



Literacy Policy

October 2026

Version 4.3

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1 Aims

1.1 The teaching of language in Sonning Common Primary School endeavours to:

- *Encourage a love of books and the enjoyment of reading, both as an individual and a social skill.*
- *Encourage the development of critical appreciation of a full range of different reading material in relation to genre, purpose and audience.*
- *Encourage enjoyment of the use of spoken language.*
- *Encourage the development of critical thought through discussion and response to language in a variety of media.*
- *Encourage pupils to articulate their thoughts and to listen to those of other.*
- *Encourage the desire to express feelings, use imagination and communicate ideas through writing.*

2 Reading

2.1 It is agreed classroom practice to include the following in the teaching of reading:

- *that reading is established as a worthwhile experience.*
- *that there are different strategies offered for helping pupils to read and these may include: phonics, word recognition, picture clues, prediction and context*
- *teachers use Read Write Inc to teach letter sounds, shapes and the ability to decode, read fluently and comprehend*
- *once children can read fluently they move onto the Grammarsaurus Comprehension Crusher programme, to continue to develop their reading skills*
- *that reading comprehension is taught explicitly in KS2 classrooms, where texts of different genres are read in different ways (teacher-led, echo reading, partner reading, timed reading) and studied in depth.*
- *that there is a range of different styles of texts which pupils should hear and read, including Media and ICT texts and texts from a variety of cultures and traditions.*
- *that pupils are encouraged to develop preferences in their choice of books and to investigate the layers of meaning and to make a critical response to what they read.*
- *that the links between reading and writing are recognised and encouraged.*
- *that reading for information is reinforced in other subjects.*
- *pupils are taught how to use the community library on site.*
- *pupils are given an appropriate reading books by the class teacher using phonics readers and book-banded books until they are sufficiently proficient to be a 'free reader' and choose their own books.*
- *pupils are expected to listen to the class reading book on a regular basis and to discuss the plot, the characters and the ideas in the book.*
- *pupils extend their referencing skills by working with non-fiction books, dictionaries, encyclopaedias and the internet.*

3 Writing

3.1 It is agreed classroom practice to include the following in the teaching of writing:

- *teaching of writing is done using the Read Write Inc programme in the Early Years, and a combination of Literacy Shed + and RWI Literacy & Language from Year 2 onwards, plus Big Write, topic writing and through other curriculum areas*
- *that writing is established as a worthwhile and enjoyable activity.*
- *children have experience of writing in a variety of forms: narrative, poetry, letters, play scripts, journals, notes, labels, instructions, posters, diagrams.*
- *pupils learn to choose the form and content of their writing to suit purpose and audience.*
- *pupils have a variety of aids to writing available to them - word books, dictionaries, word banks, wall displays and thesauruses.*
- *pupils use planning and re-drafting to improve and develop content, style and accuracy of writing.*
- *pupils are given opportunities to discuss and respond critically to their own and other pupils' writing, analyse strengths and weaknesses and make improvements at a formative stage.*
- *pupils are encouraged to write with commitment and vitality and develop independent, distinctive and original styles.*
- *use of correct grammar terminology is taught and encouraged.*
- *general organisation of writing and punctuation is addressed frequently both with individuals and in class work.*
- *pupils' progress in writing is supported by the appropriate use of success criteria and writing targets.*
- *pupils are reminded how to use the main rules and conventions of written English.*
- *pupils have opportunities to compose both on paper and computer screen using different formats and layout to present work.*
- *Pupils are taught how to use self and peer assessment to improve their own and others' work.*
- *pupils are encouraged to write for a range of purposes: to communicate to others, create imaginary worlds, explore and describe experience, organise and explain information, imagine and explore feelings and ideas, use language creatively to engage the reader, explain and inform the reader and to persuade.*

4 Spelling

4.1 It is agreed classroom practice to include the following in the teaching of spelling:

- *phonological knowledge is taught through the Read Write Inc programme and the teaching of spelling utilises the Spelling Shed curriculum*
- *common words and banks of topic words will be made familiar by displaying them on the walls in the classroom*
- *pupils are taught the names and sounds of letters and letter strings, using the Read Write Inc programme*
- *pupils learn and practise the alphabet*
- *letter strings are practised verbally and in handwriting practice using words from the agreed programmes*

