARY SCHOOL

### ENGLISH POLICY AND GUIDELINES



All children have a statutory entitlement to access the Programmes of Study for English as set out in the National Curriculum. At Leominster Primary School, we strongly believe that children's mastery of the English language and their ability to read, write and communicate verbally, with confidence, enjoyment and proficiency is the cornerstone to success and enjoyment in all other areas of the curriculum, and indeed, their future lives. Our commitment to prioritise these vital life skills is reflected in our timetable, which provides:

For Key Stage 2:

- Daily 1 hour writing lessons following 'The Write Stuff' approach (see below).
- Daily 30-minute reading lessons. 3 of the lessons will be whole class reading, 2 of the lessons will be skills-based with a focus on comprehension tasks.
- 4 short sessions a week dedicated to discreet spelling teaching using the 'Read, Write, Inc' programme and 1 short session a week dedicated to discreet grammar skills.
- 1 short handwriting lesson per week where necessary (less in UKS2 if not required).

For Year 2:

- Daily hourly English lessons (including 1 which focus on Sustained Writing)
- Daily phonics session for all pupils still requiring mastery of the programme, including additional opportunities for developing grammar and punctuation skills (Those pupils who have reached expected levels in phonics will move to a daily spelling session, focusing on their ability to apply skills and knowledge acquired to become fluent readers and increasingly accurate spellers)
- Weekly opportunity to learn and practise handwriting formation
- 5 reading sessions each week, providing each child with the opportunity to work with their teacher in a small group, developing their reading fluency and comprehension
- Daily 'story time' to promote reading for pleasure and to experience 'model reading' by an adult

For Year 1:

- Daily hourly English lessons (including 1 which focus on Sustained Writing)
- Daily phonics session
- Weekly opportunity to learn and practise handwriting formation
- 5 reading sessions each week, providing each child with the opportunity to work with their teacher in a small group, developing their reading fluency and comprehension
- Daily 'story time' to promote reading for pleasure and to experience 'model reading' by an adult

Additionally, intervention programmes are planned for pupils falling behind in the areas of phonics, reading and writing. These are sometimes delivered on a 1:1 basis, or in small, similar-ability groups.

A large proportion of our Inset training has already been dedicated to the guidance of effectively planning, teaching, marking and assessing English in our school.

We highly value the process of self-evaluation to ensure that our procedures are having a positive impact and are continually reviewing and amending our approaches in response to a schedule of lesson observations, pupil work evaluation and feedback meetings with teaching staff.

### DIVERSITY

Our commitment to encourage an appreciation of diversity (eg. racism, disability, gender) will be reflected in our English planning. Each year group will identify one genre unit per year which will aim to promote British values and tolerance.

## **LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

At Leominster Primary School, we insist on our children learning within a language rich environment. Each classroom will contain:

- Attractive reading corners, highlighting significant authors
- An English working wall demonstrating elements of the learning currently taking place, linked to particular genres
- Clear display indicating the spelling, grammar and punctuation foci of the week
- Age appropriate learning prompts (eg. *'sounds' charts, vocabulary, English terminology*)

## **ENGLISH POLICY AND GUIDELINES**

### **READING**

### **PHONICS**

In order to learn how to read easily, fluently and with good understanding, both for pleasure and for information, pupils need to learn how to decode letters and words using phonic knowledge and blending skills, through a systematic and rigorous phonics programme.

At Leominster Primary School, we follow the **Read, Write, Inc** programme to teach and assess phonics. Staff have received training and the required resources. Sessions are delivered each day to smaller groups, based on ability, starting in Reception and continuing until the programme has been completed.

### **INDIVIDUAL READING**

Reading material (largely currently made up of books from the Oxford Reading Tree scheme) is organised into coloured book bands so that we can ensure pupils are reading material of an appropriate level and can monitor progress.

Miscue analysis is used initially to judge pupils' ability to decode text and to select appropriate book levels up to the 'lime' level, then re-assessed every half term to help determine the correct book band for individual reading as well as to identify any pupils requiring intervention.

Children reading books beyond 'lime' will be assessed by their teacher in reading sessions, as the focus will be on their comprehension of the text, rather than decoding skills.

From Year 3 onwards, children move on to the Accelerated Reader programme for reading where their reading level is assessed using the Star Reader quizzes. Children are placed on a reading level and choose books that are appropriate for their fluency and comprehension skills. Once a book has been finished, children take a quiz on that reading material and these results are monitored by the class teacher who will ensure progress through the levels or offer support where appropriate to that individual child.

Children are all encouraged to read their individual reading books regularly at home, preferably with an adult. Younger pupils will also be given regular opportunities to read with an adult at school.

