

Etwall Primary School

English Policy

Aims and objectives

Through language not only do we communicate our knowledge, ideas and feelings, but we also structure and make sense of our experiences. In this sense, language is a tool for both our thinking and learning.

The aims of English are:

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.**

Teaching and learning style

Teachers follow the 2014 National Curriculum objectives for English or the Foundation Stage Curriculum to define and inform their planning in English. Foundation Stage and Key Stage One children receive daily phonics lessons where children are taught the age/ability-appropriate phonics phase (based on Letters & Sounds). English is taught on a daily basis and is an integral part of the planning for the term, thus enabling children to practise and use their English skills in other subjects across the curriculum too.

English curriculum planning

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the 2014 National Curriculum objectives as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English.

We plan creatively, following the Pie Corbett Talk for Writing structure of teaching writing and grammar and always encompassing English into cross curricular subjects, giving it a purpose and making it meaningful to the pupils. Teachers cover narrative, non-fiction and poetry genres, adapting subjects to fit in with the creative planning for that term. Teachers follow guidance from spelling and grammar objectives from the 2014 National Curriculum to help them to plan and teach spelling, punctuation and grammar.

We teach reading through guided reading lessons as well as through individual and shared reading, and we use the Pie Corbett reading spine (as reading for pleasure books as well as texts in English lessons) across all year groups, to enable us to provide the children with rich and challenging texts from a variety of authors and genres, through their years in primary school.

The English Co-ordinator completes an overview (long-term plan), highlighting fiction, non-fiction and poetry units to be covered in English over a two year cycle in each year group, to ensure that a range of genres are covered. Teachers also complete a weekly (short-term) plan for the teaching of English. This lists the specific learning objectives for each lesson and gives details of how the lessons are to be taught. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, and the class teacher and the subject leader can access them as needed.

The Foundation Stage

We teach Literacy in reception classes as an integral part of the school's work. As the reception class is part of the Early Years Foundation Stage, we relate the Literacy aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Years Curriculum which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged eight to five. We give all children the opportunity to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and extend their range of vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore, enjoy, learn about and use words and text in a range of situations.

Handwriting

In EYFS and KS1, we used the Nelson Handwriting Scheme to teach handwriting, in line with National Curriculum expectations. In KS2, we teach handwriting alongside spelling objectives, so that children are learning to join words containing the spelling pattern they are learning. Handwriting is practised daily across the school.

By the end of KS1, we expect that children should be able to do the following, as stated in the National Curriculum:

- form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another
- start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined
- write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters
- use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

By the end of LKS2, we expect that children should be able to do the following, as stated in the National Curriculum:

- use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined
- increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting [for example, by ensuring that the down-strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch].

By the end of UKS2, we expect that children should be able to write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed as stated in the National Curriculum, by:

- choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters
- choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.

Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas

The skills that children develop in English are linked to, and applied in, every subject of our curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express

themselves in all areas of their work in school. Teachers ensure that cross-curricular reading and writing opportunities are given to children in other subjects, so that they are applying their English skills across the curriculum. This is monitored by subject leaders.

Mathematics

English contributes significantly to the teaching of mathematics in our school. Children in the Foundation Stage develop their understanding of number, pattern, shape and space by talking about these areas with adults and other children. Children in Key Stage 1 meet stories, rhymes and problems that rely on counting and sequencing. Children in Key Stage 2 are encouraged to read and interpret problems in order to identify the mathematics involved. They explain and present their work to others during lessons and they communicate mathematically through the developing use of precise mathematical language. Children in Key Stages 1 and 2 do problem solving activities which involve reading and communication skills (reasoning).

Computing

Opportunities for computing are integrated into planning as appropriate. All classes have three laptops, four iPads and an Interactive White Board (IWB). There is also a further bank of laptops and iPads that can be used with a class.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

English contributes to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. We encourage younger children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues. In their science work they talk about things that improve their health and about rules for keeping them safe around the school, and they communicate their findings in investigations both orally and through written work. In Computing they talk about Online Safety and how to act responsibly online. Older children research and debate topical problems and events. They discuss lifestyle choices and meet and talk with many visitors who work within the school community. Planned activities within the classroom encourage children to work together and respect each other's views.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

The teaching of English develops skills through which our children can give critical responses to the moral questions they meet in their work. Their understanding and appreciation of a range of texts brings them into contact with their own literary heritage and texts from other cultures. The organisation of lessons allows children to work together and gives them the chance to discuss their ideas and results.

Inclusion and Special Educational Needs

English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Teachers are aware of their responsibility for SEN children, the more able pupils and those who are 'gifted and talented'. They plan the curriculum with differentiated learning activities according to their needs.

Work in English takes into account the targets set for individual children in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Teachers provide help with communication and literacy through:

- using texts that children can read and understand;
- using visual and written materials in different formats;
- using ICT, where appropriate;
- using alternative communication such as signs and symbols;
- using translators and a scribe.

Assessment and recording

Teachers use AfL (Assessment for Learning) on a daily basis in their planning and weekly plans are annotated and adapted as a result of this.

Each term, personalised writing targets are written by the class teachers which focus on year group expectations for children, taken from the National Curriculum 2014. These are shared with pupils and parents/carers by gluing them into their writing books and their learning diaries, so that both can see what their next step is. As children use one writing book across the curriculum, they can work on their writing targets in cross-curricular subjects, ensuring that their work is of the same standard in all lessons.

AWL grids (Assessing Without Levels) written by the English Subject Leaders in the cluster is used to assess both reading and writing (including grammar, spelling and handwriting) in English. Judgements are made every half term and reported to the Headteacher, Assessment Co-ordinator and English Subject Leader. Judgements are also moderated in teaching teams and as a whole staff on a weekly/termly basis.

In the Foundation Stage, children are continually observed and assessed using the Early Learning Goals and baseline assessment. This covers all aspects of Literacy including: listening and attention, understanding, speaking, reading and writing. The assessment grids are updated every term and then reported to the Headteacher and Assessment Co-ordinator.

Resources

There is a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries, thesauruses and a range of age-appropriate small apparatus, such as word mats. Each classroom has a book area with a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts. Children have access to the Internet through their classroom laptops and iPads. The library contains a range of books to support children's individual research. Bug Club is used to support developing readers in KS1, and children with SEN needs in KS2. Accelerated Reader is used to assess children's reading age and comprehension skills through an age-related scaled score. This is also used to provide children with quizzes when they have finished reading a book, to develop their comprehension skills. PhonicsPlay is used to support children in KS1. Spelling Shed is used to support children learn spelling/phonics patterns from EYFS to Y6.

Monitoring and review

Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the English subject leader. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The leader has specially-allocated management time in order to enable him/her to review samples of the children's work and teacher's planning and undertakes lesson observations of English teaching across the school. After lesson observations, the subject leader gives the head teacher a summary of strengths and areas for development, to help aid future improvement. The named governor responsible for literacy meets with the subject leader in order to review progress.