



English Policy

Rationale

Competence in English enables children to communicate effectively at home, at school and in the wider world.

The skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing enable children to organize and express their own thoughts and to access the knowledge and ideas of others. These skills, together with confidence in the use of ICT, are a practical necessity in today's world. In addition to this, the ability to respond to literature at a personal and aesthetic level will enrich children's lives.

Aims

- To recognise and value the language skills that children have already acquired and to build on these, taking into account individual strengths and weaknesses.
- To develop children's understanding of both spoken and written English in order that they become enthusiastic, responsive and knowledgeable readers, able to evaluate and justify their preferences.
- To develop children's ability to communicate freely and effectively in spoken and written English.
- To encourage children to understand the function and importance of Standard English.

Speaking and Listening

Aims

- To enable children to express ideas, feelings and experiences clearly.
- To develop children's ability to talk confidently and listen carefully in a variety of contexts, with a growing understanding of the purpose and type of speaking and listening required.
- To enable children to engage the interest of the listener using varied vocabulary and expression
- To listen attentively and respond appropriately
- To develop features of Standard English vocabulary and grammar.

Objectives

Children will:

- Be provided with a range of situations, audiences and activities in order to develop increasing competence, precision and confidence
- Be provided with opportunities to develop skills through drama.
- Be provided with opportunities to develop specific group working skills through structured group discussion activities.
- Be provided with opportunities to extend their vocabulary and use of grammar.
- be taught to listen with increasing concentration, understanding and respect of each other's point of view.
- Be encouraged to participate and have their contributions valued. Provision will be made for pupils with SEN.
- Be given opportunities to use these skills throughout the curriculum.

Reading

Aims

- To teach children the necessary skills to enable them to become fluent and independent readers.
- To develop and extend the skills of analysis, prediction and interpretation.
- To enable children to respond to a range of texts and show an understanding of ideas, themes, events and characters.
- To develop a love of reading.

Objectives

Children will:

- Be encouraged to develop a love of books by sharing books with others and by reading independently.
- Be taught the skills required at each level to develop fluency, accuracy and understanding. At the early stages, teachers will teach and encourage children to use a 'phonics first' approach when decoding the written word.
- Be provided with a wide range of books and media texts.
- Have regular guided reading sessions with a teacher and/or LSA
- From Year 1 onwards, have regular opportunities for sustained, uninterrupted independent reading. A minimum of one session per week will be timetabled, with the length of session to be decided by the teacher.
- Be given opportunities to develop the higher order reading skills of inference and deduction.
- Be taught the skills necessary to retrieve information, including ICT and Library skills.

Writing

Aims

- For children to feel valued as writers and to appreciate the writing of others.
- To develop the skills necessary to produce accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- To be taught how to plan, draft and edit their writing.
- To enable children to write for a range of purposes and in different styles.
- To develop a legible and fluent style of joined handwriting.

Objectives

Children will:

- Be provided with opportunities to write for a range of readers, both real and imagined.
- Share work and examine the way that well-known authors write.
- Have experience of different types of writing and understand their purpose, e.g. to remember, communicate, organize, and develop ideas, and to express and inform.
- Organise, draft and edit their writing, either individually or collaboratively.
- Produce writing in a variety of forms, in legible handwriting or using word-processing / desktop publishing packages.
- Be given regular opportunities to practise and use these skills within and across all areas of the curriculum.

Phonics and Spelling

In line with the recommendations of the Rose Report and the Renewed Primary Strategy for Literacy Framework, children in Foundation Stage and Key Stage One are taught phonics on a daily basis. A 'phonics-first' approach has been adopted when teaching children to read independently. Teachers use a variety of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic strategies to engage and motivate the children in the rapid acquisition of phonic skills and knowledge. Teachers in Foundation Stage and Key Stage One follow the 'Letters and Sounds' teaching sequences and order of progression. Phonic reading schemes and other phonic resources are available to support teachers and to offer children regular, engaging and varied opportunities to practise, secure and develop their phonic knowledge and skills. Some children in Key Stage Two classes will also follow a discrete programme of phonics.