### **WHOLE CLASS READING**

Although many reading skills are modelled and practised throughout the timetable (particularly during English lessons), whole class reading sessions provide the main opportunity to explicitly teach and assess the National Curriculum programmes of study for reading. They ensure that pupils experience high quality interaction with the teacher to enhance and develop their reading skills.

## **ORGANISATION**

The structure of whole class reading will change to meet the needs of the children at every stage of their development. For example, in the earlier stages, more opportunities will be given to practise phonic decoding and blending skills, whereas more advanced readers will move on to more structured discussions and debate with less reading taking place within the session.

### **YEAR 1 and Year 2:**

- Decoding skills will be mostly taught through regular individual reading, supported by the RWI phonics programme
- Whole class guided reading sessions: one session per week to focus on comprehension skills to support the new curriculum  
Differentiated follow-up activities will be completed by the children

### **YEARS 3-6:**

- There will be two types of reading lessons: whole class reading where the class will share a whole book over a number of lessons, and VIPERS skills lessons where reading skills will be explicitly taught and practiced.
- Whole class reading: Reading comprehension relies heavily on background knowledge and vocabulary. Our aim is to make it more likely that a child will understand the next book they read. Therefore, reading lessons will focus on what will transfer from the current text to the next text (e.g. character traits). Classes will study whole books, with a focus on high quality reading modelling from the teacher, discussion and questioning. Teachers will explain settings, characters, plots and themes to children and then question them to see what they remember. We will use 'The Literacy Shed +' to resource and support these lessons.
- VIPERS skills-based lessons: VIPERS is an acronym to aid the recall of the 6 reading domains as part of the UK's reading curriculum. They are the key areas which we feel children need to know and understand in order to improve their comprehension of texts. VIPERS stands for  
**V**ocabulary  
**I**nference  
**P**rediction  
**E**xplanation  
**R**etrieval  
**S**equence or **S**ummarise  
The 6 domains focus on the comprehension aspect of reading and not the mechanics: decoding, fluency, prosody etc. As such, VIPERS is not a reading scheme but rather a method of ensuring that teachers ask, and students are familiar with, a range of questions. They allow the teacher to track the type of questions asked and the children's responses to these which allows for targeted questioning afterwards.
- Each lesson might focus on a skill, or it may focus on a range of skills depending on what the teacher has assessed that the class need. As well as developing the skills required, these lessons will also give children an opportunity to see and practice giving answers more formally, e.g. writing answers, tick boxes, ordering events etc.
- We will use 'The Literacy Shed +' to resource these lessons.

## **ASSESSMENT (READING/PHONICS)**

- Dated records will state which End of Year Objective(s) (EYOs) are being covered/assessed and will include relevant comments about the group and individual pupils to inform future teaching and end of term assessment

- At the end of each term, the LPS reading assessment grid should be highlighted to reflect the percentage of EYOs each child has achieved. These results will be discussed in termly pupil progress meetings. (Grids in 'Common Staff')
- Regular review and assessment of each pupil's 'book band' colour through miscue analysis and reading sessions
- Phonics will be assessed using the 'Read, Write, Inc' material and the Year 1 phonics screening check.
- If using the Accelerated Reader programme, teachers should be regularly checking the online reports for their class to establish which children are ready to progress to the next reading level and which children need more support with the comprehension of what has been read. A score of 80% would demonstrate that the child has a good understanding of the story.
- STAR reading tests should be completed half termly and these will show the child's reading age and the progress they have made over the half term. This data will also allow staff to ensure that their children are being appropriately challenged.

### **INTERVENTION (PHONICS)**

The Read, Write, Inc programme provides a rigorous assessment process, which is repeated regularly and highlights any pupils requiring 1:1 tutoring, as well as providing opportunities to review and amend groupings. Any children who still do not pass the national phonics test at the end of Year 2 will continue to work on the appropriate section(s) of the RWI programme, during an additional daily intervention session, with a trained member of staff.

### **ENGAGING PARENTS AND CARERS**

The English Co-ordinators and Assistant Heads will invite parents to regular workshops focusing on different elements of English, sharing the school's priorities and approaches to English and offering suggestions for how they can best support their children's learning at home.

We ask that parents/carers listen to their children read aloud from their school reading book during the evenings of Monday to Thursday, encouraging their enjoyment and understanding of the texts. Pupils (or adults, if appropriate) should record their home reading in a provided reading diary – this should be taken home each evening and returned to school each day, along with their reading book.

We also ask that parents/carers share a book of their child's choice over the weekend – this book could be selected from home or school, or elsewhere (eg. library).

