

HOLME UPON SPALDING MOOR PRIMARY SCHOOL

English Policy

Aims and objectives

Our aims are achieved principally through the implementation of the New National Curriculum for English. This area of learning contributes to the achievement of the curriculum aims for all our children to become: successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve; confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives and responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.

As a school we aim to develop the following skills:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- competence in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

Teaching and learning style

English is taught as a discrete subject in our daily literacy lessons but cross-curricular links are developed and encouraged in order to develop key skills.

Throughout the school children are taught in a variety of groups, by year or ability and have the opportunity to use a wide range of resources to support their work.

Supplementary materials are available to cater for children of all abilities including reinforcement activities for the less able and the use of classroom assistants to support group or independent learning.

Through the implementation of the New National Curriculum for English, we address the following key skill areas:

- Spoken Language
- Reading
- Writing
- Spelling, vocabulary, grammar and punctuation.

Breadth of learning:

Spoken Language

The national curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. Teachers should therefore ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills. Pupils should develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write. They must be assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others and teachers should ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions. Pupils should also be taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate. All pupils should be enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Pupils should be able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role. They should have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.

Reading

The programmes of study for reading at key stages 1 and 2 consist of two dimensions:

- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading).

It is essential that teaching focuses on developing pupils' competence in both dimensions; different kinds of teaching are needed for each.

Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. This is why phonics should be emphasised in the early teaching of reading to beginners (i.e. unskilled readers) when they start school.

Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills develop through pupils' experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction. All pupils must be encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum. Reading widely and often increases pupils' vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. Reading also feeds pupils' imagination and opens up a treasure-house of wonder and joy for curious young minds.

Children are taught how to use the library and are encouraged to choose books not only for enjoyment but also to research and gather information. Throughout the school, but particularly in Key Stage 2, children are given regular opportunities to access the school library.

It is essential that, by the end of their primary education, all pupils are able to read fluently, and with confidence, in any subject in their forthcoming secondary education.

Writing

The programmes of study for writing at key stages 1 and 2 are constructed similarly to those for reading:

- transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing).

It is essential that teaching develops pupils' competence in these two dimensions. In addition, pupils should be taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. These aspects of writing have been incorporated into the programmes of study for composition.

Writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription: that is, on spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words. Effective composition involves forming, articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting.

Spelling, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation

Opportunities for teachers to enhance pupils' vocabulary arise naturally from their reading and writing. As vocabulary increases, teachers should show pupils how to understand the relationships between words, how to understand nuances in meaning, and how to develop their understanding of, and ability to use, figurative language. They should also teach pupils how to work out and clarify the meanings of unknown words and words with more than one meaning.

Pupils should be taught to control their speaking and writing consciously and to use Standard English. Throughout the programmes of study, teachers should teach pupils the vocabulary they need to discuss their reading, writing and spoken language. It is important that pupils learn the correct grammatical terms in English and that these terms are integrated within teaching.

Phonics is taught in Foundation and Key Stage 1 via 'Jolly Phonics' and 'Letters and Sounds'. In Key Stage 2, spelling strategies are taught using the statutory wordlists. Children's progression in spelling is monitored and assessed regularly in the form of weekly tests. Intervention programmes are introduced when necessary such as 'Toe-by-Toe'.

English curriculum planning

The Foundation Stage

Literacy, Communication and Language are an integral part of the Foundation Stage (FS) curriculum and are taught as part of topics covered, phonics and adult-led activities. Aspects of literacy contribute to the objectives set out in Development Matters leading to Early Learning Goals (ELG). Literacy is a specific area of learning which includes Reading and Writing. There is an emphasis on Communication and Language as a prime area of learning covering the elements of Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking.

Children are provided with opportunities to develop:

- speaking and listening skills
- gross and fine motor skills through play and mark-making activities
- an interest in rhyme, song, stories and books
- communication skills through both peer and adult interaction
- individual and adult led reading time
- shared reading and writing skills using big books when and where appropriate.

Key Stage 1

Planning, where possible, links to the overall termly topic therefore we try to use books and texts in literacy linked to this. Occasionally, this is not always possible due to the particular topic or the National Curriculum coverage required. A wide range of genres, both Fiction and Non-Fiction, are covered during the two years in KS1. Planning extends over a period of two weeks in order to allow for pieces of extended writing.

All children receive daily phonics lessons. The children are assessed and then placed in a group according to their phonetic knowledge. All weekly spellings are linked to the phonics teaching and children are expected to apply this knowledge in their writing.

Key Stage 2

Throughout KS2, where appropriate, we plan literacy through a text-based curriculum. In both lower and upper KS2 we have identified a range of authors who we believe will inspire and engage all children in Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening activities. Through the shared reading of these texts we are able to cover a majority of the reading objectives however we also still provide the children with a weekly comprehension lesson in order to further support the assessment against these objectives. Our text-based curriculum allows us to cover a wide range of writing genres, both Fiction and Non-Fiction. Writing is also planned into cross-curricular subjects for example, explanation texts in Science and recounts in History and Geography to name but a few. Where reading and writing genres do not 'fit' into the text-based planning, we ensure that these are covered as separate units of work (For example we will block a two-week unit of poetry within a particular term).