- *regular use of dictionaries and thesauruses is encouraged*
- *Pupils study the relevance of word origins, families and root words*
- *during the writing process, pupils are encouraged to attempt to spell words themselves with guidance from another pupil or an adult. Pupils may use a vocabulary/word book as a personal resource*
- *Spelling practice is encouraged by use of EdShed's Spelling Shed online resource available to pupils at school and at home.*

5 Handwriting

5.1 It is agreed classroom practice to include the following in the teaching of handwriting:

- *all teachers use the principles of the Handwriting Recovery Scheme to guide them on letter formation*
- *infant pupils practise letter patterns with a variety of implements to encourage fluency*
- *pupils must practise correct letter formation until it is secure*
- *pupils are taught the correct pencil grip, the correct sitting position and the correct position for their book or paper*
- *pupils have the opportunity to sample different types of writing implements*
- *pupils are encouraged to develop legible handwriting in both joined and printed styles*
- *handwriting is practised daily, linking it to phonics or spelling work*
- *pupils who progress rapidly will place the emphasis of their handwriting practice on speed, presentation and consistency of style*
- *pupils are encouraged to develop a sense of pride in the presentation of their work*
- *Pupils write in pencil until they have developed a sufficiently fluent style to be awarded a 'Pen Licence'. Thereafter they will write in black roller ball pen.*

6 Speaking and Listening/Oracy

6.1 It is agreed classroom practice to include the following in the teaching of speaking and listening (formally referred to as Oracy in the school):

- *teaching of oracy is an integral part of Literacy Shed + and RWI Literacy & Language lessons*
- *speaking and listening are highly valued*
- *pupils are given opportunities to talk about their own experiences either to the whole class, a group or the class-teacher*
- *pupils learn to listen to one another and to take turns*
- *pupils are encouraged to join in discussions and to give their opinions*
- *circle time sessions give children the opportunity to comment on other children's ideas*
- *pupils are encouraged to appraise critically other children's talks in a positive way*
- *children are encouraged to collaborate and negotiate to achieve an overall aim*
- *extracurricular clubs and events are maintained with the express purpose of children practising their oracy skills*

7 Drama

7.1 Classroom practice includes the following in the teaching of drama:

- *to encourage pupils to use role-play to extend children's understanding and enjoyment of literacy texts*
- *to use drama to explore meanings of text – characters, actions, themes, emotions and ideas*
- *to participate in spoken performances, dramatic interpretation and improvisations across the curriculum*
- *to evaluate the effectiveness of - professional, amateur or class performances.*

8 ICT

8.1 Classroom practice includes the following in the teaching of ICT when using a language bias:

- *pupils have opportunities to compose directly on screen*
- *pupils are taught to use word processing techniques to develop writing skills*
- *pupils learn to use a range of fonts and layout presentation features in relation to audience and purpose*
- *pupils check for written accuracy using grammar and spell checkers*
- *pupils learn to use computers to read for information from the internet.*

9 Equal Opportunities

9.1 The school endeavours to acknowledge and value the variety of different experiences, interests, social and cultural backgrounds of pupils and use such differences constructively to raise confidence and self-esteem. All staff ensure access to learning at an individual level, through differentiated teaching and learning strategies. Planning sets high expectations and provides appropriate learning opportunities for pupils from all social backgrounds, ethnic groups and for those who are disabled. The school seeks to provide texts from a range of cultures and which are free from discrimination and stereotyping, and to provide resources to support specific learning difficulties.

10 Staff Training

10.1 Staff are encouraged to attend courses and review resources. The Literacy Subject Leader will have access to specific training to support and develop their role.

11 Dissemination

11.1 The Policy is available on the school website, and a paper copy available on request from the school office.

12 Reviewing the Policy

- 12.1 This policy will be reviewed bi-annually by the Literacy Subject Leader and monitored by the Link Governor to ensure that the Policy is relevant and up to date.