

GRESHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL
POLICY FOR ENGLISH

Rationale

“English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them...pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually...All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils, therefore, who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.”

National Curriculum for English (September 2014)

English unites the important skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening and reflection. Speaking enhances pupils' understanding of language in both oral and written forms and of the way language can be used to communicate. It is also an important part of the process through which pupils read and compose texts. At Gresham, we are aware that the National Curriculum for English deals mostly with knowledge and skills, our aims also reflect the imaginative, spiritual, moral and cultural.

We intend to cover all the objectives as set out in the National Curriculum for English (2014), for children between the ages of 5 and 11 years and those set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2014.

Children will also learn and reinforce English skills through other National Curriculum subjects taught in the school through the IPC Framework (International Primary Curriculum).

Aims for teaching English at Gresham

We aim for our children to:

- read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding;
- be able to orchestrate a full range of reading cues (phonic graphic, syntactic, contextual) to monitor their reading and correct their own mistakes;
- understand the sound and spelling system and use this to read and spell accurately;
- have fluent and legible handwriting;
- have an interest in words and their meanings and a growing vocabulary;
- know, understand and be able to write in a range of genres in fiction and poetry and understand and be familiar with some of the ways in which narratives are structured through basic literary ideas of setting, character and plot;
- understand, use and be able to write a range of non-fiction texts;

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- plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing;
- have a suitable technical vocabulary through which to understand and discuss their reading and writing;
- be interested in books, read with enjoyment and evaluate and justify their preferences;
- through reading and writing, develop their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.

In addition to the above, at Gresham, we would like:

- to prepare children for all the language experiences they will encounter in life by teaching them to function confidently within the day to day demands of spoken language and of print and by enabling them to write clearly and effectively for a variety of purposes;
- to develop children's thinking and expand their imaginative and aesthetic lives through experiencing and responding to literature and drama;
- to enable children to understand the particular demands of different subjects, so that they can operate effectively in all curriculum areas;
- to teach pupils how to craft language for particular effects, through an understanding of how texts are created in relation to genre, purpose and audience;
- to provide interactive opportunities for pupils to practise using language in relevant, 'real life' contexts;
- to provide opportunities for pupils to communicate independent views and opinions, respond imaginatively and creatively and express feelings through spoken and written language;
- to enable pupils to make critical responses about the language which they read and hear in a variety of media;
- to provide an integrated approach to reading and writing, speaking and listening;
- to develop language skills in all curriculum subjects;
- to recognise the language experiences of pupils at home and in the wider community and to foster pleasure and enthusiasm for the written and spoken word;
- to increase pupils' understanding of how language is used in the world beyond school;
- to use their knowledge and understanding of the English language creatively across all curriculum subjects.

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Statutory Requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the English Curriculum (2014) and in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2014 .

The English programme of study is based on 4 areas and gives detailed guidance of what should be taught at each Key Stage in the following areas:

- Spoken language
- Reading (Word reading and Comprehension)
- Writing (Content & Composition, Handwriting and Presentation)
- Spelling, grammar and punctuation

The Curriculum is divided into 3 Key stages: Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2), Lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4) and Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 and 6).^[LSEP] By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the knowledge, skills and understanding specified in the relevant programme of study.

Aims for Speaking & Listening

At Gresham Primary School, we aim to develop children's understanding of the spoken word and their capacity to express themselves coherently and confidently in a variety of different situations.

We encourage children to:

- speak confidently, clearly and audibly in a wide range of contexts using a wide vocabulary;
- adapt their use of language, varying use and register in relation to purpose and audience;
- develop proficiency in Standard English as well as a respect for other languages and dialects;
- listen with concentration to a wide range of spoken language in real contexts, such as: assemblies, radio, television, film;
- participate in group discussions, debates and individual presentations;
- reflect on their own and each other's use of language;
- take part in drama or any other interactive opportunities to develop their ability to express feelings and emotions through the spoken word;
- speculate and hypothesise through mathematical and scientific investigations;

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- listen attentively and with understanding in a variety of situations including information conveyed orally, stories read to them or the line of an argument in a discussion;
- carry out instructions correctly after listening carefully;
- listen sensitively to the thoughts, feelings and opinions of others;
- listen responsively to poetry and prose and enjoy the sound of language;
- take part in whole school assemblies and/or school productions.

