



# Springfield School Literacy Policy

Date Reviewed	January 2023
Next Review Due	January 2025

## Intent

Literacy at Springfield aims to equip our pupils with the necessary literacy skills and tools to succeed to the best of their ability encompassing all aspects of communication: non-verbal, verbal and where appropriate written and reading skills. Work in Communication and Literacy promotes learning across the curriculum and underpins pupils' achievements and participation in all aspects of their learning.

Through the quality teaching of literacy, we aim to offer to all our pupils:

- help with communicating effectively, whether verbally or non-verbally and to be able to interact effectively with others in a range of social contexts
- access to the use of pictures, switches, intensive interaction, TAC PAC, symbols, signs and/or words to express themselves and understand others.
- encouragement to enjoy books of all genres and to where appropriate develop pre-reading and reading skills.
- encouragement to develop writing skills.
- encouragement the use of IT to develop Literacy and communication skills.
- regularly assessed progress made by each pupil and adaptations made for their learning method where appropriate.
- development in the ability to listen, to understand and to respond
- to be able to make choices, obtain information, question and be actively involved in decision making
- to develop creativity and imagination
- a consistent and appropriate approach to phonics or pre-phonics skills, which is tailored to meet their individual needs

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## Implementation

### Speaking and Listening

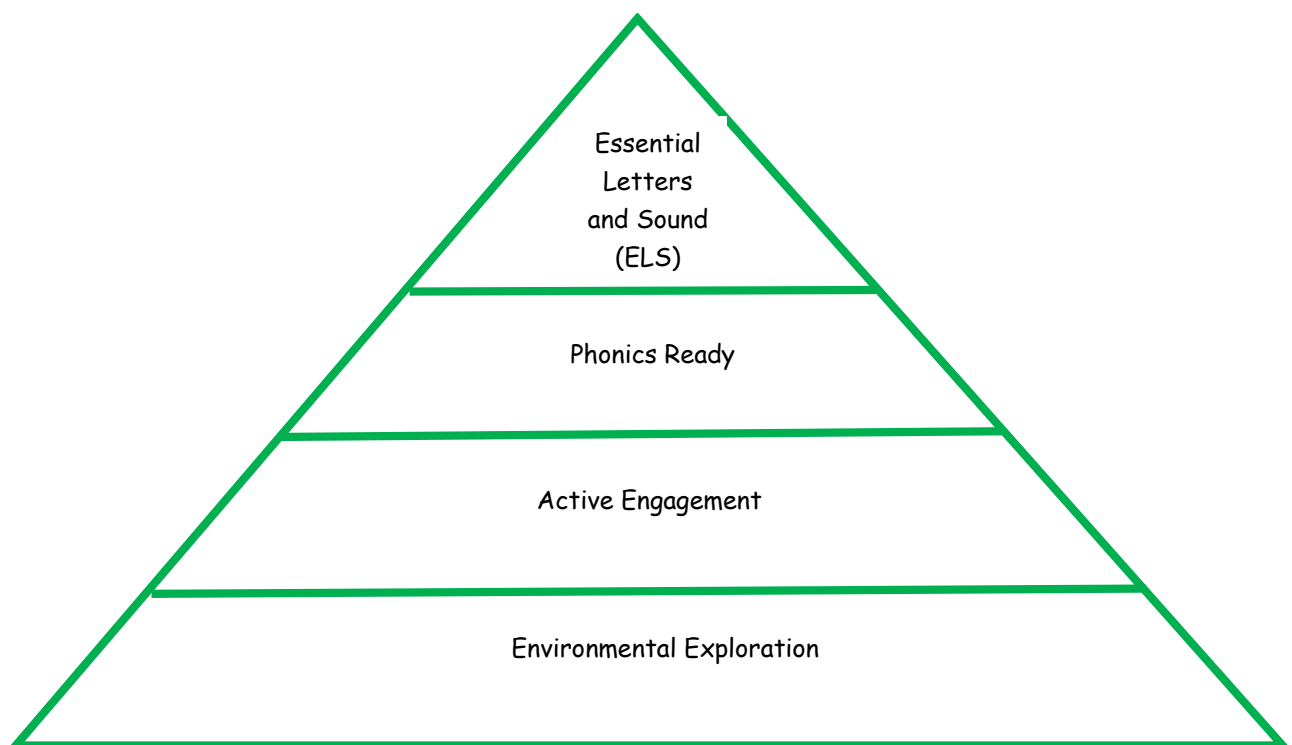
At Springfield we recognise that the ability to communicate is one of the most essential skills in a child's development. Communication forms part of every lesson and social context at Springfield. Springfield is a communication rich environment, with the aim of empowering all pupils to communicate across the school day, establishing meaningful and positive interactions.

Speaking and listening is developed and used throughout the curriculum, there are close links to speech therapists, who will assess and offer advice for individual pupils who are on the Speech and language caseload.

Please refer to the communication policy for more detail on the teaching of speaking, listening and communication skills at Springfield School.

### Phonics

Literacy is underpinned by a robust approach to the teaching of the skills to access phonics where appropriate. In Springfield School, pre-phonics skills are planned and take into consideration the individual needs of our pupils. The pre-phonics skills aim to provide the scaffolding needed to support our pupils in developing new skills and concepts based on the engagement model. When, and if, pupils are ready they will move onto the more formal phonics approach of ELS [Essential Letters and Sounds], which will be adapted to meet their needs as required.



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## Reading

For pupils at Springfield, reading is interpreted as any activity that leads to the derivation of meanings from visual or tactile representations, for example, objects, pictures, symbols or written words. This may include:

- story massage
- story props and puppets
- opportunities to experience, respond to, investigate and explore sensory materials linked to text
- tracking objects
- exposure to symbol print and photographs
- exploring books – flicking the pages, turning them when sharing with an adult, following along the text to develop idea of text from left to right, joining in with learnt phrases of a text
- observing every day social sight symbols in the community
- listening to stories to build up awareness of the conventions of storytelling thus aiding contextual understanding.

When appropriate for the individual pupil, examples of strategies to enable them to progress in phonic knowledge, grammatical awareness, comprehension, contextual understanding and information gathering are listed below:

- phonics ready activities and where appropriate ELS
- Colourful semantics
- Sensory stories and sensory story sacks
- Symbols
- AAC – low and high tech
- Use of libraries both within school and in the community
- Key words – finding key words in a text
- Sharing books
- Guided reading – structured sessions with questions and activities around a text
- Audio stories
- PowerPoint stories
- Clicker 8
- Story journeys
- Social stories
- ICT to deliver
- Role play
- Drama games

Once pupils are following the ELS phonics scheme, then they will have access to individual reading books, which are linked to the appropriate sound phase within the ELS scheme. Reading is recorded in a reading diary.

There is a book list in place for Key Stages 1 to 3 and these books relate to our Curriculum Themes. This aims to offer pupils the wider experience of engaging with books. Each academic year pupils will experience a fiction, non-fiction and a poetry text that relate to the Theme.

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## Alternative Reading Approaches

For some of our pupils, we recognise that learning to read through a phonological approach is not appropriate and these pupils therefore require an alternative approach to reading, e.g. have learnt through sight reading or who have severe hearing impairments. On these occasions, the alternative approach used is chosen based on the individual needs of these pupils in discussion with the Literacy Learning and Teaching Team and the Class Line Manager.

## Handwriting

The ability to communicate through written means is an important skill.

All pupils will have regular access to activities promoting fine and gross motor skills to develop handwriting skills. Staff will ensure pupils participate in a range of activities from the [Getting Ready to Write](#) document, which includes developing pupils' skills in the following areas:

- Gross motor pivots – starting with shoulders, elbow wrist
- Fine motor strength and co-ordination skills
- Staff will ensure pupils have access to a range of implements to make marks, including ICT, support pupils in the development of forming of pre-writing shapes and correct letter formation.

## Writing

Writing may be interpreted as any activity that communicates and records events, experiences, information, thoughts and feelings. Staff will take every appropriate opportunity to encourage pupils' writing. Examples of good practice include:

- Use of symbols to form and create sentences through to text
- Using low-tech boards as well as colourful semantics to learn how to build sentences/ sentence structure from left to right.
- Use of colourful semantics and shape coding to form and create sentences through to text.
- Using the colourful semantics grid to scaffold independent writing, for example; removing the vocabulary to encourage more independent thinking.
- Creating stories and personal writing initiated by an object of reference and scribed by the teacher using pictures, symbols and words where appropriate.
- Making lists of instructions, e.g. recipes, duties, other routines.
- Using relevant ICT aids to support and foster writing, including single switches, symbol software and concept keyboards.
- Keeping a Journal: to record news, to recount events, and to write for pleasure.
- Writing cards and invitations to events
- Making own books
- Making posters, invitations
- Using a range of writing tools, e.g. chalk, whiteboards
- Experience and exposure to how text can be presented, for example; recipe books, instructions.
- Completing and practicing filling in forms, for example; registering at the doctor/completing a driving license.

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## **Additional information on colourful semantics**

Colourful semantics is a progressive system supported by Speech and Language therapists to support children's development in writing particularly grammar. Initially symbols can be used to comment on a picture or photograph. These can start with one symbol and develop to include different components/ thematic roles of a sentence: who, what doing, what, where. These can be further developed to include adverbs, adjectives, conjunctions and negatives. As pupils progress in their writing they can have a laminated key to remind them of the grammatical parts of sentences when writing independently.

## **Literacy Across the Curriculum**

We recognise how important it is for our pupils to experience their literacy skills repeatedly Staff provide opportunities to reinforce reading and writing skills in all their lessons.

Teaching approaches to encourage Literacy within all subjects include the following:

- The use of theme related words clearly explained and presented visually where needed
- Opportunities to develop different writing styles
- Cross curricular text
- Food technology – creating shopping lists, using shopping lists, equipment lists, following recipes or packet instructions, writing instructions to make something, evaluations of processes

## **Assessment**

Pupils will regularly be assessed against the school's Progression of Skills, including either pre-phonics skills based on the engagement model and if appropriate using the ELS assessment tool and / or National Curriculum levels. When assessing using ELS, pupils will need to be able to verbalise the sounds; when this is not the case staff will assess against the school's progression of skills.

## **Impact**

Our intent is that the Literacy curriculum will enable pupils to develop their communication and the functional literacy skills they need to be able to communicate, interact and engage to their full potential in the wider world.

The outcomes of the curriculum are based on individual pupils needs and targets. All achievement and progress is celebrated but progress for our pupils may look different for each individual.

The impact of the literacy skills teaching for our pupils can be demonstrated by:

- Pupils making progress towards/achieving their intended yearly and key stage outcomes set in their EHCP annual review meeting. These will be informed by other professionals where appropriate e.g. SaLT setting targets for communication, speaking and listening
- Pupils making progress towards/achieving termly IEP targets reviewed in pupil progress meetings and in termly reports and parent's evenings
- Pupils being assessed on progression of skills for reading, writing, expressive and receptive language
- Assessments on pre-phonics skills including – Environmental exploration, Active Engagement and Phonics Ready
- Where appropriate pupils will be assessed on the Essential Letters and Sounds assessment framework
- Achieving external accreditation for secondary aged pupils e.g. AQA assessments