



Mill Lane Primary School

English Policy

September 2021

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Updated by: J Stanyard and A Clark
Date adopted by Governors and Staff:
Review Date: September 2023

Introduction

At Mill Lane Primary School, we believe that English is a fundamental life skill and recognise the crucial importance of studying the English Language. Improved performance in reading, writing and spoken language will enable our pupils to express their thoughts and ideas more fluently, accurately and, ultimately, to their greater satisfaction. This will also help them to deal more successfully with other curriculum subjects, while enriching their lives beyond school. The teaching and learning of language skills are given a high priority in our school and where possible, the creative curriculum and ICT will be used as tools.

Our overarching aim for English is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

Aims

Mill Lane is a multi-lingual and multi-cultural school. We are determined to improve the vocabulary of all of our pupils. We aim for our pupils to:

- Read easily, fluently and with good understanding **to become enthusiastic and reflective readers.**
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information **and help them to recognise the value of reading as a life skill.**
- Acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.
- Appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage.
- **Ensure our children have sound phonic awareness and use a phonics first approach to reading.**
- Be competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, **partaking in drama-based activities and participating in debate in order to demonstrate their control of the spoken word.**
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.
- Use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas.

At Mill Lane, we encourage all children to become independent learners and be confident in all strands of learning. The children will be given opportunities to speak in a variety of contexts and learn to listen to and value the views of others.

Statutory Requirements

Mill Lane Primary School follows the statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English, which are laid out in the National Curriculum in England: Framework Document (2014).

In Early Years, our curriculum is guided by the prime areas in the EYFS Framework:

- Communication and Language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

And the four specific areas:

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

Approaches to Spoken Language

Developing vocabulary dramatically boosts the ability of children to thrive in all other areas of the curriculum. This is supported by schemes and **interventions** such as **NELI (Nuffield Early Years Language Intervention)** and Word Aware, which is used in EYFS and Year 1 and interventions such as Sound Training (KS1 and 2). In addition, all classes teach a **minimum of 10 new words per week. New vocabulary taught is within the context of the learning taking place that week.** We hope to achieve the following targets:

- To develop resilience and pace with reading through contact with challenging and substantial texts.
- To support pupils through the **Mill Lane Writing Process.**
- To teach the rules of grammar, spelling and to encourage the use of appropriate vocabulary in order to produce meaningful writing.
- To encourage children to listen effectively so that they can improve their understanding.
- To show children how to communicate effectively for a range of circumstances **and audiences.**

Effective Teaching of Phonics

In EYFS and KS1, children follow a structured synthetic phonics programme; Read Write Inc. by Ruth Miskin. **Mill Lane has personalised the scheme, so that we have a fluid approach to the teaching of phonics, reading and writing. All children partake in 40 minutes phonics learning each day, followed a 40 minute English lesson.**

In Nursery, children are introduced to letters when it is deemed appropriate by the class teacher. We aim to start RWI in reception within the 1st 2 weeks of September. A large proportion of our pupils enter EYFS at least 18 months behind their peers nationally. In order to help our pupils 'catch-up' and reach age related expectations, we have a focused long-term plan in place for the teaching of phonics for our EYFS.

On entry to KS1, our focus is to help children become fluent readers by ensuring pupils are able to read the 40+ graphemes mentioned in the English National Curriculum

documents. These should be securely in place by the end of the spring term in Year 1. The summer term is used to focus upon fluency and comprehension. Throughout the programme children work in ability groups and lessons move at a pace suitable for the children. **To ensure progress is consistent, the RSW Lead assesses the children every 6-8 weeks. After the assessment, children's groups are re-organised.**

Using the expertise available within school, we use Cued Articulation when teaching RWI in EYFS and if required, in Year 1. This helps pupils who have recognised speech and language difficulties, and our many EAL pupils, to distinguish clearly between the different sounds taught.

Mill Lane uses action words to help support the teaching of the RWI 'red words'. Each year group has a clear set of words, which are taught each term. The focus is to read these words fluently.

