



English Policy

Adopted by Ashby Willesley Primary School on:	Date: 23 August 2021
This policy will be reviewed	As policies, procedures and regulations are updated.
Version	1

For the purpose of this policy, the 'Head Teacher' refers to the Executive Head teacher, Head teacher or Head of School.

English Policy

Intent

Our English Curriculum ensures children communicate their ideas through: speaking and listening and writing and become confident in the principles of spelling. Children will develop a love for reading and, through imaginative and purposeful links, will become passionate about their English skills, showing creativity and flair.

Aims and Vision

Our aims in teaching English are that all children should aspire to the following expectations.

- Develop positive attitudes towards books so that reading is a pleasurable activity.
- Read a varied selection of texts whilst gaining an increased level of fluency and understanding.
- Develop a range of reading strategies for approaching reading: using and applying phonological, contextual, grammatical and graphic knowledge.
- Use reading as a means of gathering information to support their learning throughout the entire curriculum.
- Enjoy writing in different contexts and for different purposes and audiences, including themselves.
- Write with increasing awareness of the conventions of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Form letters correctly, leading to a fluent and legible, cursive handwriting style.
- Develop listening and comprehension skills through a variety of means including reciprocal and non-reciprocal situations.
- Develop their spoken language skills in drama activities and as a valuable tool and progression to develop their writing skills.
- Express opinions, articulate feelings and formulate appropriate responses to increasingly complex questions and instructions.

THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

The structure of English teaching is based upon the English National Curriculum guidelines and covers all of the recommended objectives to ensure that a broad and balanced English curriculum is taught to all pupils at Ashby Willesley.

To ensure that there is adequate time for developing their reading, writing and grammar, punctuation and spelling skills, each class in KS2 has a dedicated English lesson each day, with a duration of approximately 60 minutes and KS1 having four lessons a week with a duration of 45-60 minutes. Opportunities for extra reading and extended writing are planned when appropriate. Phonics is taught throughout KS1.

The English skills that the children develop are utilised and supported in every area of the curriculum and can be directly linked with other subjects. For example, formal letter writing within English may be developed within a history topic and instructional writing could be linked to work completed in Science.

STRATEGIES AND PLANNING

Each year group has a range of teaching materials available from which the teacher plan lessons. However, we have planned our teaching of English around our curriculum topic headings, key texts and educational visits participated in and the planning ensures coverage of the National Curriculum. Work is differentiated to meet the needs of the pupils and to ensure progression within each year group.

PROVISION AND DIFFERENTIATION

- By recognising that some children may need specific help with their English skills e.g. if they are dyslexic, although they may have other strengths within the subject.
- By giving extra support to children who need extra opportunities for reinforcement.
- By ensuring that pupils with particular ability and flair for English are extended through the use of additional, more demanding, open ended tasks and planned challenges within each lesson.
- Pupil Premium children work in small groups, as identified, and participate in appropriate intervention groups each week to aid their progress and attainment in English.

APPROACHES TO READING

Teachers model reading strategies during shared reading sessions, whilst children have the opportunity to develop reading strategies and to discuss texts in detail during guided reading sessions. In KS1 and KS2, children also have the opportunity to read 1-1 or in a small group with an adult at least once a week. As the children move through the school, opportunities to read independently for a sustained period of time are offered to them.

Decodable books are provided for pupils starting in EYFS, which match our Sounds Write phonics approach within Willesley. Pupils also have the opportunity to choose an additional book to develop their vocabulary and interest for reading with an adult at home. Over the next few years, our banded books will be replaced with further reading books which support our new phonics approach ensuring effective progression of skills and fluent reading. Teaching assistants support reading activities to ensure that children have more frequent opportunities to read with adults.

Many exciting and rewarding activities are arranged in school to promote the pleasure and knowledge that can be gained from books, i.e. Book Weeks and reading challenges. Book Weeks include opportunities to bring books alive through planned activities and reading sessions in mixed classes. Where possible, visits by: published authors, skilled story tellers, performances by professional theatre groups are organised in addition to making books and the use of drama to illustrate the texts studied.

In Key Stage 2, children choose books to take home and read. We have a selection of banded books available to cater for all reading needs. In lower KS2, Accelerated Reader is used to assess each individual pupils' reading ability to identify their proximal zone of development where they can select books that they can comprehend and read with greater fluency whilst providing challenge and interest. After reading each book, a short comprehension quiz is carried out by the pupil to assess their understanding of what has been read. This is then closely monitored by their teacher. These high quality books also aid the reading of our disadvantaged children within the whole of KS2 and support those attaining below the expected reading standard in each year group.

We encourage all readers to share a book at home with their grown-ups and reading rewards are provided for doing so. We believe that this not only helps to develop inferential skills, but also supports a lifelong love of reading. Throughout the Key Stage, children become more independent in recording what they have read in their reading contact books. We recognise the value of adults (both in school and at home) reading aloud to children, in order to improve their grasp of story language; enthuse them with a love of books and to inspire them to become great authors themselves.

