**Tacolneston and Morley CE VA Primary School Federation**

**English Curriculum Statement**

English is the foundation of all learning. Our mission is to deliver a high quality English curriculum that gives children the best possible opportunities to become confident, literate, successful members of society with a deep love and understanding of English language and literature. We strive to engage children in creative, high quality learning experiences and have high expectations for all children to achieve and enjoy learning, providing them with the confidence to communicate effectively in both speech and writing.

Early Years Foundation Stage

Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations. Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest. Mark-making materials are widely accessible for the children to use during purposeful play and learning experiences.

**Our aims for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are that they;**

* Become articulate and confident children who can generate demonstrate understanding and explain their ideas in a variety of ways.
* Listen and respond with relevant actions, comments or questions.
* Use their phonic knowledge to decode regular words and some common irregular words in order to read and understand simple sentences.
* Hold a pencil correctly to write simple words and sentences which can be read by themselves and others.

Spoken Language

We believe the development of spoken language is an essential tool for all areas of the curriculum, as talk underpins learning and thinking.  The ability to speak and listen is fundamental to our children’s language and social development.  The use of the ‘Talking Partners’ strategy encourages higher-quality talk between our children. They are given time to respond to the teacher’s questions by talking their responses through with one of their peers. We use ‘Talk Boost’ as an effective intervention for our younger children who need more support with the development of their communication skills.

Reading

We foster a positive reading culture through the use of varied, rich and inspirational texts to encourage a life-long love of reading.

**We aim to develop a love of reading by**:

* Providing opportunities for children to share their own reading choices with their peers.
* Regularly sharing a range of texts with the children including those from our literacy heritage which children may not be familiar with.
* Small group guided reading sessions - challenging pupils to read a wide range of texts.
* Building in time to explore stories further through drama and role-play activities so that children can use the structure of the text to create their own versions.
* Encouraging parents and relatives to join us regularly for reading sessions or learning cafes and to engage in reading activities with their children at home.
* Relating taught aspects of the curriculum, such as grammar and punctuation, to real books.
* Providing different opportunities for the children to engage with books such as: author visits, book week activities, performances based upon specific texts, theatre trips and visits to local libraries.
* Teaching children how to use the school library to borrow books and empowering our older children to take responsibility for the library: changing books for younger children, creating displays and organising activities and competitions relating to the authors they enjoy reading.
* Inspiring our children to deepen their understanding of a topic through their own reading by providing intriguing and thought-provoking experiences in other subject areas to act as a spring-board.
* Providing additional support for reading for those who need it though the use of interventions such as Reading Recovery.

Writing

Every child is encouraged to see themselves a writer - becoming more critical and reflective of their own work and making informed decisions in editing and improving their work.

**We aim to develop confidence and a love of writing by:**

* Supporting the children in the development of their handwriting and presentation skills using the Nelson Handwriting scheme.
* Encouraging discussion around writing.
* Developing children's understanding of the spoken word and their ability to express themselves while developing the necessary skills to listen and respond to others.
* Ensuring children can write in a range of contexts - adapting their language and style for different purposes and audiences.
* Extending pupils vocabulary, understanding of grammar and knowledge of how language is structured for different purposes.

Phonics and Spelling

Children begin their learning of literacy through the synthetic phonics approach based on the Letters and Sounds curriculum. It aims to build children's speaking and listening skills in their own right as well as to prepare children for learning to read and write by developing their phonic knowledge and skills. Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are taught Phonics daily.

**We aim to develop children’s phonic knowledge by;**

* Teaching the children the letter sounds. This includes alphabet sounds as well as digraphs such as sh, th, ai and ue and alternative spellings and pronunciations of of these graphemes.
* Using different multi-sensory methods, children learn how to form and write the letters.
* Teaching children how to blend the sounds together to read and write new words.
* Teaching children how to segment sounds as Listening for the sounds in words gives children the best start for improving spelling.
* Developing the children’s knowledge of ’Tricky’ words which have irregular spellings.
* Developing their understanding of less common spelling rules and the rules for adding prefixes and suffixes.
* Continuing the teaching of phonics into Key Stage 2 for those who need it, through the use of structured intervention programmes such as Sound Discovery.

Pupils are asked to learn a list of spellings, at home each week, taken from Appendix 1 of the English National Curriculum (2014) and are tested in class. In Years 1 and 2 children are expected to learn a list of 100 common exception words which are words that they frequently use in their writing and are spelt using less common representations of the phonemes they contain. The word-lists for Years 3 – 6 are statutory and are a mixture of words pupils frequently use in their writing and words they commonly misspell.

Year 6 Leavers

**Our aim for children leaving our school at the end of Year 6 is that they:**

* Enjoy reading for pleasure and have a hunger for widening their knowledge and understanding of the world through factual texts, biography and fiction.
* Are able to discuss and explain their ideas about what they have read.
* Are confident writers, seeing themselves as authors - enjoying creating text and having the confidence to redraft and refine their own writing for content, grammar and punctuation.