

Shipbourne School



English Policy

INTRODUCTION-National Curriculum Requirements

At Shipbourne Primary School we believe that language and literacy is fundamental to the overall development of the child and their access to the curriculum in all its aspects. It is a major vehicle of communication, through which ideas and feelings can be developed and expressed. We aim to deliver quality teaching of basic and higher order reading, writing, speaking and listening skills to enable children to become confident and successful in not only their English, but also their wider education.

Language and Literacy

Teachers should develop pupils' spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for pupils, understanding the language provides access to the whole curriculum. Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects.

Spoken language

Pupils should be taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently using Standard English. They should learn to justify ideas with reasons; ask questions to check understanding; develop vocabulary and build knowledge; negotiate; evaluate and build on the ideas of others; and select the appropriate register for effective communication. They should be taught to give well-structured descriptions and explanations and develop their understanding through speculating, hypothesising and exploring ideas. This will enable them to clarify their thinking as well as organise their ideas for writing.

Reading and writing

Teachers should develop pupils' reading and writing in all subjects to support their acquisition of knowledge. Pupils should be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose (both fiction and non-fiction) and be encouraged to read for pleasure. Schools should do everything to promote wider reading. They should provide library facilities and set ambitious expectations for reading at home. Pupils should develop the stamina and skills to write at length, with accurate spelling and punctuation. They should be taught the correct use of grammar. They should build on what they have been taught to expand the range of their writing and the variety of the grammar they use. The writing they do should include narratives, explanations, descriptions, comparisons, summaries and evaluations: such writing supports them in rehearsing, understanding and consolidating what they have heard or read.

Vocabulary development

Pupils' acquisition and command of vocabulary are key to their learning and progress across the whole curriculum. Teachers should therefore develop vocabulary actively, building systematically on pupils' current knowledge. They should increase pupils' store of words in general; simultaneously, they should also make links between known and new vocabulary and discuss the shades of meaning in similar words. In this way, pupils expand the vocabulary choices that are available to them when they write. In addition, it is vital for pupils' comprehension that they understand the meanings of words they meet in their reading across all subjects, and older pupils should be taught the meaning of instruction verbs that they may meet in examination questions. It is particularly important to induct pupils into the language which defines each subject in its own right, such as accurate mathematical and scientific language.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

At Shipbourne Primary School **The National Curriculum 2014** is implemented throughout the school from Year 1 to Year 6. In the Foundation Stage, the **2012 EYFS framework** is implemented. All children within the school access daily English, phonics/spelling and guided reading sessions, as well as regular additional opportunities to apply these skills in other curriculum areas.

Planning begins with the long-term plan which ensures coverage of the Programmes of Study. Coverage of different text types – narrative (and plays/play scripts), non-fiction and poetry-across year groups and across the school is ensured. Where possible, units will focus on high quality whole texts and link with a class topic area.

Medium term planning is data led and, for each unit, class teachers will select objectives to be covered based on gaps in learning identified from assessment tracking grids. Talk for writing is used, which ensures pupils have sufficient opportunities to respond to texts through reading, speaking, listening and drama, as well as time to practice oral composition skills before implementing them in writing. Weekly planning is completed by the class teacher indicating learning objectives (WALT), success criteria and differentiated learning opportunities for each individual lesson. Planning in years 1 to 6 makes clear the age appropriate levels that children are working at in each class, and therefore ensures that differentiation is appropriate and enables accelerated progress through the addressing of gaps in learning. Children are targeted through the use of age specific success criteria in the majority of lessons. Where required, individual targets will be given to move a child forward. Extra time may be allocated for this child to work on intervention programmes with a TA or teacher.

Intervention Programmes are used to support any child who is identified as falling behind, or who has been identified as requiring greater challenge. After termly pupil progress meetings (six per year), such pupils are identified for each year group and tailored interventions are planned by the SENCO and class teachers. These interventions are aimed at addressing gaps, or extending learning, therefore ensuring accelerated progress. The impact and nature of provision is reviewed every term.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

All pupils at Shipbourne Primary school are expected to achieve at least 4 points progress across each curriculum year (6 points in Key stage 1). This progress is achieved through appropriate differentiation which addresses each child's individual needs. Differentiation can be through level of learning as well as learning style or access strategy. When necessary, differentiation will be decided upon through consultation with the SENCO and other professionals.