APPROACHES TO WRITING

We aim to develop the children's ability to produce well structured, detailed writing in which the meaning is made clear and which engages the interest of the reader. Attention is paid throughout the school to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling. Our approach to teaching writing covers the 'transcription' and 'composition' requirements of The National Curriculum (2013). To support our teaching of writing, staff refer to a range of strategies from key influences such as the 'Power of Reading' and the 'Talk for Writing' approach by Pie Corbett.

Teachers are flexible in their selection of these English experts' strategies to suit the needs of the children and text type being taught.

Teachers model writing strategies and the use of phonics and spelling strategies in shared writing sessions. Guided writing sessions are used to target specific needs of both groups and individuals, whilst children have opportunities to write at length in extended independent writing sessions at regular points during a term.

The children are given frequent opportunities, in school, to write in different contexts using quality texts as a model and for a variety of purposes and audiences. The text types, which are required to be covered by the National Curriculum (2014), are outlined in our long term plans for each year group to ensure that there is a breadth of coverage. They may be asked to produce their writing on their own or as part of group.

We recognise the important role that computing has to play in our school in the development of English skills. There are many opportunities for children to improve their writing inspired by drama techniques and film clips. Interactive technology is used regularly to enhance the teaching of English.

We use a cursive handwriting style throughout the school and writing aids are provided to those pupils whose fine motor skills need supporting.

APPROACHES TO GRAMMAR AND SPELLING

The teaching of Grammar and Spelling is in line with the requirements of The National Curriculum (2014). Our expectations were created as a whole staff and are outlined in a progression grid. It details the expectations for the teaching of grammar and the agreed terminology (from the NC glossary) which must be used by each year group. Grammar is taught discreetly each week and embedded within English lessons where appropriate.

To be able to spell correctly is an essential life skill. When spelling become automatic, pupils are able to concentrate on the content of their writing and the making of meaning. Whilst we note that spelling is not the most important aspect of writing, confidence in spelling can have a profound effect on the writer's self-image. We aim to use explicit, interactive teaching which draws children's attention to the origins, structure and meaning of words and their parts, the shape and sound of words, the letter patterns within them and the various ways they can learn these patterns.

In EYFS and Key Stage One, we use the Sounds-Write Quality First Phonics programme to deliver our phonics teaching. This will eventually progress into Key Stage Two to support pupils who have yet to grasp the various sounds and spelling patterns. Sounds-Write starts with what all children acquire naturally and right from the start, the sounds of their own language and teaches the letters or combinations of letters which represent those sounds when we write. Sounds Write is a Sensory-Motor approach to teaching reading and spelling. It requires: visual discrimination of letter shapes; auditory discrimination of the sounds in speech (we always say the sound as we write it) and integration of auditory and visual skills (Sounds match to spellings, spellings match to sounds).

Phonics is taught daily for 30 minutes across EYFS and Key Stage One through whole class instruction progressing through the 3 main parts of the Sounds-Write programme; The Initial Code, The Extended Code and the teaching of Polysyllabic Words. Whole class instructions are supplemented through small group practice, one to one support and extension activities to enable all children in our school to be equipped with the necessary concepts, skills and knowledge to become independent in reading, writing and spelling.

Through the teaching of systematic phonics, our aim is for children to become confident, accurate and independent readers and spellers by the end of Key Stage One. Attainment in phonics is measured by the Phonics Screening Test at the end of Year 1.

From Year two and into KS2 the children move towards using their phonic knowledge to help them to understand spelling rules and patterns. We teach children to use their growing understanding of the morphology and etymology of words to support their spelling. Helping the children to understand how to use and apply known spelling patterns (and to develop strategies to tackle unknown words) is the key to helping them to become successful spellers. Spelling skills are taught each week and are also embedded in English lessons so that strategies and rules can be taught in the context of writing.

When actually writing, children should be concentrating on higher order thinking skills and should simply 'have a go' at spelling and underline words that they are unsure of with a dotted line. When marking children's work, we do not correct all spelling errors, instead we focus on high frequency words, topic words and those studied in spelling sessions. The teaching and development of spelling will be encouraged as part of the home-school partnership and weekly spellings will be sent home to practise, in readiness for an informal test in school. Children will be given words according to their developmental needs, so the amount and level of difficulty may vary.

SPELLING STRATEGIES

- All classes have a set of spelling activities to support regular opportunities for children to practice learning spellings that they need next.
- The 'Look, Say, Cover, Write and Check' approach to learning the spelling of words will be taught and encouraged however, this approach alone will not be suitable for every pupil.
- Children will be taught to look for common letter strings, patterns in words and spelling rules.
- Spelling games encourage children to look closely at words.
- Where possible, children are encouraged to identify their own spelling errors and edit accordingly and check spellings.
- Sounding out words phonemically and breaking them down into syllables is another strategy for pupils to be aware of.
- Drawing on analogies to known words, roots, derivations, word families, morphology and familiar spelling patterns creates a fascination into the English language.
- Identifying words which pose a particular challenge are identified and pupils learn them by using mnemonics, multi-sensory re-enforcement and memorising critical features
- The effective use of a dictionary is taught to find words beyond the initial letter and the use of a thesaurus is taught and encouraged to expand their vocabulary awareness and choice.

