
ENGLISH POLICY aligned to Curriculum 2014

(Elements in bold are from the DfE National Curriculum 2014 document)

Purpose of study

English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English teaches **pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils, therefore, who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.**

The main focus of the English within Nancealverne school is to provide effective learning opportunities for all pupils at all ages and abilities. We provide a stimulating and varied curriculum which enables pupils to learn in an inclusive environment with learning opportunities designed to meet their individual learning needs.

Communication is a focus and underpins all learning at Nancealverne School. The core elements of the English curriculum will be taught in English sessions and then embraced and consolidated in all other subjects in cross-curricular activities with the focus remaining on effective communication. In delivering all areas of the curriculum all pupils will be actively engaged in their learning, given differentiated support and guidance for opportunities to progress and enjoy learning. All pupils will be provided with meaningful access to expressive and receptive communication, using a range of communication strategies and resources.

Aims

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- **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**
- **are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate**

At Nancealverne we have additional aims that take in to account the specific needs of all of the students and their individual learning needs:

- To provide pupils with a range of appropriate communication strategies including: Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), Key Word Signing (Makaton) and British Sign Language (BSL), symbol and photo systems, speech and Alternative and Augmented Communication (AAC) to communicate effectively.
- To enable pupils to develop their preferred means of communication to their full potential.
- To enable pupils to develop, use and apply functional skills in a purposeful and meaningful way.
- To enable pupils to access symbol and/or pictorial textual information to the best of their ability.
- To provide pupils with differentiated texts and stories to enable them to access the programmes of study to the best of their ability.
- To promote and improve self esteem by teaching functional reading and writing skills.
- To equip pupils with skills which will lead to them being able to contribute to their communities as a valued member of society.
- To promote and engender an awareness of cultural diversity and their place as valued members of a global community.

Spoken language and communication

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 therefore ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills. Pupils are supported to develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write. They are assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others and teachers ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions. Pupils are also taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate.

All pupils are enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Pupils are supported to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role. They 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.

Communication and spoken language at Nancealverne School is especially important for many of the pupils as they have additional language learning needs. With this difference, we incorporate elements of Equals SLD or PMLD units to differentiate the learning activities to meet individual needs. Where appropriate, pupils have communication books and passports. The school is heavily supported by speech and language therapists who provide advice and support in the learning needs of specific pupils.

Communication is of crucial importance throughout the school with all pupils having access to symbol based systems including visual timetables, PECS and Makaton. The staff are supported by regular training sessions and days focused on elements of communication, there are also communication champions and expert signers (Makaton and BSL) that help facilitate staff learning and the delivery of the communication targets.

The **statutory requirements which underpin all aspects of spoken language across key stage 1, key stage 2 and key stage 3 are also reflected and contextualised within the reading and writing domains which follow.**

Reading

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

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

At Nancealverne the **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. Phonics is therefore emphasised in the early teaching of reading to beginners and emergent readers.

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 are 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. It is our aim that, by the end of their education, where appropriate, all pupils are able to read fluently, and with confidence.

Teaching reading at Nancealverne school has a longer term approach as the children all develop at different speeds and abilities throughout their time at the school. All teachers are responsible for the implementation of differentiated teaching and the provision of outstanding resources to support their learners at whichever stage they are in their reading ability. There is a dual importance placed on symbol recognition as well as purely whole word recognition with many of the children having access to symbol communication books and AAC resources such as iPads and other specialist tools.

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).**

The teaching at Nancealverne **develops pupils' competence in these two dimensions. In addition, pupils are taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. These aspects of writing are incorporated into the National Curriculum 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 but is not exclusively focused on in Nancealverne.

Many of the children have considerable difficulties with the aforementioned elements of writing and handwriting. It is the individual teacher's responsibility, with support given from the co-ordinator and the senior leadership team where appropriate, to embed the process of writing within an appropriately differentiated manner. Adaptations in the tools used to write include symbol construction and the use of sentence books. Specific children throughout the school also have dedicated iPads with Symbol-based AAC applications (Proloquo2Go) to support writing. When levelling and assessing the children, the specific handwriting targets can be disregarded if the child has significant physical difficulties; importance is placed on composition in these cases.

Spelling, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and glossary

The two statutory appendices in the National Curriculum – **on spelling and on vocabulary, grammar and punctuation** – which **an overview of the specific features that should be included in teaching the programmes of study** inform our teaching at Nancealverne. Teachers in each class and in each Key Stage have the responsibility of implementing these depending on the needs and abilities of the children in their class.

Opportunities for teachers to enhance pupils' vocabulary arise naturally from their reading and writing. As vocabulary increases, teachers 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 also teach pupils how to work out and clarify the meanings of unknown words and words with more than one meaning. Pupils are taught to control their speaking and writing consciously and to use Standard English.