Speaking and Listening

An Environment for Speaking and Listening

At Shipbourne we aim to create classrooms where speaking and listening flourishes; where children feel confident that what they have to say is valued and will listen to one another carefully; and where they can use talk to aid their thinking and to explore their understanding. We encourage pupils to be confident when speaking in a range of situations, for different purposes and audiences.

Aims

To enable pupils to:

- Develop the self-confidence to communicate their needs to others.
- Be able to communicate effectively, recognising that communication is a two way process.
- Listen effectively and develop respect for the views of others.
- Express themselves creatively, imaginatively and emotionally.

The four strands to speaking and listening are **Speaking, Listening, Group Discussion and Drama.**

At Shipbourne:

- Pupils are encouraged to speak clearly and with confidence. Their ideas and values are considered in order to maintain a curriculum which is stimulating and relevant to them.
- Pupils are encouraged to clarify their ideas by talking to a partner, within a group or to the whole class.
- Circle time** is implemented in the school to develop the pupils' thinking skills. It also embraces and develops speaking and listening skills.
- Cross-curricular links** develop skills within a variety of contexts and purposes, and across a range of audiences.
- Drama** is an important forum for exploring and responding to characters and texts. Across both Key Stages in all areas of the curriculum drama is used to enrich the pupils' learning. This may involve: Role play, hot seating, conscience corridors, freeze frames and mime (this is not an exhaustive list).

Assessment

Assessment against NC speaking and listening objectives takes place termly using assessment tracking grids.

Such assessment allows teachers to quickly identify gaps in learning and address these in the next units' teaching.

Reading

Aims

To enable pupils to:

- Read for enjoyment and meaning
- Develop a love of books and lifelong English skills.
- Access a range of rich and stimulating texts.

- Access information in a range of contexts: within books, catalogues, leaflets etc. and through ICT.
- Become successful, fluent, independent readers.
- Use inference and deduction to evaluate texts, to extend understanding, so that they make informed judgements, develop preferences and make choices.
- Understand authors' intention and purpose in texts.

The Classroom Environment

At Shipbourne we endeavour to create an environment where reading is an exciting and stimulating activity. Each classroom has a lively and inviting Book Corner with access to a range of texts.

Book Banding

All the books which form our structured reading, for the development of reading skills, are banded according to difficulty. Pupils are expected to read for 15 minutes each night at home. They may read their own choice of book from home or take a book from school which they change upon completion. Children are encouraged to keep a reading journal in which they record the books they have read and respond to them in an imaginative way that develops their interest and understanding of books.

Oxford Reading Tree

The Oxford Reading Tree Scheme is used as the core reading scheme in Key Stage 1. However, it is not used exclusively and teachers supplement the reading scheme with a range of alternative texts.

Guided Reading

Guided Reading takes place regularly throughout the school. Pupils are grouped according to their reading ability and a different focus group works with the class teacher as required. Texts are chosen to develop independent reading strategies and promote comprehension. Preparation tasks and follow up work are set by the class teacher for the remaining sessions in the week.

Shared Reading

Shared Reading happens in English lessons when introducing a new text. The teacher will model the reading, concentrating on reading strategies, and draw out the key elements of the content. The pupils then read the text together before further exploration of the text begins. Each class will also be read to by a member of staff each day, promoting the joy of reading.

Reading in Class

Pupils read a range of genre daily in a variety of ways depending on age and ability. This may involve reading quietly to themselves, reading to a partner, to a teacher, learning support assistant, adult helper or to an older or younger child. Each classroom promotes a reading rich environment where many daily additional opportunities for reading will occur.

Interventions

A Beanstalk teacher is employed at the school who works with identified pupils on a 1:1 basis to accelerate their independent reading skills.

English Events

Opportunities to raise the profile of reading are encouraged. Displays around the school offer a wide variety of reading materials generated by the pupils as well as commercially produced material. The school is part of the Scholastic Book Club and catalogues are sent home termly.

Assessment

Pupil progress and attainment is updated every six weeks and assessed through tracking grids. Planning is adapted and modified to meet pupils' needs. Pupils who do not make the expected progress in reading will be targeted through a suitable intervention as decided in discussion with the headteacher and SENCO

Writing

Aims

To enable pupils to:

- Develop writing for purpose and enjoyment
- Be independent, confident writers.
- Understand and appreciate the different purposes of writing and its value as a means of remembering, communicating, organising and developing ideas and information.
- Respond to a variety of stimuli, including stories, poems, plays, information and ICT (films and interactive resources e.g. Literacy Shed)
- Identify the purpose of writing and choose how best to organise it according to audience and context.
- Recognise the characteristics of different kinds of writing e.g. narrative, poetry, persuasion.
- Plan, review and improve their writing.
- Understand that punctuation is essential to aid understanding and to use it correctly in their writing.
- Extend their vocabulary and have a sound understanding of the meaning of words and phrases.
- Develop presentation and creative skills – handwriting, illustrating and through the use of ICT.
- Develop understanding of grammar and effective use of varied sentence constructions.