Reading

The teaching of reading is explicitly planned across all Key Stages to meet the needs of all of our children. Pupils have opportunities to undertake **reciprocal**, shared and independent reading **sessions** throughout the school. In Reception and Year 1, this occurs during the RWI lessons. All children who have completed the RWI Phonics programme will take part in a reciprocal reading **lesson**. All children (with the possible exception of some SEND and EAL pupils) access the same text. Pupils are explicitly taught **at least** 10 new words each week, which are linked to the text. Classes spend up to 2 days clarifying and deconstructing the text, and then complete a further 2 days answering a range of SATs style questions. **During the 4 days, teachers model and directly teach different reading strategies; this helps to** broaden the range of skills available for the children to use when **independently comprehending a text**.

Children in Foundation, KS1 and KS2 need to be provided with an environment that promotes reading. All classrooms have a designated reading area. The school has a library area in addition to these. **All classes are timetabled a weekly slot in the library, and a lunchtime library club runs for KS2 children 3 lunchtimes each week. Children are encouraged to read for pleasure, borrow books and research the current topic they are studying.**

The teaching of reading in KS1 uses a variety of strategies: phonics, picture clues, reading on, reading back, reading for meaning etc. and where necessary this should be continued throughout KS2. In Reception and Year 1, reading is taught alongside the Read Write Inc Programme.

Reciprocal Reading in KS2:

During reciprocal reading sessions, the teacher's role is to demonstrate what good readers do. Shared reading allows the children to access a text, which may be

challenging to them individually. Reading skills and strategies are clearly modelled, and discussions should help children to gain a deeper understanding of the text. Shared reading should have a specific focus and all abilities should be included in discussions by differentiated questions. Teachers take a fluid approach to reciprocal reading to encourage text to be contextual to children's wider learning and writing e.g. through the reading of information texts related to other curriculum areas. Careful study of the reading genre over several days leads to children attempting writing in that same genre as part of a block of work lasting several weeks.

Children will enjoy modelled reading from our **Key Author books** during daily story time sessions, in order to learn how to add vocal expression, punctuation and dramatic affect to their own reading. This should take place in all classes from Foundation Stage to Year 6.

In EYFS and the autumn term of Year 1, RWI lessons can be shared with parents so that the daily sound can be practised at home. Advice is also given to parents on how to support quality-reading experiences. Class-based reading will take place in the English lesson; however, this alone is not sufficient. Children are encouraged to read every day and to share books at home.

Home Reading:

Nursery children are able to take home a book to share with an adult. These are taken from the class selection. Reception and KS1 follow the following guidelines for home reading:

- Children who are at the initial stage of learning set 1 sounds, but are not yet blending, are able to take home a lilac reading scheme book, a lilac book bag book and **a book matched to the phonics taught in class.**
- Children who are able to blend but have not yet acquired a broad range of graphemes take home the RWI class book, the matching book bag book, action words and **a book matched to the phonics taught in class.**
- Children who have reached the Yellow books in the RWI scheme will take home the RWI class book, the matching book bag book, a matching reading scheme book.
- KS2 children will take home a reading scheme book.

All classes have a Reading Record File in which a record is kept of the children's books read and comments are made to move children's reading on. All children take home a reading record so that parents, carers or the children themselves can comment on their reading success. Mill Lane accepts that many of our parents are unable to listen to their children read at home. We encourage children to read to **themselves**, a sibling, a favourite toy or even a pet, **at least 3 times per week.** Children can record that they have read using a smiley face or by writing a comment. Staff discuss comments with

pupils on a regular basis. A certificate, and a packet of 'buttons for books' are awarded each week for a star reader in each class.

Methods for Promoting Reading

Each year group has been allocated a Key Author and children have the opportunity to take home a range of their books. Teachers keep a record as children read key author books and gold star pins are presented to any child who reads 10 from each set. Classes have a dedicated daily story time each day to help promote effective storytelling, key authors and a general enjoyment of books. During this session, teachers can read a 'brilliant book', often linked to the curriculum, or a key author book. Children have the opportunity to borrow these books as well. Teachers also ensure that all classes have:

- A book area - so books have a high profile in every class
- Attractive displays of books in the classrooms and Library
- Listening stations/ e books/ ipads
- Access to Reading Plus and Lexia websites, which allow children to earn certificates.
- All year groups can access the Oxford Owl website, which allows them to read the full range of Oxford University Press Books
- Access to the school library
- Visiting the local Library for special events
- Links with our local book shop

Progress in Reading:

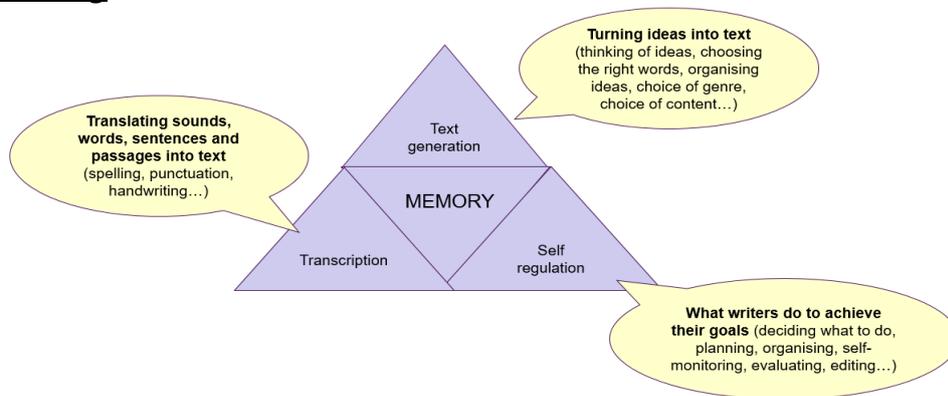
In Reception and Year 1, the lowest achieving 20% of pupils are targeted with 1:1 or 1:4 RWI interventions each afternoon to enable them to make enhanced progress. In Year 2 and KS2, targeted PiXL therapies are used to support children who are not making the desired progress. Mill Lane also makes great use of additional reading staff. These focus upon the class target readers and ensures that all children have the opportunity to read to an adult in school at least **once** per week.

Mill Lane Spelling Programme

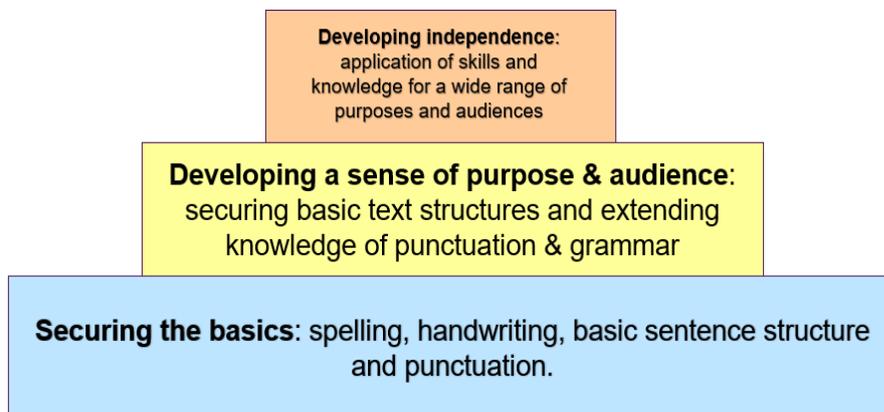
Mill Lane uses the PiXL Spelling programme. This has specific rules for each year group and guarantees a consistent approach across school. **As a school, we have focused upon teaching the rule rather than the spelling. Each week, the children receive a new spelling rule to take home with examples. Testing of the rule takes place the following week, using a wider range of spellings, which follow the rule. This is to ensure that children learn the rule and not the specific spellings, so that they are able to apply this independently in their own writing. Children who are working significantly below Age Related Expectation (ARE) will still learn the class-spelling rule, but will also receive a selection of catch-up words from previous year groups.**

It is an expectation that by the end of each term, pupils should have completed each box **in our spelling scheme**. At the end of each term, teachers complete an overview-spelling test, which is prepared by the Spelling Lead, to assess what learning has been retained.

Writing



Writing is a complex process involving a range of different skills and knowledge. Good writing requires the co-ordination of all these elements in working memory. Progression in writing in our school will depend upon ensuring that skills and knowledge are transferred into our children's long-term memory, and recalled when appropriate. In order to create 'strong writers' children must have secure foundations and the idea of building blocks is vital to ensure that this occurs.



EYFS and KS1 must focus upon securing the basics of transcription, spelling and punctuation. These must become second nature so that they are no longer a barrier to writing. In Lower KS2, the emphasis switches to extending knowledge of punctuation and grammar and helping children to acquire the knowledge and skills, which will allow them to write for different audiences and purposes. When all of these processes are secure, upper KS2 can focus on application to a much greater degree - drawing on wider understanding and developing a true writing style.

