



Grammar and Punctuation Policy

1. Teaching and Learning

Grammar is concerned with the way in which sentences are used in spoken language, in reading and in writing. It is also about developing pupils' curiosity about language and their capacity to observe and reflect which will in turn enable them to develop more control and choice in their use of language. Grammar helps us to organise and make shape of what we are trying to say.

Understanding the concept of a sentence and manipulation of different sentence types is a key factor in ensuring children's progress in writing. It allows children to become more confident and versatile in their use of language. It is not the naming or the learning of a set of arbitrary rules for correct English.

"The grammar of our first language is learnt naturally and implicitly through interactions with other speakers and from reading. Explicit knowledge of grammar is, however, very important, as it gives us more conscious control and choice in our language. Building this knowledge is best achieved through a focus on grammar within the teaching of reading, writing and speaking. Once pupils are familiar with a grammatical concept (for example 'modal verb'), they should be encouraged to apply and explore this concept in the grammar of their own speech and writing and to note where it is used by others. Young pupils, in particular, use more complex language in speech than in writing, and teachers should build on this, aiming for a smooth transition to sophisticated writing." - Primary Curriculum 2014 (English Appendix 2)

Punctuation helps readers make sense of written texts and helps writers convey their meaning accurately. It chunks texts into meaningful units, making a variety of grammatical boundaries and is inextricably linked to grammatical features. The most effective way of teaching punctuation is in context and linked to grammatical structures.

Grammar and punctuation knowledge enables writers and speakers to:

- Control and use language to meet the needs of purpose (genre) and audience
- Control sentence structure for impact through:
 - Construction
 - Expansion
 - Manipulation
 - Reduction
 - Transformation
- Proof read, edit and revise their writing

Children need to know:

- What a sentence is

- That they can't always write the way they speak
- That grammar and punctuation changes according to text type and purpose
- That grammar and punctuation can be manipulated for effect

Underpinning all this is having a language to 'talk about grammar'.

2. Entitlement and Curriculum Provision

Grammar and punctuation are taught as part of a planned whole-school programme, following the 2014 Primary Curriculum – see '*English Appendix 2: Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation*'.

This table sets out when concepts should first be introduced, not necessarily when they should be completely understood. It is important to recognise that having being 'exposed' to a concept, children may still not understand that concept by the end of the academic year. It is therefore paramount that content in earlier years be revisited in subsequent years to consolidate knowledge and build on pupils' understanding. Teachers should also go beyond the content set out if, in their professional judgement, they feel it is appropriate.

3. Role of the Teacher

- To follow the school's grammar and punctuation policy enabling every child to develop as a confident and independent writer.
- To create a learning ethos and environment that promotes confidence.
- To provide direct teaching and accurate modelling of grammar and punctuation.
- To ensure that all pupils are suitably challenged and engaged in fun, fast paced, interactive learning.
- To ensure that children have the time to talk about and discuss language choices.
- To ensure that children can explain the choices they have made and how they impact upon the reader.
- To observe pupils, monitor and assess their progress and development, through questioning, differentiated tasks and regular developmental marking.

4. Continuity and Progression

Research shows that the most effective teaching of grammar and punctuation is that which:

- Introduces grammatical constructions and terminology at a point in the teaching sequence which is relevant to the focus of learning.
- Focuses on effects and constructing meanings, not on the feature or terminology itself.
- Aims to open up a repertoire of possibilities, not to teach about 'correct' ways of writing.

These three principles underpin the practical approaches and strategies to the teaching of grammar and punctuation at Lawley Primary School.

As a simple overview we will follow these basic steps:

- Teach children to understand the concept of a sentence and how to represent an idea in a sentence.
- Teach children how to use different sentence types to structure and connect ideas in a range of ways.
- Teach children how to add detail by using specific nouns, effective verbs and developing noun, adjectival and adverbial phrases.
- Teach children how to manipulate sentences – linking and expanding ideas in sentences using clauses and changing word order.
- Teach children how to link sentences within and across paragraphs.
- Teach children how to make choices to create effects.

In Reception, the accurate use of grammar in speech and writing is consistently modelled from the outset. Children learn the difference between numbers, letters and words. They learn what makes a simple ‘sentence’ and, through whole class and small group teaching, they are ‘exposed’ to a range of punctuation such as inverted commas, capital letters and full stops.

In Years 1 to 6, grammar and punctuation are taught as part of a planned whole-school programme, following the 2014 Primary English National Curriculum – see ‘*English Appendix 2: Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation*’.

5. Planning

“Researchers agree that it is more effective to teach punctuation, sentence variety and usage in the context of writing and reading than to approach the topic by teaching isolated skills.” – Chin 2000

Following the 2014 Primary Curriculum (English) requirements, teachers identify and plan for grammar and punctuation teaching, using the following key principles:

- Exploration of and response to examples in texts used – considering the way writers use grammar and punctuation to impact (quality and purpose) on readers.
- Sentence games and word play activities to embed and play about with the language and feature.
- Use of examples as models to experiment with and provide initial scaffolds.
- Direct and explicit teaching of grammatical features relevant to the writing and introduced at the appropriate time.
- Consistent use of terminology - see 2014 Primary Curriculum (English) glossary p80-98.
- Sufficient time to review and rework editing through improvement time

The teaching of grammar and punctuation is taught and delivered using a ‘balanced’ approach. Beyond ‘contextual learning’ other opportunities may be:

- Oral/mental starters within English lessons
- Phonics sessions
- Early morning work

- Homework

6. Assessment

Teachers assess the development of children's grammar and punctuation through observed application in their written work and speech. Often, success criteria within a literacy lesson will be grammar based, enabling teachers to formally assess whether children are successfully applying what they have been taught. Opportunities to address any problems or misconceptions are provided through regular developmental and AfL marking.

7. Inclusion

Where pupils make limited progress in their confidence and ability to correctly apply grammar and punctuation to their writing, intervention programmes may be set up, following Pupil Progress Meetings with Phase Leaders and in consultation with the SENCo. Both class teachers and TAs lead these intervention groups, depending on the needs of the whole year group.

8. The Learning Environment

Classrooms display wall charts, grammatical word collections and examples of pupils' investigations to stimulate, support and provide information. Pupils have good access to a range of appropriate dictionaries and thesauruses.