### **ENGLISH POLICY AND GUIDELINES**

#### **WRITING**

At Leominster Primary School, we teach the skills of writing through sharing a range of high quality written text with the children and exploring its language and structure in depth, the knowledge and understanding of which is used to inspire and direct the children's own writing. Children will have regular opportunities to write with at least three book entries a week.

As of January 2022, we will be starting to embed the teaching of writing through The Write Stuff programme of study.

#### **PLANNING**

The English curriculum is organised through the vehicle of genres/text types so that our pupils are very clear about the language skills they are learning and developing.

## **OVERVIEW**

The LPS 'genre overview' (in 'Common Staff') lays out the expectations of writing to be produced by each year group within each genre type. It offers a suggested time guide for each genre unit but this is flexible and time has been allowed for creative opportunities outside of the main structure (eg. writing competitions/current 'awe-inspiring' events/etc).

## **GENRE UNIT PLANNING (1)**

There is a blank format (in 'Common Staff') which should be completed by year groups/teachers and saved onto Common Staff. Elements to be included on unit plans include:

### **LEARNING OBJECTIVE**

It is crucial that all participants of any lesson are clear about what is being **learnt** in each session. (As opposed to what is being **done**.)

The learning objective of each English lesson must be displayed consistently on each IWB page during the lesson and will often be transferred to the class working wall to demonstrate learning progression.

At the beginning of the lesson, teachers must share and fully discuss the learning objective and its vocabulary. The learning objective should then be frequently revisited and understanding of it checked throughout the session.

### **SUCCESS CRITERIA**

Teachers should provide the children with 3 success criteria for each learning objective, during English lessons. These will indicate what the children will need to do or include, to demonstrate their fulfilment of the learning objective.

These should be discussed and modelled at the beginning of the lesson, then referred to throughout the lesson, giving opportunities for the pupils to self-evaluate.

### **PITCH/DIFFERENTIATION**

Independent activities should be provided, which match the pupils' abilities. Provision should be made for the following groups:

- 'Age appropriate focus' for those children who are able to achieve the main LO
- 'Bridging focus' for those children who require support (eg. through adult guidance, extra resources or adapted activity)
- 'Enhancement focus' for children who are already capable of the main LO before input, and should be offered the opportunity to extend their knowledge, skills or understanding (eg. through additional adult input, extended or adapted activity)

### **FOCUS GROUP(S)**

The teacher (and any additional adults) should always focus on working with a particular group, during English lessons, so that the specific needs of children in the class can be met, and specific areas developed, in smaller group situations. The groupings will often be determined during the lesson, through elicitation of pupils' understanding. The plan should specify the focus group(s) and adult(s).

### **PUNCTUATION/GRAMMAR FOCUS**

Although there are opportunities to discreetly discuss and explore the use and terminology of punctuation and grammar (see below), it is important that pupils are able to identify their use and effectiveness in the context of a 'real text'.

It is also important for the teacher to model the writing process, including the use of any punctuation or grammar which is being focused on.

There will always be a weekly punctuation or grammar focus identified in each class, which may be referred to in this section but it could also introduce a new element, or revise one previously covered.

Vocabulary use may also be focused on in this section.

## **CROSS-CURRICULAR WRITING**

Some of the genre units have been consciously placed alongside topics which support opportunities for cross-curricular learning and meaningful audiences and purposes.

However, in addition, we do expect all pupils to produce cross-curricular writing each half term so that we can monitor their ability to apply knowledge and understanding gained during English lessons, in other subjects and situations.

## **SPELLING/GRAMMAR/PUNCTUATION/HANDWRITING**

Once the RWI phonics programme has been completed, children will begin to work from the 'RWI' scheme, which provides teachers with a tool for meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum, ensuring consistent coverage and progression. In KS2, 4 weekly sessions of 15 minutes of the timetable will be spent on revising, teaching, learning, practising, applying and assessing spelling strategies, knowledge and skills.

Effective learning of grammar and punctuation conventions is largely gained through exploration in context and this is provided regularly during English lessons, which specify grammar/punctuation foci, as well as during guided reading sessions. However, we also value the opportunity to explore these skills and terminology discreetly, through 1 to 2 short, succinct sessions each week, displaying and sharing the weekly focus with the children.

## **ENGLISH POLICY AND GUIDELINES**

### **MARKING AND FEEDBACK**

At Leominster Primary School, we believe that our pupils' efforts should be valued and rewarded. This is partly achieved through the knowledge that their work will regularly and promptly be carefully considered, in terms of what has been achieved along with clear guidance as to how their learning can be reinforced or further developed, and that this will be communicated clearly back to them.