Spelling at Year 2 (once introduced at an appropriate stage) and in Key Stage Two follows the Literacy strategy Y2-Y3 spelling model, with children having 5 spelling sessions over a fortnight block. Children undertake spelling investigations to discover patterns, rules and exceptions. They are taught spelling strategies to help them become accurate spellers. All children receive phonic/spelling homework on a weekly basis. Parents are advised of how they can support their child at parent meetings and via the 'Helping Your Child with Spelling' booklet. This has been issued to parents of existing school children, is issued to new parents within the first term of school, and is available on the school website. Further detail of the agreed phonics and spelling policy is contained within the documents entitled 'Policy for Teaching Phonics and Spelling' and '5 Session Spelling – recommended model KS2'.

Handwriting and Presentation

The school's approach to the teaching of handwriting can be found in the documents listed below, including detailed guidance on the progression in skills and in standards of presentation:

- Handwriting Guidelines – 2007
- Staff Handbook '2007-2008 Presentation of Work'
- Handwriting patterns, formation and Joining
- Renewal Framework Objectives Strand 12 - Presentation

Our Approach to the Teaching of English

The school has decided to adopt the Renewed Primary Strategy for Literacy Framework, with each class having a daily English lesson, although these may vary in length according to the task and stage of learning. The Renewal Framework clearly identifies the objectives that should be met by children, the range of experiences which all pupils should have and the skills they should be taught.

Additional time is given to spelling, handwriting, guided and individual reading.

Speaking and Listening skills are developed by the class teacher, with children given opportunities to develop these throughout the curriculum.

Children in Reception Class follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, with the teacher selecting appropriate learning experiences to enable the children to meet the Communication, Language and Literacy objectives, within the context of the EYFS six areas of Learning and Development and the Early Learning Goals.

All children have an English target, which is reviewed and amended on a half-termly basis. Children's individual targets are set based on centrally-agreed school targets for reading, writing and speaking and listening, and reflect the current focus of the school's English work. Additional literacy support programmes are used with children in Y1 and in Y3 to Y6, as identified by teacher assessment and the 'Meeting the needs' document drawn up by the SENCO.

Equal Opportunities

All children have an entitlement to participate fully in English, in accordance with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy.

Planning, Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Long term planning

- Objectives and areas of experience are taken from the Renewed Primary Strategy for Literacy Framework.

Medium term planning

- Completed on a half-termly basis, with appropriate links being made to Letters and Sounds, Developing Early Writing, Grammar for Writing, and Spelling Bank.
- Wherever possible, links are made to others areas of the curriculum to give a context and real purpose to the work.

Short term planning

- Weekly objectives for literacy are included on the Weekly Learning Objectives sheet handed in to the headteacher on Mondays.
- Detailed weekly/unit plans are created by teachers for daily English lessons. These plans should include daily learning objectives, differentiated tasks and TA / teacher support where appropriate, and should show clear progression over the course of the unit , i.e. from reading and analysis, through teacher modelling, shared, paired and guided writing, to independent writing and review.
- Objectives relating to current English targets should be clearly marked on plans.
- Teachers have been advised to use the Somerset model of unit planning, which is based on the Renewed Framework units, objectives, teaching sequences and intended outcomes. Teaching sequences taken from the framework need to be adapted to fit the needs of the children within the class.
- Teachers in Foundation Stage and Key Stage One classes complete a weekly phonics plan, using the agreed planning format (Weekly Phonics Planner)
- Short term plans should be annotated with ongoing assessment observations and evaluated, so that necessary adjustments can be made to subsequent planning and areas of individual strength/weakness can be noted and addressed.

Children's work in English is assessed according to the school's Policy for Assessment.

Formative Assessment

Teacher assessment is used to inform planning and is carried out on a daily, weekly and half-termly basis.

It includes:

- spelling assessments
- regular, half termly assessments in writing assessment books. Work is levelled and progress against targets reviewed. Writing target trackers are completed.
- Notes on reading progress in home/school link books in Foundation Stage and Key Stage One
- Teacher notes from Guided Reading sessions, kept in Guided Reading folders. The school has decided to adopt the Somerset Model 'Assessing Reading', which shows part levels and the different Assessment Focus statements. This is used to inform and guide the focus of reading with a group, and can be used to record progress / areas of strength and /or weakness for a group.

