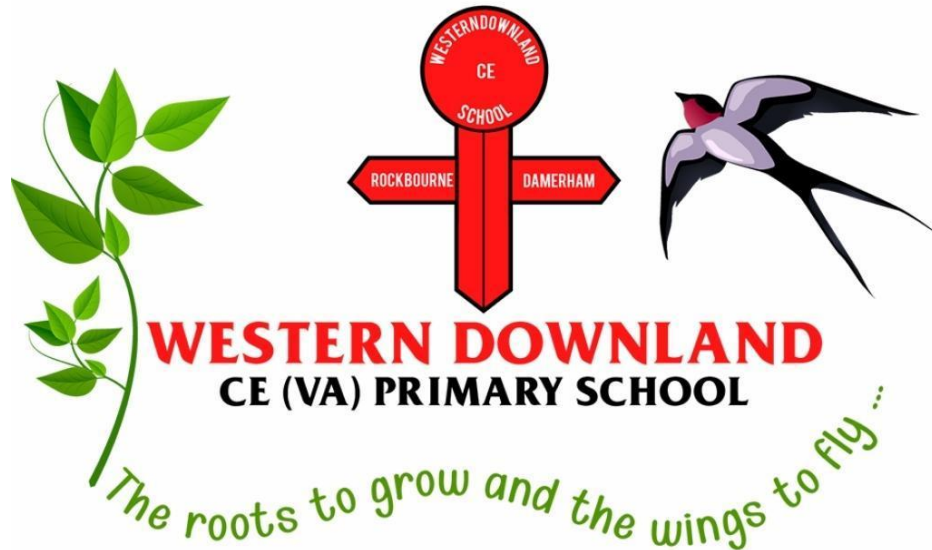


WESTERN DOWNLAND C. of E. (V.A.) PRIMARY SCHOOL

In partnership with parents we aim to provide:

'The roots to grow and the wings to fly'



English Policy

Western Downland CE (VA) Primary School

Reviewed

September 2025

Next Review

July 2027

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES PROFORMA

Subject and Version of Document:	English 2025
Author:	James Gilbert and Samantha Kirkcaldy
Persons/Committees etc consulted whilst	

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Amendments Summary:

Amend No	Issued	Page	Subject

Western Downland CE (VA) Primary School

English Policy

1. AIMS

At our school, we believe that English is the foundation of all learning and essential for children to succeed in life. Our intent is to develop confident, self-assured, and articulate learners who can communicate their thoughts, ideas, and emotions effectively through spoken and written word.

We teach English through key literary and linguistic concepts such as **figurative language, characterisation, and setting**, enabling children to understand how language choices create meaning and impact an audience. Through this, pupils learn to write purposefully, read with fluency and understanding, and speak with confidence.

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We aim for all children to:

- Become fluent, enthusiastic readers who develop a lifelong love of reading.
- Understand, enjoy, and interpret a wide range of high-quality and diverse texts.
- Write clearly, imaginatively, and effectively, making deliberate language choices to create impact and meaning.
- Develop strong speaking and listening skills, enabling them to articulate their thoughts, feelings, and ideas with clarity and respect.
- Access the written word through inclusive teaching approaches, adapted texts, and effective use of technology.
- Recognise how language reflects and shapes identity, culture, and values, enabling them to appreciate diversity.
- Leave primary school with secure literacy skills that prepare them for the next stage of education and for life beyond school

2. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

In the Foundation Stage:

Children's learning and competence in communicating, speaking and listening, understanding, being read to, and beginning to read and write must be supported and extended. They are provided with opportunity and encouragement to use their skills in a range of situations, a range of purposes and be supported in developing the confidence and disposition to do so independently.

Statutory requirements are laid out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE September 2025).

Key Stage 1 and 2:

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum in English Framework Document (DfE September 2014) and in the English Programme of Study: Key Stages 1 and 2 National Curriculum in England (DfE September 2014).

3. THE GOVERNING BODY

Regular reports are made to the Governors on the progress of English provision and to our English Governor.

