



# Ashby Willesley Primary School

## English Policy *2018-2021*

This policy is reviewed every three years and was agreed by the Governing Body of Ashby Willesley Primary School **and will be reviewed again in Sept 2021**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Chair of Teaching and Learning

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# English Policy

## **Aims and Vision**

Our aims in teaching English are that all children should:

- 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 plans 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. The children have a Progress Writing book that they take with them through the school as is used to record individual writing progress.

## **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, 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.

A range of reading schemes are used to support early readers as well as book banded ‘real books’ used for guided 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 Week’ and our visiting ‘Reading dog’. 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 also have a selection of banded books available to all classes to cater for all reading needs. Those children still learning to read have access to a range of books, which are at an appropriate interest age, but are at an accessible reading age. These help lower attaining and SEN children to continue to grow in confidence as readers with a text that appears appropriate for their age group.

We encourage all readers to share a book at home with their grown-ups. 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 (2013), 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 the Nelson Handwriting Scheme in school to help children develop fluent, cursive, clear and legible joined up writing (see Handwriting Policy for further details).

## **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 the Early Years and KS1, daily phonics is the key to the children's learning of spelling. This is taught using the Phonics Play programme. Children are taught to blend sounds to read and segment to spell. At the same time, they learn words which are not phonically regular (common exception words).

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 tricky 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 as 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 will vary.

Grammar and spelling are assessed every term using NFER assessments in Years 3, 4 and 5, which are then recorded on our tracking system and used to gain a secure teacher assessment and to identify areas that need further teaching and consolidation. Parents may like to refer to our website for further information on key words, patterns and rules that are taught in each year group.

## **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:

- 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 marking and improvements encouraged through highlighting and recording next steps.
- Spelling Tests are carried out weekly. Phonics screening is undertaken at the end of Year 1 and Y2, when they did it in Y1, and Y6 SATs Spelling Tests.
- Reading and writing assessments are recorded on a tracking system which is kept updated by the teachers who analyse the data along with the senior management team.
- Pupils on the SEN records are identified and monitored. Progress towards targets in their individual passport is analysed by teachers and the SENCo

### **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 a English subject leader.

### **ROLE OF THE ENGLISH SUBJECT LEADER**

The English subject leader should:

- 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 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. 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 dealing with e.g. overhead projectors, tape recorders etc. The children are taught to be aware of their own and others' safety. Children also learn about e.g. what constitutes appropriate reading material. 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.