In the Foundation Stage (Reception):

Children are taught to speak, listen and represent ideas in their activities by;

- communicating and modelling correct spoken language
- providing a narrative for what children are doing
- using communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum;
- becoming immersed in an environment rich in print and opportunities to communicate;
- role-playing
- inviting speakers into school to talk about topics they may be studying
- encouraging children to explore and share ideas verbally
- encouraging children to recall events or learning and ask questions

At Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2) children learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say; they learn to read and respond to texts with enthusiasm; they learn to use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds. Children are given opportunities to speak and listen throughout all subject areas.

At Key Stage Two (Years 3 - 6) children learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works.

Aims for Reading

At Gresham we believe that reading is a quest for meaning which requires the reader to be an active participant. A love of literature contributes not just to language and literacy development, it is also of immense personal and social value.

We encourage children to:

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- read a variety of literary forms and styles independently with fluency and understanding;
- read for pleasure for sustained periods in and out of school, in the hope that they may find a lifelong enjoyment in reading;
- use a variety of strategies in their reading, including phonic, graphic, syntactic and contextual clues to obtain meaning;
- select the appropriate book for their purpose, whether that be for reading for pleasure or to obtain information;
- appreciate the ways in which writers convey meaning effectively and to understand the different conventions used for different types of texts;
- read a wide range of written material in both book and non-book form, including labels, signs, media and IT text so that they become aware of the essential part reading plays in everyday life;
- develop the high order skills of skimming and scanning and use all the organisational devices of non-fiction books to extract information;
- become discriminating readers by making a critical response to what they read and justifying their opinion by referring to the text;
- read a wide range of modern and classic fiction including poetry, myths, legends and traditional and modern stories drawn from a variety of cultures and traditions to increase their understanding of the thoughts and emotions of other people, races, cultures and times;
- read for information and other purposes in all national curriculum subjects.

We provide a variety of style and level of reading books to meet all needs which include fiction and non-fiction texts. We highly value the involvement of parents, especially in listening to children read at home and this is an essential part of our Home Learning. We provide parents with curriculum materials e.g. types of questions to ask when reading, book lists for each year group and information about the development of reading skills. We believe that free access to books of all kinds is important in the development of the child's interest in, and appreciation of, reading. To this end, all classrooms have book corners in Reception and KS1, 'reading areas' in KS2 or book displays and collections related to ongoing topic work. In addition to this, children are encouraged to use the library, not just for research but also to choose books to read for pleasure. Pupils are encouraged to use the library as a resource when researching work for topics and as a quiet area to sit and enjoy books. Each class has a weekly timetabled session, which may be used at the teacher's discretion, and pupils are also able to access to the library during lunchtimes as well as before and after school.

Pupils' reading is monitored and assessed on a regular basis. Teachers tell pupils what skills they are working on before a reading session, whether it is a whole class 'VIPERS' session or in a small group and are then told if they have achieved them. Teachers and

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pupils record this in pupils' learning journals (in KS2) or in teacher's individual records (KS1) Where pupils are working below age appropriate objectives, an intervention programme will identify additional opportunities to read with an adult or practise reading comprehension skills.

How reading is taught at Gresham

Foundation Stage

In the Foundation Stage children have daily, discreet phonics lessons. Children have opportunities to develop their communication, language and English skills on a daily basis in both adult led and child initiated activities. In addition, they are encouraged to choose books to share with each other and the class as well as listen to adults (and older pupils in the library) reading stories.

Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1, daily discreet phonics lessons continue and are taught as a whole class and, where appropriate, in ability groups, while children have daily mixed ability English lessons.

At Gresham, we recognise not only the importance of being able to read well, but also the pleasure and enjoyment that being able to read brings us. Children at Gresham experience different kinds of reading at school:

- During English, through shared reading, book talk and in small groups with a teacher or a teaching assistant through guided reading.
- Some one-to-one reading with teaching assistants, volunteers or the teacher for assessment purposes and for those experiencing difficulties.

As well as the above, pupils take part in early morning Cracking Comprehension sessions and have regular story times to develop a love of reading. They also have 'VIPERS' lessons in which they learn to distinguish between the different reading skills required to answer comprehension questions. These skills are outlined below:

Vocabulary: Pupils draw about their knowledge of vocabulary to understand the text.

Inference: Pupils learn the technique of finding answers from clues and from prior knowledge rather than directly.

Prediction: Pupils predict what they think will happen based on the information they have been given.

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Explanation: Pupils explain their preferences, thoughts and opinions about the text.

Retrieval: Pupils identify and explain the key features of fiction and non-fiction texts such as: characters, events and information.

Sequencing: Pupils sequence the key events in the story.