Children from EYFS to Year 6 should be given opportunities to write and the links between reading and writing should be made explicit. Children should be made aware of the importance of planning their writing. In the Foundation Stage, this may be telling the teacher what they are going to write, whilst in Key Stage 2 it may involve a planning grid and/or draft copy. (See writing overview documents)

In EYFS, children should be encouraged to use emergent writing and any phonic knowledge to write freely (Emergent Writing), but should also see writing modelled by the teacher in Modelled/Shared Writing sessions and phonics lessons. **By the end of Reception, most children should be confident using set 1 and some set 2 sounds. Teachers emphasise the need for correct letter formation in order to achieve GLD (Good Level of Development). Pupils can use this knowledge to begin to spell simple words and write basic sentences.**

In Year 1, children use their phonic knowledge to write simple sentences. All letters must be correctly formed, accurately sized, and simple sentences should have basic punctuation. By Year 2 children should be extending their own writing to include varied punctuation and ensure handwriting has a clear style with accurate formation and clear ascenders and descenders. **Children should be made aware and try to focus upon writing for different audiences and purpose. In KS2, we move from a focus on transcription skills (which are embedded) and now focus on encouraging children to write independently and effectively for a variety of audiences and purpose.**

Mill Lane follow a focused writing process. Before children are able to write, they will need to see the process modelled, which occurs during English and cross-curricular lessons. Staff should routinely model writing by using an 'outer monologue' or 'writer's voice' to demonstrate the thought processes a good writer applies. Pupils should see writing is significant throughout the entire curriculum. Cross-curricular writing is used for story writing in Religion, non-fiction writing in science, history and geography. Extended writing is recorded in curriculum books, to reflect its cross curricular nature. Children also have the opportunity to publish their final piece in their special publishing book. We record planning, shared, drafting and refining stages of writing, in an English Skills book. Rules and strategies used when writing during English lessons, will be applied in all subject areas. Within the writing process, grammar is contextualised and taught directly from quality texts. Wherever possible, grammar must not be taught as a standalone lesson. Staff are provided with a grammar framework and whenever possible grammar is not taught as standalone activities.

Non-negotiables for writing:

All staff must ensure that each child uses a set of ARE non-negotiables that they should use in their writing, across all subjects. These can be adapted to meet the need of the child and must reflect their previous learning and achievements. Non-

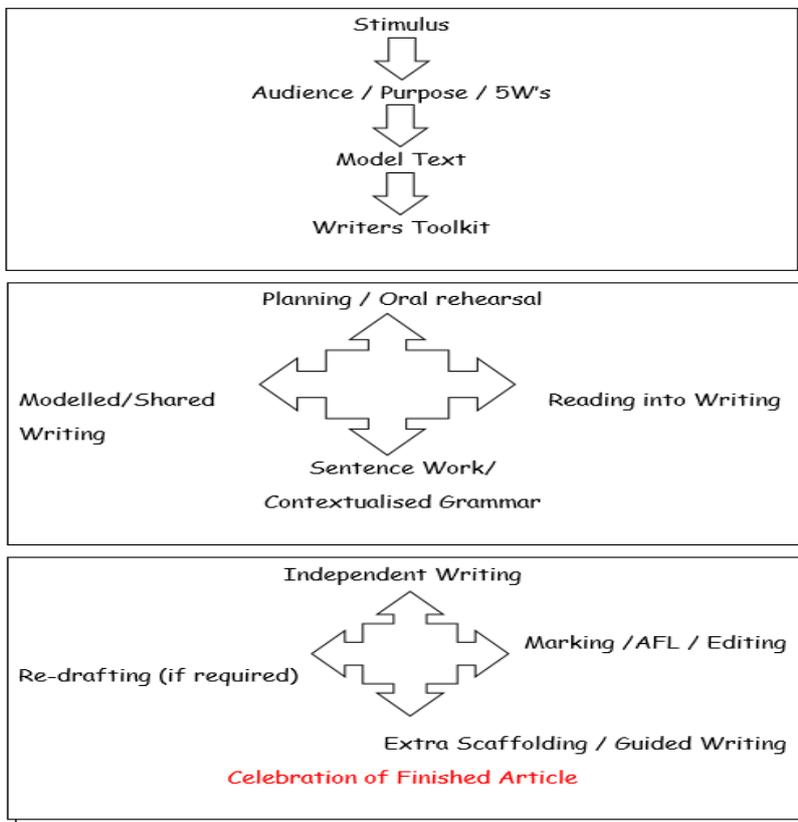
negotiables are a powerful aid in developing self-regulation and memory. Pupils are told that these expectations are important, they are expected, and must occur in all writing in all subjects. Non-negotiables change for each year and show progression. These are used as a guide when children are independently proof reading their drafts.