Teaching and Learning

In the Foundation stage pupils are encouraged to write by the provision of mark making equipment and materials e.g. sand trays, chalk boards, whiteboards, interactive whiteboard, paper. A positive, creative environment is fostered which is supportive of emergent writing. Emergent writing is valued and displayed in school. Multiple writing opportunities are provided for pupils, and pupils are encouraged to read and talk about their work with others.

As children move into Key stage 1 and 2 they will be given regular opportunities to develop their writing skills as part of the daily English lesson. Teaching of writing is undertaken through a talk for writing approach which recognises the importance of oral rehearsal of writing skills before putting pencil to paper. Using this method of teaching, pupils will first of all analyse how different writers use language for purpose and effect, before experimenting with different strategies for themselves. Much of this experimentation takes place orally in order to develop in pupils a 'writer's voice.' Once pupils have had the opportunity to experiment with different writing strategies,

towards the end of the unit, they will have the opportunity to demonstrate these new skills in formal writing.

As well as taking part in independent writing, throughout a English unit, pupils will also have the opportunity to take part in **shared** and **guided writing** with their class teacher. In shared writing sessions, pupils will have the opportunity to see the writing process demonstrated and verbalized by an experienced adult. In guided writing, pupils needing to work on a specific target will be grouped together in order to talk through with an adult how to implement this skill when building a piece of writing.

BIG WRITE

As well as teaching the National Curriculum Programme of Study, at least once a fortnight each class across the school takes part in a 'BIG WRITE' session. This involved giving pupils extended writing opportunities to regularly revisit different text types. Big write sessions focus on what makes a 'good' piece of writing, and encourages pupils to reflect on the level they are currently working at in their writing, and what they need to do next. Big write sessions practise the key writing skills of sentence structure, punctuation and building a text. The sessions begin with approximately 20 minutes worth of oral rehearsal, in which pupils practise creating higher level sentence structures with appropriate punctuation. This is then followed by a 30 - 45 minute writing session. At the end of each session, pupils are encouraged to assess and level their own work, setting themselves targets for the following week. During this independent writing session, class teachers help to accelerate pupils' progress by carrying out pupil conferencing or additional guided writing sessions. The teacher will promote a quiet writing environment which will include candlelight, music and fruit.

Broad and Balanced Experiences

At Shipbourne we recognise that it is important that writing is developed as a cross-curricular skill in order to encourage writing for different purposes. The aim is to maximise the children's experience, understanding and enjoyment of the purpose of writing in a range of genres. Wherever possible, English units are linked to a high quality text and/or whole school topic work and children are also given the opportunity to write for real life purposes using a range of different text types in all subjects.

Visits to places outside school, drama sessions, events, visiting authors, visiting theatres, guest speakers and workshops are all also seen as important and valid experiences for the development of meaningful English tasks which develop different styles of writing with a clear purpose. Wherever possible, such opportunities are incorporated into the English curriculum.

Working Walls

Teachers in all classes use a working wall display to model and demonstrate the genre the class is studying. The working wall varies depending on the age of the pupils. The displays show the outcome of the particular unit the class is studying and relevant success criteria. It may also include the weekly spelling pattern/ rule, vocabulary associated with the unit, punctuation, examples of text, shared writing, pupils' work (planning, draft and best, edited writing). The working wall is updated regularly during the course of the unit of work. It is used as a reference for both the teacher and the pupils. At the end of the unit the complete process from commercial examples of the genre to the pupils completed work can be seen.

Inclusion

All pupils, regardless of their age or stage of development are encouraged to view themselves as writers at Shipbourne Primary school. We recognise that writing is a developmental process and will only improve through appropriate teaching and opportunities to practise. We appreciate that pupils do not learn to write through copying and therefore, even when writing is emergent or difficult to read, it will be valued and praised. For pupils who struggle with the process of writing, additional strategies may need to be implemented. When the difficulties are physical it may be appropriate to adopt ICT or the use of a scribe in order to ensure that a pupil is able to share their ideas successfully without impediment. Where pupils' difficulties are linguistic, advice from the SENCo or even Speech and Language Therapy services may be sought. For pupils who have difficulties with spelling, differentiated phonics teaching, word banks and even spell checkers may be utilised to support the pupil in question.