Phonics

Phonics is taught daily in the Foundation Stage and KS1 either through English lessons, and discrete teaching. Phonics is taught with the principle that it is a tool for reading. The written aspects associated with it are taught in spelling sessions and handwriting sessions and in other areas across the curriculum. In Year 1, children take the Phonics Screening Test to assess their knowledge of all the 44 phonemes learned in Reception and Year 1 and their ability to blend these phonemes for reading. If pupils do not meet the expected standard, we prepare the most appropriate support for these children to help them catch up, through extra phonics sessions. These children will re-take the phonics screening check in the June of Year 2. If pupils have still not met the required standard by the end of KS1, they will be given intervention support in KS2.

Throughout Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, we use books closely matched to the phonics stage teachers have assessed them to be at. Reception children will usually be at stages 2 and 3; Year 1 will be at stages 4 and 5 and Year 2 at stages 6 and beyond). Children's books from a range of publishers have been carefully selected and grouped to provide progression through 13 stages from very simple texts (Stage 2) to texts for fluent readers (Stages 10, 11, 12 & 13). Stage 1 is a pre-school level which involves exploring and experimenting with sounds and words, distinguishing between speech sounds, recognising some words that rhyme and providing a string of rhyming words. It is assumed that most children will have had these experiences **before** starting school which is why pupils start at stage 2. In Reception, teachers will not place pupils on the scheme until they feel they are ready. Most children will progress steadily through the 10 -13 stages over a three to four year period. However, it is important to remember that children do develop as readers at different rates. The stages are linked to phonic phases and children must be **secure and consistent** in the skills in each stage before they are moved onto the next stage. Pupils are encouraged to choose a new book twice a week and given a 'Reading Record' in which parents record their child's progress. These are not written in by teacher's as they keep their own records, but are monitored regularly to ensure that pupils are changing their books regularly and are being supported with their reading at home.

Pupils are also encouraged to visit the school library either during school hours or before and after school.

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Reading at Key Stage 2

In KS2, pupils reading comprehension skills are further developed through daily 'VIPERS' and 'Cracking Comprehension' sessions with pupils experiencing increasingly challenging texts and questions. They are also taught the further skill of '*summarising*' in which they learn to summarise the main points of a denser text with more than one paragraph.

It is assumed that by this stage, pupils are able to read independently and are encouraged to read a wide variety of texts which they may choose from the school library. Support is provided for pupils who have not yet reached the 'independent' stage through 1-1 reading, phonics interventions, where appropriate, and booster sessions.

Aims for Writing

Writing is closely related to reading - the two activities reinforce each other. As with reading, it is important that children learn to write independently from an early stage. We encourage children to think of themselves as 'writers' as soon as they enter school.

We encourage children to:

- see writing as an enjoyable as well as purposeful activity;
- use writing increasingly as a tool for extending and clarifying their thoughts;
- develop their skills in punctuation, grammar, spelling, choice of vocabulary and composition through a variety of activities and reinforce these through all areas of the curriculum;
- write in different forms for different purposes and audiences: to communicate to each other, create imaginary worlds, explore and describe experience, organise and explain information, imagine and explore feelings and ideas, use language creatively to engage the reader, inform, explain and persuade;
- write coherently about a wide range of topics, organising their writing in a form and style appropriate to the purpose, content and audience by providing models of each style;
- produce writing that is increasingly different from speech and understand that it has its own distinctive conventions, structures and vocabulary;
- write with increasing technical accuracy;
- compose writing both on paper and through the use of ICT using different formats and layouts to present work;
- discuss and respond critically to their own and other pupils' writing, analysing strengths and how to make improvements;
- plan, draft, revise, proof read and redraft their written work to improve and develop content, style and accuracy of writing;

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- develop their own independent, distinctive and original styles;
- develop a legible, fluent style of handwriting and to take care over presentation;
- present their ideas in various ways, including the use of ICT to reflect the increasingly technological world we live in.

In addition to this, English skills including writing, composition, handwriting, spelling and grammar are developed through the CLPE core books list and the 'Power of Reading' teaching sequences and approaches and these are further enhanced across the curriculum. Provision is made for children who require extra support through intervention (booster groups) and differentiated class teaching (see section on Inclusion).

Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation

We view spelling, grammar and punctuation as part of the formal conventions of the writing system, along with punctuation and handwriting. Pupils are taught spelling strategies both discretely and through learning across the curriculum and they undertake a weekly spelling test using words from the English Curriculum words list from their year group

At Gresham we enable children to:

- understand the alphabetic code and spell accurately in order to communicate effectively and independently in writing;
- understand the conventions of English spelling in order to be able to encode and spell independently and accurately;
- be creative , take risks and use ambitious vocabulary;
- proof read their work accurately.