The Writing Process:

Mill Lane's writing process is displayed in each classroom from Year 1. It takes the children through the different stages. Mill Lane use the writing process chart below and this is discussed with the children.

Extended writing starts from the Spring Term in Year 1. By Upper KS2, children spend more dedicated time on the draft and editing process. **This writing session should be linked to the English or Curriculum topic and throughout the year should encompass a range of different purpose and audience.** These should be repeated as part of our cyclic long-term plans. Children should have the opportunity to repeat genres across the curriculum and in differing formats, to ensure that knowledge is embedded.

Children are given feedback in line with the current marking policy and should 'polish' work using purple pens during the editing process. Staff are encouraged whenever possible to add challenges to children's writing to help further learning and expectations. Whenever it is possible, creative links should be made with other curriculum subjects.



Handwriting Process:

Mill Lane uses the Nelson Handwriting scheme alongside the RWI programme. We are currently phasing out cursive handwriting. Handwriting begins in the E.Y.F.S with mark-making and patterns. All pupils are given access to a wide range of writing tools and mediums to practise the early fine motor skills. The needs of left-handed children or those with physical difficulties are taken into consideration and where necessary accommodated with resources or specific intervention. Pupils are encouraged to develop fluent lines of correctly orientated letters from an early age and emergent writing is encouraged. We believe that discrete handwriting sessions where children's formation and pencil grip can be readily overseen should take place at least once a week and more frequently in the foundation stage. Correct posture and positioning of paper or books are also emphasised during these sessions using the phrases TNT (Tummy Near Table) and BBC (Bottom Back in Chair). Letter formation and handwriting is taught and modelled using a range of resources. Please also read Handwriting Policy for additional details.

English in the EYFS

In the Foundation Stage, both language and literacy development are incorporated in all areas of learning. Opportunities are provided for children to communicate thoughts, ideas and feelings. Purposeful role-play is used to develop language and imagination. Children are given opportunities to share and enjoy a wide range of rhymes, songs, poetry and books. An environment is provided which reflects the importance of language through signs, notices and books. Children are provided with opportunities to see adults writing and they can experiment with writing themselves. Children receive daily phonic sessions.

We teach English in the Foundation Stage as an integral part of the school's work. We relate the Literacy aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals and Foundation Stage Curriculum Guidance, which underpin the curriculum for children aged three to five.

We give all children the opportunity:

1. To talk and communicate in a widening range of situations.
2. To respond to adults and to each other.
3. To listen carefully.
4. To practise and extend their vocabulary and communication skills.
5. To explore words and texts.

Approach to Literacy (planning and organisation)

Each year group has a Writing Overview Document, which details the different genre, purpose and audience to be used across the year. Assessments are also indicated and reflect the learning taking place in the previous term.

There are 3 phases to each unit of work;

Phase 1 focuses on reading texts, and unpicking the key features including contextualised grammar. (Writer's toolkit)

Phase 2 focuses on the 'author's voice' through modelled and shared writing and developing sentence work.

Phase 3 focuses on extended writing, editing, refining and publishing.

Year groups accessing RWI phonics, use the daily-adapted daily lesson plans provided. There are reciprocal reading plans in place for Year 2 and KS2 teachers.

Organisation

Across all key stages, children can be taught in ability groups but these groupings are flexible and children are moved between them at the teacher's discretion, especially during KAGAN work.

To promote effective transcription, spelling, and reading skills, additional lessons take place each afternoon for 30 minutes. We follow a 3-week rota:

Week 1: Lexia or Reading Plus

Week 2: Additional Spelling or editing activities

Week 3: Trouble shooting handwriting sessions

Speaking and Listening

Throughout Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 (KS1) and Key Stage 2 (KS2), children need to be given opportunities to express their ideas in speech, to describe their own ideas, to make plans and to take part in discussions.