- Phonic bookmarks and associated teacher records, phonic screening, phonic tracker, and keyword checklists at Foundation Stage and Key Stage One.
- Scrutiny of work

Summative Assessment

- Foundation Stage profile initial assessments are carried out in Term 1, with ongoing assessment thereafter.
- Letters and Sounds phonic assessment is carried out towards the beginning of Autumn, Spring and Summer terms. Phonic tracker is completed /updated, stored in Assessment folder and copy passed to English Co-ordinator.
- Spelling ages are assessed in September and March each year, for Y2 to Y6 inclusive, using NFER Single Word Spelling Test (introduced 2006-2007 academic year).
- NFER Nelson Reading Tests take place biannually in Years 2 -6.
- Children in Y1 are assessed using MIST in the Spring term.
- Statutory SATs take place in Years 2 and 6. Non-statutory SATs take place in Years 3, 4 and 5.

Marking

Marking is part of the assessment process and follows the school's Marking Policy.

Reporting to and Communicating with Parents

- At Foundation Stage and Key Stage One, a home-school book is used to record comments with regard to a child's reading.
- Reception and Year One children have a weekend book which prompts them when discussing out of school activities.
- Key Stage Two children have a Reading Journal and Homework diary where comments may be made. English tasks, including spellings, are given for homework.
- Children in Foundation Stage take home Sound Books and Key Word books, as well as phonic bookmarks, to allow parents to help with their learning.
- Children in Key Stage One take home spelling books for High Frequency words, as well as phonic bookmarks, to allow parents to help them with their learning.
- Children in Key Stage Two take home spelling bookmarks/journals, reading journals and homework diaries.

Parents are encouraged to meet with staff at Parent/Teacher Consultations and receive an annual written report at the end of the school year. National Curriculum levels are reported from Year 1 onwards. Foundation Stage Profiles, including the CLL area of development, are shared with parents in the Autumn and Summer terms.

The Role of the Co-ordinator

The English Co-ordinator is responsible, with the headteacher, for monitoring standards and levels of attainment in English within the school. This includes:

- assisting the headteacher with lesson observations and feedback
- assisting the headteacher with the analysis of test results across the school
- writing the school's English development plan
- ensuring that resources are available and appropriately deployed
- keeping abreast of relevant publications and information relating to the subject
- supporting staff and arranging support training if necessary
- co-ordinating the levelling of work across the school
- working with the SENCO to support children with identified needs
- reporting to and co-ordinating with the school's governing body

Resources

The English Co-ordinator is responsible for prioritising requirements for the year. In addition to the Renewed Primary Strategy for Literacy Framework and its associated resources, the core materials in use within the school are:

- Letters and Sounds (Phonics programme)
- ORT Floppy's phonics reading books (FS)
- Rigby Fast Phonics First (FS and KS1 interactive CD Rom)
- Rigby Phonics Reading Scheme books (FS and KS1)
- Read Write Inc. Phonics Reading Scheme books (FS and KS1)
- Rigby Guided Reader sets Y1, Y2 and into Y3
- Rigby Independent Readers FS through to Y3
- Oxford Reading Tree Main scheme for individual reading, inc. Treetops, throughout the school
- Ginn Lighthouse Guided Reading books throughout school
- Heinemann Focus English to support KS2 English
- Grammar Success (Oxford), Models for Writing (Ginn), and Pelican Interactive CD-roms (Longman) are also used at KS2 as appropriate
- Big Book Spelling and Cambridge Spelling used at KS2
- Spelling Through the Literacy Hour (LDA) used at KS1
- Nelson Handwriting font and resources are used from Foundation Stage onwards

The school also uses Resources 4 Learning as an additional source of Big books, guided reading sets and topic related reading materials.

Spiritual Development

Pupils are given opportunities to:

- Express personal thoughts, feelings and ideas in creative writing
- Understand human feelings (e.g. hopes and fears) through stories, which tell of human achievement
- Reflect on issues raised in texts (e.g. relationships and moral dilemmas)
- Explore values and attitudes expressed through text and language
- Experience and share a sense of wonder through the beauty of language used in poetry, literature and the spoken word

Review

The Policy will be reviewed according to the governing body's schedule of policy review and in the light of changing legislation or practice.

Policy updated and Reviewed with staff : 25th September and October 2nd 2007

Submitted to Curriculum Committee: 8th October 2007