The spellings and aspects of grammar for each year group are taken from:

- The National Curriculum for English (2014)
- The Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage (2014)
- Letters and Sounds

Every class is taught the conventions of spelling, punctuation and grammar whether discretely, if the class teacher feels it appropriate, for example, if they feel a particular skill needs reinforcing, or as part of a writing or reading lesson where pupils are given the opportunity to investigate spelling patterns and conventions, increase their awareness of grammatical structures as well as know the terminology for these structures as set out in the 2014 National Curriculum. They have opportunities to practise punctuation skills by proof-reading texts, re-drafting their own work and dictations. They will also be given a weekly spelling test; children are given a list of no more than 10 words (although this can

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be flexible according to the pupils' needs) from the spelling lists and spelling patterns as set out in the English Curriculum which they will be tested on during the following week. These are reinforced throughout the week through spelling sessions or through opportunities for extended writing in both fiction and non-fiction forms. At Gresham we recognise that children learn spellings in many different ways and that spelling tests are not the single, most appropriate way for children to learn spellings. We ensure that spellings are taught through a variety of strategies and that those who find spellings difficult are given opportunities to find ways to retain spelling patterns which are suited to their individual needs (see section on Inclusion).

As with reading, we value the involvement of parents highly and most especially in helping our children to practise and learn spellings at home.

Support for Parents

Parents are supported to help their children learn at home via;

- parent meetings at the start of the year;
- curriculum workshops (e.g Spag, reading and maths)
- targeted materials for use at home e.g. spelling lists, book lists
- Home Learning sheets

Handwriting

For those whom teachers feel are ready, based on initial assessments, pupils are taught pre-cursive script from the moment they start school. Individual letters are taught with the entry and exit stroke and teachers model this whenever it is appropriate to do so. A copy of the school's handwriting script is sent home to reception parents and they are encouraged to practise this at home. Teachers provide opportunities to practise and improve their handwriting and encourage pupils to develop a fluent legible style. Teachers model the agreed style consistently across the school. In all classes, pupils are given the opportunity to develop their handwriting skills, either in a discreet session or within an English lesson, with the lesson also focusing on improving presentation. It is up to individual teachers to assess their pupils' handwriting needs and plan accordingly for handwriting practise and improvement in presentation.

The contribution of English in other Curriculum areas

The skills that children develop in English are linked to, and applied in, every subject of our curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work at school. Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links in IPC

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(International Primary Curriculum) and other subject areas.

They will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum, with a particular focus in our school of writing through all subject areas where the same standard of writing is expected as seen in English books.

Principles for Inclusion

We recognise the fact that there are children of widely different abilities in all classes and we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child.

We achieve this by:

- asking questions and setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks tailored to the abilities of the different children, i.e. based on the individual and small group teaching that those children have participated in;^[L]_[SEP]
- where possible, using teaching assistants to support, lead and challenge the work of individual children or groups of children.

Where particular pupils have learning requirements which go beyond the provision described above, and which must be addressed in order to overcome barriers to learning, for example as a result of lack of progress in English, a special educational need, disability, or linked to the pupils' progress in learning English as an additional language teachers will take account of these requirements by;

- Making provision where necessary to support individuals or groups of pupils to enable them to participate effectively in the English curriculum in the classroom;
- Ensuring that very specific and measurable targets, are used for every child who is working below the expected standard for English, (whose progress will not necessarily be shown using a statistical measure) by means of 'Small Steps Trackers' and/or teachers' individual records of these pupils and that these are updated regularly and are used to feed into the pupils' Passports for Learning.
- Taking account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the pupil. In many cases the action necessary to respond to an individual's requirements for curriculum access will be met through greater differentiation of tasks and materials, consistent with school-based intervention as set out in the SEN Code of Practice. Where pupils need access to specialist equipment or adapted activities teachers will refer to and implement the pupils' statement of special educational needs and work closely with representatives of other agencies who may be

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- supporting the pupil.
- Providing booster group sessions either before school or during assembly times, as appropriate.

Special Education Needs

Children's special educational needs in English will be identified and met, as far as possible, by the class teacher. The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities coordinator (SENDCo) will also advise and give practical support.

Intervention programmes

In the event that we identify children who are falling behind their peers and we believe could catch up with some targeted support, we will endeavour to provide specific and appropriate interventions. In this case, we will strive to facilitate the release of a trained adult to implement that programme on a regular basis for the prescribed duration. The programmes we use to raise attainment include: Croydon Literacy Support, one to one English tuition and one to one Speech and Language support with appropriately trained Teaching Assistants.