Children in KS2 receive a weekly Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS) lesson, the content of which follows the statutory requirements set out in the National Curriculum. The children are expected to apply their knowledge and understanding, taught in these discreet sessions, into their independent work.

Pupils are expected to learn the words from the spelling list associated with their phase (Y3/4 or Y5/6).

Linking English to the wider curriculum

There are many ways in which English can be linked into learning across the whole curriculum. Here is a summary of five of the most useful ways of building meaningful links.

- **Teaching concurrently:** This is where an aspect of English is taught at the same time as a linked area of learning across the curriculum. For example, we might teach how to write non-fiction reports in English using the content from our topic on the local area as the context for learning.
- **Directly teaching an aspect of English in another subject:** this may happen less frequently, but would be where a particular aspect of skill or knowledge from the English curriculum is taught through another subject, such as the teaching of spelling of technical vocabulary as part of a science lesson.
- **Using and applying English skills – planned and incidental:** this could include providing opportunities for people to use previous learning in another context. For example, a teacher may plan for the pupils to use explanatory writing skills, which were taught in a previous term, in the context of a technology project.
- **Using English teaching strategies in other curriculum areas:** a teacher might use the strategy of learning and remembering texts to support pupils with learning and remembering the water cycle in science or use a vocabulary generation game to begin planning a dance sequence.

Teaching English to children with special educational needs

At our school we teach English to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our English teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have Special Educational Needs (SEN). At this point we intervene, via the advice of our SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) and implement a Termly Support Plan. Alongside assessing ways in which we can aid the individual child in the classroom: organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation, the TSP provides specific targets to be worked on, with the child, in order to aid their future progression. In many cases these targets will not only be addressed by the child's teacher but also teaching assistants who may work with these children in the classroom and in 1:1 sessions.

Staff ensure that children with speech and language difficulties are identified and assessed promptly with support from the SENCO and Speech and Language Therapist. When additional support is required in the Foundation Stage to develop speaking and listening skills, programmes such as 'Teaching Talking' are implemented. In Key Stage 1 and 2 children follow programmes such as 'Communication Fix' and 'Lexia' in order to progress further.

In the situation where we receive children who have English as an additional language (EAL), we will be supported through external agencies that provide support and direction for the class teacher. Similarly children who have difficulties communicating through spoken language will be encouraged to develop signing skills

through the Advanced Signing Programme which incorporates a balance of Makaton and English Sign Language.

The Gifted and Talented leader will liaise with the English leaders and class teachers to ensure individual needs are met and that appropriate targets are set and reviewed regularly.

Assessment and recording

Speaking and Listening: Speaking is one of the major means, particularly in the Foundation and Key Stage 1, through which knowledge and understanding are assessed in all areas of the curriculum. The quality of children's talk is greatly affected by features not related to their ability, such as the response of the listener, the nature of the task and the learning environment provided. It is therefore necessary to assess speaking and listening activities over an extended period of time.

Reading: Progress and objectives met in reading are assessed during any guided, group or whole class reading sessions. These are then inputted into our school recording system (O Track). Reading records are maintained for each child throughout their school life. Progression through the adopted reading schemes is monitored. Reading Progress Tests are carried out across the school using a variety of assessment material (Y2-6 Rising Stars) to help support and inform teacher assessments.

Writing: Samples of writing are kept at the end of each half term throughout KS1 and KS2 for each child. These follow them through the school to provide an overview of development for the receiving class teacher. In KS1 and KS2, individual children's writing is continually assessed against the relevant ARE (Age-Related Expectations). Writing from across the curriculum, alongside their written work in literacy, will inform the standard achieved by individual children.

Throughout the Foundation Stage children are continually assessed in their Communication, Language and Literacy skills through observations related to Development Matters which then lead into assessments against the Early Learning Goals (ELG)

In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, daily marking of children's literacy work is completed by the teacher following the marking and feedback policy.

Currently children complete the National SATs Tests at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Results from National SATs tests, in conjunction with on-going teacher assessment in other year groups, are used to assess, monitor and track the progress of individual children throughout and at the end of each academic year through our school assessment system – O-Track.

Resources

There are a range of resources to support the teaching of Literacy across the school. All classrooms have a variety of age-appropriate materials. Classrooms provide a text-rich environment and contain a selection of Fiction, Non-Fiction and reference texts. Children have access to the internet through the computer suite and classroom computers. Audio-visual aids are available to promote learning. The library contains a range of books to support children's individual research and develop their enjoyment and love of reading.

Monitoring and review

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the subject leader, phase leaders and the Headteacher. All staff are expected to follow the agreed 'Teaching and Learning Expectations'. This will provide a focus for lesson drop-ins and book scrutinies. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in their teaching; being informed about current developments in the subject and providing a strategic lead and direction for English in the school.

This policy will be reviewed and updated in light of new government initiatives. Phase leaders will be asked to make suggested amendments and they will be considered at the next policy review.

Sarah Youd: KS2 Literacy Leader

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