In line with our commitment to clarity of learning, feedback will be led by the Learning Objective of the lesson and, in particular, the children's understanding of the success criteria which have been set, or by progress made in terms of the pupils' individual targets. It is vital that the children are fully aware of the criteria their work will be marked against and this should always be made clear throughout the lesson.

Crucially, pupils will be given regular opportunities, and will be expected, to reflect upon, to respond to and act upon feedback given.

It is important that our policy and practice remain focused on the purpose and the desired outcomes of effective feedback, which are:

- To highlight and celebrate success
- To generate improvement
- To model and guide pupils towards self-evaluation
- To identify and tackle misconceptions
- To identify and support next steps in learning
- To establish high expectations
- To give pupils opportunities to act upon feedback
- To allow the pupils a chance to re-try or demonstrate their level of understanding

- To motivate pupils to strive to reach their full potential
- To raise children's own awareness of their strengths and areas for development

## **MARKING SUMMARY (ENGLISH)**

- Teachers should always mark using red ink.
- Teachers and TAs should indicate in pupils' books when support has been given, which compromises the work as 'independent', with a circled S.
- Pupils should always self-correct and edit in green.
- Redrafting will often be focused on parts of a whole text and can be written in pencil/pen.

### **Marking 'English lessons':**

- Pink highlighter to show example of where success criteria have been met. (1 example of each is adequate.)
- Yellow highlighter to show errors for the children to self-correct. In year 1, this will be accompanied by an 'error type' symbol (see symbols suggestions).  
From Year 2 onwards, the error symbols will not be used as staff move to encourage children to become more independent at identifying their own errors. Staff may decide that for some pupils (eg SEN) the symbols are helpful and they may still be used.

### **Comments**

- The pink highlighting will be a very visual way of establishing whether the LO has been met. Therefore, there is no need to write 'LO met' at the end of the piece of work.
- If LO not met:  
Indicate with an arrow '→' followed by a scaffold or example prompt (linked to reason LO has not been met).

### **Marking 'In genre' pieces:**

- Pink highlighter will be used to evidence examples of:
  - **End of year objectives** that have been chosen because they are the most appropriate for that genre
  - **One personalised target** (*in KS1 only*)

These targets will be decided before the children start writing and will be shared with them.

- There will be NO yellow highlighter – children will self-correct in green pen. However, depending on age and ability, staff may decide that the yellow highlighting and marking symbols are more appropriate.
- It is expected that teachers will be monitoring the children's writing as they progress through the final piece so as to establish the most appropriate and beneficial whole class feedback. There is no expectation that teacher comments will be written in the middle of the piece as this can interfere with the flow of the work, but staff should be making notes on either the 'Whole Class Feedback' sheet and/or saving their feedback/editing lessons/flipcharts and these should be available if they are asked for.

Children's books should show evidence of editing throughout the final write which reflects the whole class feedback they have received. Children should also be given the opportunity at the end of their writing to edit/redraft their work with the targets and 'non-negotiables' such as full stops, capital letters, etc in mind.

- At the end of the genre piece, teachers will 'tick' off which of the EYO targets have been met and, in KS1, decide whether the personalised target needs to be carried on to the next piece. This will be shared with the children through the tick sheet.
- Assessment sheets will be stuck in the front of English books or stored in folders and evidence can be ticked off against each EYO at the end of each piece of writing so as to build a picture up over time of children's strengths and areas of development.

## **CROSS-CURRICULAR WRITING**

- Focus and comments to be based on subject matter and features of the relevant genre.
- Use of pink highlighters for examples of the features checklist.
- No yellow highlighters for self-corrections – children will be responsible for self-editing.

## **ENGLISH POLICY AND GUIDELINES**

### **SPEAKING AND LISTENING**

At Leominster Primary School, we recognise and value the emphasis placed on the skills of 'Speaking and Listening' in the English Curriculum, understanding the huge advantages to be gained from learning to become articulate and confident verbal communicators.

Through the teaching of all subjects, we recognise the significance of pupils having the opportunity to discuss their thoughts and ideas with one another, in order to clarify and enhance their learning, giving pupils frequent opportunities to offer ideas to the class/group or to verbalise their thoughts to a 'talk partner'.

In English lessons, when studying genres of writing, pupils often have opportunities to tackle learning objectives specific to the skills of speaking and listening (eg. performing poetry).

When they are writing, we also encourage children to habitually 'try out', amend and rehearse their sentences aloud before writing them down, then to read them aloud when checking for accuracy.

Reading sessions also offer excellent, regular opportunities for the children to engage in high quality discussions, both in a small group with the teacher, and independently with one another.

This policy will be reviewed regularly.

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