They are taught to use the elements of spelling, grammar, punctuation and 'language about language' listed in the statutory appendices. These do not constrain or restrict teachers' creativity, but simply to provide the structure on which they can construct exciting lessons. The school follows the definitions provided in the non-statutory glossary in the national curriculum. **Throughout the programmes of study, teachers teach pupils the vocabulary they need to discuss their reading, writing and spoken language. Pupils therefore learn the correct grammatical terms in English and these terms are integrated within teaching.**

The Approach to the Teaching of English at Nancealverne

Nancealverne has adopted the National Curriculum programmes of study for English as a basis for our English curriculum. Every class throughout the school has the equivalent of a daily hour of literacy (with some classes choosing to have 'double sessions' to cover other timetable commitments). Discrete phonics and spelling is taught across a week. Additional time is also given to handwriting, individual reading, and listening to, and reading, stories and poems. The reception class follows the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

When planning and teaching the English curriculum the following elements are considered:

- Differentiation to meet the needs of all pupils including careful planning of work to include a range of teaching strategies with a balance between audio, visual, and kinaesthetic techniques with lessons being supported with appropriate communication resources and tools
- ICT and cross-curricular links are made where appropriate
- The careful marking of work in accordance with the marking policy
- Using reading and writing targets with the children to ensure progress is made
- Specific Individual Educational Plans with targets containing communication elements

Equal Opportunities

All children have an entitlement to participate fully in English, regardless of gender, race, age or ability, in accordance with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy. Children for whom English is an additional language will receive additional support as appropriate.

School curriculum

The programmes of study for English are set out year-by-year for key stage 1 and two-yearly for key stage 2 and key stage 3. The 6th form follow OCR units of work which leads to a Diploma in Life and Living Skills. The programme is modular with focus on skills in communication, numeracy and PSHE.

At Nancealverne the programmes of study are taught through fiction, non-fiction and poetry blocks lasting 2 or 3 weeks. These are identified on our long and medium term plans for literacy. Additional elements of the English curriculum are taught discretely:

- daily phonics where applicable
- weekly spelling focus in the older classes where appropriate
- guided reading sessions
- reading on a 1-1 basis and in small groups or pairs

Our **school curriculum for English on a year-by-year basis is available online** at our school website.

Planning

Long term planning identifies the blocks of Literacy that will be taught across the year groups aligned to the National Curriculum orders for English (2014).

Medium term planning is undertaken on a unit plan basis following the *Read – Analyse – Plan – Write – Review* teaching sequence over several weeks. Carefully chosen texts stimulate and enthuse the children to read and write. The audience and purpose for any writing outcomes are clearly identified.

Short term planning on weekly plans exemplifies the objectives for the week taken from the medium term plans. These plans show differentiation where appropriate and progression across the week. Additional plans outline the discrete areas of English that are taught in addition to the daily literacy lesson, e.g. guided reading and phonics and spelling. At the end of each week evaluation informs future planning.

All plans are monitored on a regular basis by the Headteacher and the Literacy Subject Leader.

Assessment and Recording

Assessment is crucial to the learning process. Children's work is regularly assessed through observation, discussion, scrutiny of work and evaluating outcomes.

- End of year targets are set for each year group

- Termly Pupil Progress Meetings are used to track the progress of each child in reading and writing across the year

Formative Assessment

Teacher assessment is an integral part of good practice. Assessment is carried out on a daily and weekly basis too. It involves identifying children's progress against teaching objectives and targets, determining which children have achieved and moving them on to the next stage of learning. Where appropriate, additional support and interventions are identified for children not making the expected progress. Teachers annotate the weekly plans and record the progress of groups.

Summative Assessment

This includes:

- Baseline in the Foundation year
- Termly pupil progress meetings with members of the senior leadership team
- Annual review of statements
- Termly review of individual education plans

Attainment targets

The school recognises that **the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study**. At the time of the policy Nancealverne continue to use the specific targets as laid out in the P-Levels (QCA 2005). Targets are determined using the Progression Guidance document (DFE 2010) to set challenging and relevant targets for the learners across the school. The school will review their use of P-Level and National Curriculum Levels once the DFE have made their plans for the replacement of P-levels clear.

Recording

- Tracking in reading and writing against NC levels
- Guided reading records
- Phonics check through Letters and Sounds word checklist – spelling and reading
- Reading records

Marking

Marking in English is part of the assessment process. Please refer to the Marking Policy.

The Role of the Subject Leader

The role of the Literacy Subject Leader is defined in the job description.

Resourcing

The Literacy Subject Leader, with the Headteacher, is responsible for the ordering, costing and allocation of resources to support the teaching of English.

A review of resources is carried out periodically which leads to a prioritised list of requirements. This is funded within the school's budget plan for the financial year.

Reporting to Parents

Parents receive regular informal or verbal feedback as to their children's progress in literacy. Each child has a reading link book to record progress in reading at home and school. In addition, parents also have the opportunity each term to meet with the staff to discuss progress and to see work.

Parents receive an annual written report in the form of their annual review of the statement of special educational need. This includes details of their children's progress and areas for development. Where appropriate the national test results are reported.

Monitoring and Evaluation

In order to monitor standards and progress the following systems are in place:

- Each teacher meets with the Headteacher and Literacy Subject Leader three times a year to discuss progress in reading and writing. Particular attention is paid to children working below age related expectations, children with SEN and children eligible for Pupil Premium.
- The Literacy Subject Leader is given time to monitor literacy through a range of activities which includes: analysis of tracking data for reading and writing (including CASPA), lesson observations, scrutiny of work, review of planning and interviews with stakeholders
- Staff meet at least twice a year to moderate and level writing across the school
- The school's literacy action plan is part of the whole school development plan and is updated annually by the Literacy Subject Leader and Headteacher.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years

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