4. SUBJECT ORGANISATION

In Reception Class, the Early learning Goals are followed to ensure continuity and progression from the Foundation Stage through to the Key Stage 1. Literacy is encouraged and developed across the curriculum. Pupil provision is related to attainment, not age and clear objectives are set for each session and are shared with pupils. Teachers differentiate according to the needs of the pupils and use intervention programmes for targeted support. They work towards independent learning and plan for different working groups e.g. whole class/small group/ paired/individual. Teachers employ a range of generic teaching strategies based on principles underpinning literacy teaching, these include:

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- Instruction/direction
- Modelling/demonstrating/scribing
- Explaining
- Questioning
- Discussing
- Consolidating
- Assessment
- Evaluating
- Summarising

APPROACHES TO SPEAKING AND LISTENING

At Western Downland the four Strands of Speaking and Listening: Speaking; Listening; Group Discussion and Interaction, and Drama permeate 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 value providing opportunities for children to perform plays, stories and poetry to each other across the key stages. This encourages children to develop their confidence when speaking to an audience.

APPROACHES TO READING

- **Little Foresters**, use the Little Wandle, foundations for a love of reading plan and recommended books to support, understanding of verbs and nouns, connection with books, bringing the language to life and participation in repeated refrains in order to support a love of reading.
- **Phonics**: Systematic, synthetic phonics are taught daily in Reception Class and KS1, following the Little Wandle programme
- **Decoding, Prosody and comprehension**. Children in Reception Class and KS1 follow the Little Wandle 'three read approach' to foster fluency, expression and comprehension, in differentiated small groups, guided by a Little Wandle trained adult: Session 1, decoding, Session 2, prosody, Session 3, Comprehension.
- **Reading for Pleasure**: Each classroom promotes a reading-rich environment with access to a wide range of texts. Teachers act as reading role models, sharing and recommending books.
- **Comprehension**: Whole-class guided reading and focused comprehension tasks develop children's inference, retrieval, summarising, prediction, and critical thinking skills. Children also develop and consolidate their knowledge and understanding through whole class, small group or individual guided reading sessions. These sessions are tailored to the needs and requirements of individuals with clear learning outcomes.

APPROACHES TO PHONICS AND SPELLING

To ensure continuity in Progression of skills across the Foundation Stage and the Key Stages, the school follows the Little Wandle programme until Year 3. From Year 3, teachers use the Western Downland spelling progression to guide their teaching.

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- Little Foresters follow the Little Wandle Foundation weekly lessons to support development of sound discrimination skills eg: alliteration, rhyme and oral blending.
- Reception Class and Key Stage 1 teach discrete phonics/spelling daily. Each session lasts for 20 minutes.
- Key Stage 2 teach spellings at least twice weekly. Each session lasts for 20 minutes.
- Spellings and Phonics are reinforced throughout topic work and other areas of the curriculum.

APPROACHES TO WRITING

In the Foundation Stage, children develop their fine and gross motor skills through play and adult-led activities. They are encouraged to explore mark making through play-centred emergent writing until they are ready to learn formal handwriting patterns.

- Writing is taught through the **'Opening Doors to Writing'** approach, which provides ambitious stimuli and models for children to imitate, innovate, and invent their own writing.
- Pupils are taught to write for a range of **audiences and purposes**, including narrative, persuasive, informative, and poetic texts.
- A strong emphasis is placed on **vocabulary enrichment**, grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- We use the Collins Happy Handwriting scheme of learning from Reception Class to Year 4. This begins with a non-cursive approach, developing into cursive in Year 2. In the Upper Key Stage, handwriting is consolidated and intervention given as required.
- Drafting, editing, and redrafting are taught and embedded to build resilience and independence as writers. Children are taught to systematically edit by focusing on spelling, then punctuation, followed by cohesion as a process to refining their writing. Children are provided with feedback grids in order to remind them of the process they need to go through when editing.

INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY

- We are committed to ensuring all pupils can access the English curriculum.
- Adaptations are made through differentiated resources, scaffolding, pre-teaching, use of technology, and personalised support.
- A diverse range of authors, characters, and contexts are used to ensure representation and promote equality, diversity, and inclusion.

LITERACY

By the end of Reception, children will have enthusiasm for reading and writing. They will have developed the basic skills and knowledge to become a fluent reader and independent writer, understanding that text carries meaning and is used for a range of purposes. They will be exposed to and begin to recognise a range of genres.

Aspirational goals:

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- To select and read a book of their choice to a Little Forester.
- To write a letter to their new Acorn Buddy introducing themselves.
- To write a seaside story to present to parents.

COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE

By the end of Reception, children will listen carefully in a range of situations. They will understand and follow instructions in several steps. They will have the confidence to present their ideas to others. They will be articulate in explaining their thinking, feelings, describing events and asking questions. Children will be exposed to and encouraged to use an adventurous and technical vocabulary.

Aspirational goals:

- To confidently take part in a class presentation; sharing experiences from their seaside topic.

5. BREADTH OF STUDY

From EYFS to the end of KS2, through careful planning and preparation, we aim to ensure that, throughout the school, children are given opportunities to read, explore and write in a wide variety of genre for a variety of audiences.

Reading: a wide range of quality texts are used – fiction, non-fiction and poetry.

Writing: a wide range of quality texts are as 'text drivers' following the Hampshire Learning Journey model - stimulate and generate; capture, sift and sort; create, refine, evaluate.

Speaking and listening is an integral part of all subjects.

Key vocabulary is taught in each subject developing a broad vocabulary covering many topics.

6. PARENTAL/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

We value parent/carers involvement in children's development of literacy and promote a home school partnership in the following ways:

- sharing information – newsletters, parents' leaflets, reading diaries;
- celebrations – assemblies, school performances, displays, book fairs;
- home learning - in line with our homework policy and home/school agreement.

7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

English is monitored by the English Subject Leaders and all class teachers. Having identified priorities, the English Subject Leaders construct an action plan that forms part of the School Development Plan. This forms the basis for any monitoring activities and will clearly identify when, who and what is to be monitored and how

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this will take place e.g. lesson visits and learning walks, work scrutinies and moderation, pupil voice and surveys on attitudes to reading and writing, analysis of assessment data to identify strengths, gaps, and next steps.

8. ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING

Assessments are made in line with the school assessment policy. Teachers report to parents twice a year at parents' evenings and in the annual report to parents. Children are assessed on entering the school using the Reception Baseline assessment. They are formally assessed at the end of the Foundation Stage and each key stage. NFER tests are used in years 1, 3, 4 and 5 as a form of summative assessment with SATS assessments in year 2 and 6. Children working below ARE are tracked termly using Hampshire Fluency Tests and Vernon Spelling Test (Year 3-6). Reading and writing levels are put into Insight three times a year and this data is then analysed and targets are set and tracked. Teachers use assessment for learning to ensure planning is based on prior attainment and that pupils know what they need to do to achieve the next steps. Group or individual targets are set accordingly. Marking is in line with the school marking and feedback policy. Teachers keep individual records and these include a reading record and any other information that enables the teacher to deliver an effective, relevant curriculum which builds on prior attainment and meets the needs of pupils.

9. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The English Subject Leaders and all class teachers are expected to keep up to date with subject knowledge and use current materials that are available in school or on the DfE website. Training needs are identified as a result of whole school monitoring and evaluation, performance management and through induction programmes. These will be reflected in the School Improvement Plan which includes the English Action Plan.

10. RESOURCES

Every class has access to resources for English such as dictionaries, thesauruses and reading books in their class library area. The school libraries contain a range of up-to-date fiction and non-fiction books. Guided reading books are kept in classrooms and some of these books are banded according to the PM benchmarking, 'Book Bands'. Children in Reception Class and KS1 (and in KS2 where appropriate) are provided with correctly levelled Little Wandle books (according to assessment for learning). These are shared with families in the form of e-books. The school subscribes to the School Library Services and Subject Leaders use this service to ensure up to date literature is available. These strategies provide the opportunity for children to borrow books and read them at home. Enrichment events may be organised including storytellers, authors and theatre groups

11. INCLUSION

We aim to provide opportunities for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment through quality first teaching and intervention programmes. Children working at Greater Depth will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided. Additional adults are used to

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support the teaching of English. They work under the guidance of the teacher with small groups of children or individuals. Where identified some pupils are considered to require targeted support to enable them to work to age appropriate objectives. Intervention strategies include the use of Child friendly individual Education Plans (EHCPs), TA support, support programmes and precision teaching.

The needs of children with English as an additional language will be met through planning and support. This is supported by our Equal Opportunities Policy.

12. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

Teaching and Learning Policy

Assessment and Record Keeping

Responding to pupils' work / Feedback / Marking policy

Special Educational Needs Policy

Computing Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Members of staff responsible: James Gilbert and Samantha Kirkcaldy

Date policy updated: September 2025

Date to be reviewed: July 2027