In parallel with this, they have to learn to listen to others and to absorb what they hear. They have to learn the conventions of conversation, taking turns, allowing others to speak, responding appropriately to what has been said and valuing the opinions of others.

All members of staff at Mill Lane Primary School have the responsibility to ensure that all children are empowered to speak and express their ideas. Children should be encouraged to speak in a range of contexts and, as they grow older, adapt their style of speech appropriately.

Speaking and listening permeates all areas of the curriculum. The children learn from early on, to plan their work, listen to the plans of others, recall and assess their work and to listen while others recall. It is only when speaking and listening skills have been developed that children can effectively work co-operatively and collaboratively.

Equal Opportunities

As a staff we endeavour to maintain an awareness of, and to provide for equal opportunities for all our pupils in Literacy. We aim to take into account cultural

background, gender and Special Needs, both in our teaching attitudes and in the published material we use with our pupils

Assessment

The English Lead follow a calendar to ensure rigorous monitoring of this subject (see below)

Assessments are carried out each term and are moderated across school and when possible with other local schools. Evidence is sort from cross curricular areas and not just English sessions.

English Calendar 2021 2022

06.09.21	Initial RWI Assessment
13.09.21	Initial Reception RWI assessment
20.09.21	
27.09.21	
04.10.21	PSC 2017 Paper for Y2
11.10.21	
18.10.21	Informal English Learning Walk
HALF TERM	
01.11.21	PSC 2017 Paper for Y1
08.11.21	Pupil Voice Interviews Writing
15.11.21	Pupil Voice Interviews Reading
22.11.21	2 nd RWI Assessment
29.11.21	PSC Year 2 2019 Paper
06.12.21	Reading File Check
13.12.21	
Winter Holidays	
04.01.22	
10.01.22	
17.01.22	
24.01.22	
31.01.22	PSC 2018 Paper, Year 1 and Year 2
07.02.22	3 rd RWI Assessment
14.02.22	Informal English Learning Walk
HALF TERM	
28.02.22	
07.03.22	PSC 2019 Paper Y1 and Y2
14.03.22	
21.03.22	Pupil Voice Interviews Writing
28.03.22	Pupil Voice Interviews Reading
04.04.22	Reading File Check
Easter Holidays	
25.04.22	4 th RWI Assessment
02.05.22	
09.05.22	Y6 SATs week
16.05.22	
23.05.22	
HALF TERM	
06.06.22	Year 1 and 2 PSC Final 2022 Paper
13.06.22	
20.06.22	Informal English Learning Walk
27.06.22	Pupil Voice Interviews Writing
04.07.22	Pupil Voice Interviews Reading
11.07.22	Reading File Check
18.07.22	
Summer Holidays	

Resources

There are a wide range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All children in KS2, and when appropriate Year 2 pupils, access the Reading Plus scheme and EYFS, ARP and KS1 pupils are able to access LEXIA through ICT equipment. These sessions take place for 20 minutes 3 times per week. Children are also able to access this resources from home. All classrooms have dictionaries and Y2 - 6 have thesauruses. Each classroom has sets of reading comprehensions appropriate to their year group and can access Cracking Comprehension from the school system. All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts. Our library contains a wide range of books to support children's individual research and to encourage reading for pleasure.

Children use ICT in English lessons where it enhances their learning, as in drafting their work and in using multimedia to study how words and images are combined to convey meaning.

Special Needs

Wherever possible we aim to fully include SEND pupils in the daily English lessons so that they benefit from working with the whole class and by listening and participating with other children. However, on advice of our SENCo, or other specialised professionals, an individualised programme written in consultation with the appropriate staff may be followed. When needed, children can have access to the wealth of expertise on offer in Mill Lane's Additional Resourced Provision. There are also 2 specialised TAs who deliver specialist interventions at the direction of the SENCo. Some pupils, who have specific learning difficulties (an EHCP or High Needs funding), are provided with the opportunity to join a specialist nurture class, which works alongside our ARP.

Children who are more able

Where possible, more able pupils will be taught with their own class and stretched through differentiated group work and extra challenges. When working with the whole class, teachers will direct some questions towards the more able to maintain their involvement. Very occasionally special arrangements will be made for an exceptionally gifted pupil. For example, they may attend lessons in the next year group or follow an individualised programme.

Signed and dated:

Head Teacher

Chair of Governors