

## English Vision Statement

English plays an important role in both education and in society as a whole. At Homer First we believe that understanding language helps all pupils to access the whole curriculum. Through being taught to write and speak fluently, pupils learn to communicate their ideas and emotions to others; through their reading and listening, others can respond and communicate back. Reading allows pupils the chance to develop culturally, emotionally, spiritually and socially. Through reading a wide variety of texts pupils acquire new knowledge and build on what they already know. In order to participate fully as a member of society, all the skills of language are essential.

At Homer First School we aim to:

- Promote high standards of literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the written and spoken word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.
- Ensure that all pupils read easily, fluently and with good understanding of the text.
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information.
- Ensure that all children acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.
- Encourage children to appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage.
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.
- Use discussion in order to learn; children should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas.
- Become competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

### The English Curriculum - Reading at Homer First School

At Homer we aim to foster a love of language and reading and, therefore, attach great importance to enabling our children to become fluent readers.

Phonics is taught through a highly structured programme (Little Wandle- Letters and Sounds Revised) of daily lessons across FS/KS1 using a variety of fun activities. For further information, please refer to our Phonics information on the school website.

Guided reading and individual reading sessions take place in Year R and there is a focus on segmenting and blending skills during adult led and child led activities.

In KS1 children enjoy a story time on a daily basis, giving them the opportunity to hear the written word being read aloud to them. In addition to this guided reading sessions occur at least twice weekly. Those children at risk of falling behind also read individually to an adult.

In KS2 children will experience a wide range of authors and text types and will regularly hear books being read to them. Independent reading takes place on a daily basis to encourage a love of books and reading for pleasure. Children are encouraged to talk about their favourite authors and recommend stories to others. Whole class reading sessions cover all the key skills of vocabulary, inference, prediction, explanation, retrieval and summarising as well as overall comprehension of a text. Those children at risk of falling behind also read individually to an adult.

All children are expected to read independently or to an adult on a regular basis and their progress is tracked through their reading record book. Children's achievements in reading are celebrated regularly with stickers and small prizes given.

The school uses a range of reading schemes to help emerging fluent readers, some of which are used for Guided Reading and others being available for children to choose to take home at an appropriate level. When children are confident and fluent they are encouraged to choose from a range of high quality texts and to regularly to change their books. For those who find reading more of a challenge we follow a range of interventions including small group work.

### The English Curriculum – Writing, Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar at Homer First School

Children are encouraged to use their knowledge of texts to write for a variety of purposes and wherever possible to publish them for a selected audience using a range of writing forms such as: explanations, instructions, balanced arguments, stories and poems.

They learn to plan, draft, revise, edit and present their work, using the Talk for Writing approach, before evaluating the success of their writing.

In KS2 grammar and punctuation is taught to match the writing purpose, with children developing their understanding of technical terms to be able to discuss and justify the choices they include when structuring their ideas.

Handwriting is very important at Homer First School, children are taught to write in a neat, legible style, using a cursive script from Year 2 onwards. Handwriting sessions take place at least twice weekly basis with the focus on correct pencil grip; forming all letters correctly by knowing the size and orientation of each letter; clear and neat presentation and increasing fluency and speed of writing.

Spelling strategies are taught and tested throughout KS1 and KS2 and children are encouraged to use these in their independent writing. Children also regularly use dictionaries and thesaurus to check and improve their work.

Drama and speaking and listening are an integral part of not only English but also the wider curriculum at Homer First in order to encourage self-confidence, imagination and empathy. It is used to stimulate, explore and challenge ideas. Communication is a key feature of many aspects of our curriculum.

### Planning for the English Curriculum

English learning is linked to topics when appropriate. Planning highlights the skills the children need to acquire each year.

- Long term plans map out the units to be covered each term, during each Key Stage.
- Medium term plans identify learning objectives and outcomes for each unit, as well as indicating the skills being taught, and making links to other curriculum areas.
- Short term plans prepared by each teacher, highlight the skills and objectives of the lesson, and identify resources and appropriate differentiation and assess.

### Assessment and Monitoring

Teachers assess children against clear learning objectives and success criteria. Children are encouraged to self, and peer assess throughout each unit. The subject leader is responsible for monitoring attainment and progress, the outcomes of which are collated in the subject leadership folder and fed back to staff at an appropriate time. Teaching and learning is monitored in line with School Improvement Plan.