Assessment

Independent writing is undertaken by KS1 and KS2 pupils towards the end of each unit of work and also regularly as part of our 'BIG WRITE' sessions. This writing is checked against assessment criteria and writing tracking grids are updated regularly for each child.

Moderation takes place every term within the school to ensure that level judgments are secure. We also moderate across schools at least once a year within the Tonbridge Village collaboration.

Progress in writing is monitored termly. Children who are not on track to achieve targets are discussed during pupil progress meetings and appropriate interventions are put into place to address this quickly.

Marking for improvement

Every piece of writing that a pupil completes is marked by the class teacher. On a regular basis areas where the pupil has been successful will be highlighted and then pupils will be given points for improvement. Pupils are given opportunities at the beginning of every English lesson to respond to or act upon these areas for development.

Handwriting

Aims

To enable pupils to:

- Develop a fluent, joined and legible style
- Be aware of the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively

Teaching of Handwriting

In the Foundation Stage pupils are taught to read and write letters using the 'Nelson' handwriting scheme in combination with the English Strategy's 'Letters and Sounds.' In this way pupils are taught letter sounds combined with the correct letter formation. The Nelson scheme continues through KS1 and KS2 through weekly handwriting lessons and consistent modelling by all staff.

Handwriting and letter formation is explicitly taught throughout the school. The correct way of forming letters with joining leads is modelled by the teacher. Most pupils are taught to join their letters by Year 2.

Teachers encourage correct posture and correct pencil grip, and take into consideration the needs of left-handed writers. Pupils with motor difficulties may be

given access to specialist equipment such as a pencil grip or writing slope. Where pupils' have significant physical disabilities the teaching of touch typing may be more appropriate than handwriting.

In KS1 and KS2 whole class teaching provides the handwriting focus for the week and pupils practise their skills daily.

Spelling and Phonics

Aims

To enable pupils to:

- Be independent, confident and competent spellers.
- Be aware of the need for correct spelling, recognising that it is important to communicate with clarity.
- Be able to attempt the spelling of new vocabulary by drawing upon phonic knowledge and graphic spelling strings.
- Use a variety of strategies to check and correct spellings.

Spelling Schemes

Pupils across the school are taught 'Letters and Sounds' which is a six-phase teaching programme from the National English Strategy. Phase one concentrates on activities to promote speaking and listening skills. Phases two to six focus on high-quality phonic work that continues throughout Key Stage One. Phonics setting takes place across Years R to 3 with a daily 20 minute session led by a class teacher or TA for each phase of the strategy. Pupils in Year 4, 5 and 6 who still require phonics development join these sets or access small group interventions with a TA.

Spelling in Years 4 -6 is delivered as part of a weekly unit of 'Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar.' Using the National Curriculum 2014 as a basis for planning, each English lesson will focus on a specific area, often with a link to the focused genre being studied.

Assessment

Quick-fire pupil response activities ensure that assessment in phonics is regular and ongoing. Tracking grids are completed each term in order to monitor the progress of pupils within Years R – 3. Setting groups are then reviewed to ensure that all pupils are accessing the most appropriate provision for their level of need.

In Years 4 – 6 assessment in Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar is carried out through the assessment of writing (see above).

MANAGEMENT OF ENGLISH

The role of the subject leader involves:

- Teaching demonstration lessons;
- Ensuring teachers are familiar with the school's English policy;
- Helping teachers to plan lessons;
- Leading by example in the way they teach in their own classroom;
- Preparing, organising and leading INSET;
- Observing colleagues with a view to identifying the support they need;
- Attending INSET provided by LA;
- Monitoring the progress of pupils within Reading and Writing and addressing areas of underachievement.

Discussing regularly with the headteacher and appropriate monitoring governor the progress towards targets within the School Improvement Plan.

Role of the Learning and Development Committee:

To visit the school regularly to talk with the teachers and when possible, observe some of

the daily English lessons;

To report back to the Governing Body on a regular basis;

To attend any relevant inset or training.

Role of the Headteacher:

Liaise with subject leaders to lead, manage and monitor the National Curriculum, including

monitoring teaching plans and the quality of teaching in the classrooms;

With the Governor Monitoring Pair, keep the governing body informed about standards;

Ensure that English remains a high profile in the school's development work.

For further guidance, please refer to National Curriculum 2014-English