Pupils in receipt of the Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) are subject to close monitoring of their progress and attainment and their progress is tracked every term. Funding is used to help close the gaps via additional support from teachers, support staff and outside agencies where necessary.

English as an Additional Language (EAL) and Ethnic Minority Achievement (EMA)

These children are supported in language and classroom work, as far as possible, by the class teacher and where particular needs are identified, by an assigned teaching assistant.

Equal Opportunities

The full and effective participation and progression of all pupils is achieved by:

- acknowledging and valuing the variety of different experiences, interests, social and cultural backgrounds of pupils and using such differences constructively to raise confidence and self-esteem;
- ensuring access to learning at an individual level, through differentiated teaching and learning strategies;
- setting high expectations and providing appropriate learning opportunities for

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- pupils from all social backgrounds, ethnic groups and for those who are disabled;
- providing texts from a range of cultures and which are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- providing resources to support specific learning difficulties.

Planning

Clear and careful planning is important to the success of the teaching and learning of English at Gresham. Lessons are planned with reference to the objectives contained within the National Curriculum for English. We use a broad range of resources, books and websites as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the English Curriculum. These include: CLPE Power of Reading, The Literacy Shed, Pobble 365, TES Elements, Twinkl etc.

The English Curriculum details long-term teaching objectives. Our yearly teaching programme identifies the key objectives in English that we teach to each year.

Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan for the teaching of English. This lists the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes for each lesson, and gives details of how the lessons are to be taught and their differentiated challenges.

Planning also includes groups of children whom teachers, along with the English subject leader, have identified as pupils who are in need of specific, targeted support. These will vary from class to class and may include a group of pupils who need to be challenged to reach 'Greater Depth' or pupils who are lacking in confidence in a particular area and need some specific support in order to make accelerated progress.

We plan the activities in English so that they build on the children's prior learning. While we give children of all abilities the opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding, we also ensure progression in the schemes of work, so that there is an increasing challenge for the children as they move up through the school.

Record-keeping and Assessment

See assessment policy.

Assessment for Learning (AFL)

See assessment policy.

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Monitoring and Evaluation

This will be done through a variety of ways which include:

- INSET, staff meetings and informal discussions to share ideas, review progress and highlight areas for development;
- The monitoring by the Headteacher/Deputy Head and English leader of pupils progress data which will inform discussions in termly pupil progress meetings;
- Classroom observations by the Headteacher/Deputy Head and/or English leader and working alongside colleagues to help identify strengths and areas for development and to provide support to individual staff as appropriate;
- Results of both internal and external testing;
- Teacher's own evaluation of lessons;
- Examining samples of children's work;
- Talking informally to children to gain their view of their own progress and involve them in self-assessment;
- Regular monitoring of resources;
- Looking at classroom organisation;
- Reviewing of assessment outcomes and data to evaluate the quality of learning in English throughout the school;
- Checking that within a key stage there is coverage of the full English curriculum in line with national curriculum requirements.
- Checking that there are appropriate opportunities to raise multicultural and gender issues;
- Ensuring that the time spent on the teaching of English is in line with national recommendations;
- Looking at LEA inspectors reports, OFSTED and reports/comments of other visitors (governors, visiting teachers, advisers etc)
- School Governor oversees standards in English
- School Governors review attainment and progress on a termly basis and visit the school to monitor effectiveness e.g. via Learning Walks, Governor Days and conduct Book Looks.

Developing English at Home

We recognise that the role of the family is central in supporting the child's language development as a speaker, reader and writer.

- Parents are informed of when their child has moved up a reading stage and the home learning policy is linked to developing English skills at home.

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- Teachers provide guidance, at formal and informal meetings, on what families can do to extend their child’s competence in using spoken and written language.
- Parents/Carers are informed of how to reinforce what is taught at school at home through Curriculum Workshops, Parent Evenings and a written overview (half-term on a page) of what will be covered throughout the half term.
- Pupil books are sent home for every half term for one weekend to make parents more aware of their children’s targets so that they are in a better position to help them reach these..

Guidelines for marking and feedback in English (taken from Assessment Policy)

See assessment policy.

Review date: April 2020

Next review: April 2022

Confirmation that the policy for English, in respect of Gresham Primary School, has been discussed, approved and ratified by the Governing Body:

Signed by:

Chair of Governors:Date:.....

Headteacher: Date:

Approved at the Governing Body Meeting on: