



**George Hastwell School**  
**English and Communication Policy**  
**Date: June 2020**

**Subject Leader for English: Karen Baxter**  
**Subject Leader for Communication: Nicola Bower**

**School vision:**

**“An enriching journey to individual success”.**

George Hastwell School is a safe and creative learning community where everyone achieves and is valued.

We will fulfil this vision through:

- Being a happy place where learners feel safe to challenge themselves and develop their independence to its full potential.
- An individualised, creative curriculum which fosters the pupils’ love of learning.
- Treating the pupils as individuals with consistent support.

**GHS Values:**

- Respect
- Fairness
- Kindness
- Pride
- Responsibility
- Resilience

We seek to promote and uphold our vision and values across the whole school curriculum, including English and Communication.

**Equality in School**

George Hastwell School is proud that it fully supports equality in all aspects of its work - for pupils, staff, governors and parents as well as for visitors and other community members linked with the school. Equality is integral to all schools and workplaces and the promotion of equality of opportunity for all pupils underpins school life. We ensure that high quality provision meets the diverse needs of our pupils, staff, governors and parents and promotes not just equality of opportunity but improving outcomes for all pupils regardless of background.

**Aims and objectives**

We aim to help all our children realise their full potential. We have high expectations and provide all pupils with a broad and balanced English and Communication Curriculum that is appropriate to both their needs and ability.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that each child has access to a broad, balanced and differentiated English and Communication Curriculum that:

- Meets their specific learning needs;
- Matches their ability;
- Ensures progression by building on prior knowledge and experience;
- Is cross-curricular;

- Uses adapted statutory guidance where appropriate to pupils' individual needs - *The National Curriculum 2014 and EYFS Framework 2020*;
- Enables pupils to achieve relevant accreditations and awards;
- Prepares pupils well for life beyond school.

### Literacy

George Hastwell School recognises the importance of developing skills in Literacy. We aim that every child will, as appropriate to their needs:

- Enjoy literacy and be motivated to learn;
- Have an interest in books, sensory stories and reading for enjoyment;
- Develop literacy skills using: signing, symbols, ICT, objects, pictures and words;
- Extend their spoken, pictorial and written vocabulary;
- Read and/or recognize their own name and other important key words;
- Be able to use literacy to a functional level to prepare them for adult life;
- Read aloud with developing fluency and intonation;
- Make progress in phonics by knowing and applying letter sounds in reading, writing and/or speaking and listening;
- Make progress in Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation;
- Experience a broad range of texts and genres;
- Communicate answers to simple questions about past, present and future events and/or stories;
- Develop skills through writing for a variety of purposes;
- Continue to develop mark making, fine motor and handwriting skills;
- Use their imagination in drama and role-play activities;
- Use ICT to support learning.

### Phonics

Phonics is taught using the *Letters and Sounds* system and resources from *Jolly Phonics*. As pupils move through the school, those working at appropriate levels also use the *Snappy Lessons* synthetic phonics programme at a 1:1 or small group level throughout the school.

### Communication, Speaking and Listening skills

Effective communication is vital to our pupils' development. We aim that every child will, as appropriate to their needs:

- Be able to communicate their wants and needs using a range of relevant strategies, including:
  - on-body signing
  - objects of reference
  - photographs
  - Makaton signing
  - PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System)
  - symbol support
  - assistive technology
  - the spoken word
- Enjoy communicating with others and be motivated to do so;
- Extend their spoken vocabulary and their fluency with verbal language.

In addition the school works with the Speech and Language Therapist who provides assessments and programmes for identified pupils, and training for staff on communication strategies. The Senior Teaching Assistant for Communication works alongside the communication subject leader to develop strategies and resources for class groups and individual pupils.

All class teachers are trained in the use of PECS.

The school has a number of Makaton-trained staff and has an active signing choir which includes pupils and staff and provides an opportunity to develop confidence and signing skills in a practical and fun setting.

## **Provision**

English and communication are taught in daily short core skills lessons where pupils have the opportunity to practice key concepts and skills, often those linked to their EHCP outcomes and IEPs. During these lessons pupils have the opportunity to work on the following as appropriate to their needs:

- Communication - e.g. PECS, symbol support, Makaton signing, intensive interaction, on-body cues
- speaking and listening programmes as a result of agreed interventions at pupil progress reviews or via the speech and language therapist
- phonics, including Snappy Lessons
- focused reading
- handwriting

In addition pupils have the opportunity to apply their skills and study some concepts in more depth in longer English lessons timetabled across the week, and through using reading, writing and communication activities across the whole curriculum.

## **Involving pupils in their learning**

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English and communication according to their individual abilities. Pupils are informed of their learning objectives and take part in assessment for learning sessions in relation to these objectives. Where possible pupils attend their EHCP reviews to discuss their progress towards EHCP outcomes. Older pupils are involved in their progress towards achieving accreditations in English through targets related to their Functional Skills level.

## **Monitoring and Assessment**

Assessment at George Hastwell is intended to be a useful process to identify progress and next steps, which feed straight back into planning. Classroom staff are involved in the process by: assessing work with the child, marking and annotating written work, completing observations, listening to reading, identifying and recording progress. Next steps are identified with the child and with the class team. Parents' views are also included, particularly in the IEP targets, which are shared with them each term, and reviewed in the annual review of each child's EHCP.

English and communication are assessed and reported in the following ways:

- Inputting data into the SOLAR assessment system based on individual pupils targets. This is analysed three times per year.
- Through IEPs which focus on EHCP outcomes. These are delivered via SOLAR and are evaluated termly.
- End of year and Key Stage Data.
- End of year reports to parents.
- Photographs/film clips.
- Assessment files.
- Marking and annotating work.
- Observations and stickers which contribute to learning journals.
- Individual reading records.
- The deputy headteacher monitors medium-term, weekly plans and assessment data. She reports to the Local Governing body regularly.
- Observing lessons, learning walks and work scrutiny are also part of the monitoring process.
- Accreditations via ASDAN Awards – Transition Challenge (KS4), Towards Independence (KS4) or Personal Development at Bronze, Silver and Gold Levels (KS5).
- Accreditations in Functional Skills English at Entry Levels 1, 2, and 3 for more capable Y11 and KS5 pupils.

## **Resources**

Independent reading books are book banded and stored in the resource room. These include a range of published reading schemes, with Oxford Reading Tree and the main core scheme.

English Resources include: story sacks, sensory stories, Snappy Lessons, *Jolly Phonics*, mark making resources and the use of the school library where there are a range of fiction and non-fiction texts. Some classes also make visits to local public libraries to foster a love of reading. The English subject Leader audits resources on a regular basis.

Opportunities to use ICT to support teaching and learning in English and communication will be planned for and used on a daily basis. Examples of ICT include: use of the ICI suite to work on individual PCs, plasma screen work, ipads and use of AAC.

### **Parents**

Liaison with parents is a vital element in the creation of home/school partnership to support learning in school. Effective communication is the key. Parents support the teaching of English at George Hastwell by:

- Reading with their child at home;
- Attending whole school events;
- Attending annual reviews of EHCPs;
- Providing feedback on IEPs and their child's annual report.

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed in accordance with the school's School Improvement Plan unless an earlier review is deemed necessary by the Subject Leader, the Senior Leadership Team or the Local Governing Body.

It will be reviewed by the Subject Leader in the first instance and then shared with the staff as appropriate. Once agreed with staff then the policy will be taken to the Local Governing Body for comment and adoption on behalf of the school. At this time it will be published on the school website and parents notified.