

English Curriculum – Intent

At Pilton Infants' School, our role is to set the foundations for a successful learning journey. Literacy skills are at the core of what we do: a strong start in the skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing and spelling will enable children to succeed through school and into the work place. Good communication skills form the basis of our understanding: academically, socially and emotionally.

In recent years, our cohorts have changed to include more children with EAL or with speech and language difficulties. We tackle this by providing a language rich experience from day one. Speaking and listening is important in every subject and the children hear, and take part in, songs, nursery rhymes and story-telling as soon as they start school.

Our approach to early reading is rigorous with a combination of a Phonics First approach alongside explicit teaching of other reading skills e.g. reading for meaning and using visual clues.

Children can only be good writers when they are exposed to a range of high quality texts. Reading corners are comfortable and inviting with both up-to-date and well-thumbed texts. Children are taught how to use these areas in Reception and are given a greater range of texts as they move through the school. We link with the town library and have visits from local authors. Every class enjoys story time at least once a day.

We know that vocabulary size is a good indicator of future success and we work hard to develop vocabulary through all subjects but specifically through English. We want children to ask about new words and try them out in their speaking and writing. Staff model standard English and expect children to answer them in full sentences.

The content of the EYFS and National Curriculum is taught through specific skills lessons and in sequences which allow children to apply them. We deliver this with a range of text types so that children will learn and write a range of narratives, non-fiction texts such as information texts, instructions and letters, and poetry.

We ensure this coverage, but do not follow a rolling programme. This allows us to change the texts we use according to what the children need and are interested in. It means we can cater for children with SEND and challenge children of all abilities.

We link our English in with our wider topic, and where there is no text suitable, we write our own to include the language or features we want to teach. Writing is purposeful and children develop resilience by responding to feedback and helping improve shared texts. A high standard of handwriting and presentation is modelled by teachers and expected from the children when they write in English and all other subjects.

We strive to get all children to at least the "Expected Standard" by the end of each year and where children aren't on track, we put in significant support. Children with SEN have individualised support and interventions which are reviewed and assessed to ensure they have a positive impact on the child's progress. We provide Language Links, Wave 3, pre-learning activities and extra phonics support.

We know how important good home-school links are and we work hard to develop this partnership with parent workshops and ideas in reading and spelling diaries.

We work hard to prepare children for their transition to Key Stage 2. They leave us independent, resilient with a love of reading and language.