ENGLISH ASSESSMENT

Informal assessment occurs throughout every lesson through discussion and evaluation of the children's work. This is invaluable in enabling the teacher to check that children have grasped the main teaching focus of that lesson.

More formal records for each pupil will consist of a range of procedures. These are listed below.

- At the end of KS1 and KS2 the pupils' reading and writing attainment are assessed formally within the Standardised Assessment Tests (SATs). KS2 pupils are also formally assessed in a Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar Assessment and KS1 pupils are informally assessed.
- Pieces of unaided and levelled written work (kept in pupils' Progress Writing book) – teachers provide accurate teacher assessments; based on their analysis of pupils' work and the use of TAFs in Y2 and Y6 and 'The Symphony Assessment System' for the rest of the school.
- We moderate pupils' work, as a whole staff, at least termly. Levels are agreed between professionals. We seek to moderate with other schools whenever possible.
- Personal targets - children are expected to work towards achieving their personal targets through self assessment, aided by teacher assessment. Identified children who have not made expected progress across the year are targeted within intervention groups and sessions.
- Work is assessed via teacher feedback, and improvements are encouraged through highlighting and recording next steps.

- Spelling Tests are carried out weekly (Y3 upwards). Phonics screening is undertaken at the end of Year 1 and for those not achieving the expected standard, are re-assessed at the end of Year 2.
- Reading and writing assessments are recorded on a tracking system (OTrack), which is kept updated by the teachers, who analyse the data along with the senior management team.
- Pupils on our SEN records are identified and monitored. Progress towards targets in their individual educational plans (IEPs) are analysed by class teachers and the SENCo and communicated to parents.

CROSS-CURRICULUM LINKS

Cross-curricular links are made in specific subject areas:

- These occur in all subject areas

ROLE OF THE HEADTEACHER

In consultation with the English Subject leader, the Head teacher:

- determines the ways English should support, enrich and extend the curriculum;
- decides the provision and allocation of resources;
- decides ways in which developments can be assessed, and records maintained;
- ensures that English is used in a way to achieve the aims and objectives of the school;
- ensures that there is an English policy, and identifies an English subject leader.

ROLE OF THE ENGLISH SUBJECT LEADER

The English subject leader should be able to:

- ensure the development of a scheme of work for the English curriculum. This will follow the New Primary Framework guidelines and will be built around the school's curriculum topics and cover aspects of the English National Curriculum statements;
- promote the integration of English within appropriate teaching and learning activities;
- manage the provision and deployment of resources and give guidance on classroom organisation support;
- inspire colleagues to deliver high quality teaching and learning opportunities;
- analyse data across the whole school to identify strengths and weaknesses in outcomes; planning for improvement accordingly;
- write, monitor and evaluate an action plan for English for the School Improvement Plan;
- lead INSET within the school, and investigate suitable courses elsewhere;
- act as a contact point between the school and support agencies, including schools within the Symphony Group;
- provide technical expertise;
- lead the evaluation and review of the school's English policy;
- bid for and manage the budget for this curriculum area;
- monitor and review the English provision within the school.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The teaching of English will be monitored through the School Improvement Plan by the English subject leader in the first instance and then by the Senior Leadership Team and the Head teacher. KS1 and KS2 SATS results are analysed and areas for development prioritised. Governors are kept informed via a subject report as scheduled in the Monitoring and Evaluation programme. The

Governor(s) assigned to monitoring English will be kept abreast of developments, progress and changes within the subject.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health and Safety issues in English include the safe teaching of appropriate procedures when using a range of equipment such as: iPads and laptops. The children are taught to be aware of their own and others' safety and how to be safe online through the teaching of E-Safety. Children also learn about what constitutes appropriate reading material and are aware about how to report anything inappropriate that they may have read or seen. They are expected to display appropriate behaviour at all times.

EQUALITY STATEMENT

At Ashby Willesley Primary School, we actively seek to encourage equity and equality through our teaching. As such, we seek to advance the equality of opportunity between people who share any of the following characteristic:

- gender;
- ethnicity;
- disability;
- religion or belief;
- sexual orientation;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy or maternity.

The use of stereotypes under any of the above headings will always be challenged.

INCLUSION

Our school is an inclusive school. We aim to make all pupils feel included in all our activities. We try to make all our teaching fully inclusive. We recognise the entitlement of all pupils to a balanced, broadly-based curriculum. We have systems in place for early identification of barriers to their learning and participation so that they can engage in school activities with all other pupils. We acknowledge the need for high expectations and suitable targets for all children.