

Pilsley CE (VA) Primary School



English Policy

Version	Amended	Approved	Review Date
1			
2	May 2021		

English Policy

English Curriculum Statement

Intent

At Pilsley CE Primary School, we believe that a quality English curriculum should develop children’s love of reading, writing and discussion. We aim to inspire an appreciation of our rich and varied literary heritage and a habit of reading widely and often. We recognise the importance of nurturing a culture where children take pride in their writing, can write clearly and accurately and adapt their language and style for a range of contexts. We want to enable children to be confident in the art of speaking and listening and to use discussion to communicate and further their learning.

We believe that children need to develop a secure knowledge-base in Literacy, which follows a clear pathway of progression as they advance through the primary curriculum. At Pilsley CE Primary School, we recognise that a strong basis in literacy skills is crucial to underpin all aspects of education, and will give our children the tools they need to participate fully in society and become life-long learners.

Implementation

These aims are embedded across our literacy lessons and the wider curriculum. We have a rigorous and well organised English curriculum that provides many purposeful opportunities for reading, writing and discussion. Teachers adapt the Cornerstones curriculum scheme as appropriate to their classes, ensuring that cross curricular links with concurrent topic work are woven into the programme of study. Our curriculum follows the aims of the National Curriculum for English 2013 and the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021.

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.

In addition to daily literacy lessons, children excel in early reading through the use of the RWI programme from Reception – Year 2 and continue to develop a range of reading skills, as well as a love of reading through accessing a variety of high-quality texts and resources in the classroom.

Impact

As a result we have a community of enthusiastic readers and writers who enjoy showcasing their developing literacy knowledge and skills. They are confident to take risks in their reading and writing, and love to discuss and share their ideas. Our attainment at the end of EYFS, KS1 and KS2 is above that of Derbyshire and the national average.

Teaching and Learning

Organisation

In Years 1 – 6, English lessons take place 4-5 times per week and are usually taught to the whole class by the class teacher. They are effectively differentiated to ensure that every child can be successful in their achievement of the learning intention, with high expectations for all learners. English lessons cover knowledge and skills in reading, writing, spelling and grammar, vocabulary and speaking and listening.

All English lessons have clear success criteria so that the children understand the expectations of the task and how they can achieve their best in the lesson. Success criteria are consistently referred to during teacher modelling and used effectively for self and peer assessment at the end of a task. The success criteria are clearly referred to when feedback from the teacher is given, either verbally or in writing. Success criteria indicate how greater depth can be achieved and demonstrated and can be altered for different ability groups in the same lesson where appropriate.

English activities are effectively differentiated so that all children can achieve the success criteria and feel empowered by their own accomplishment. Nevertheless, all children are given the chance to reach the same high level in every lesson. Effective differentiation is in place so that all children have opportunity to meet every learning intention. Children are supported to achieve by using vocabulary word banks, writing frames and sentence starters, mixed ability groupings and adult support.

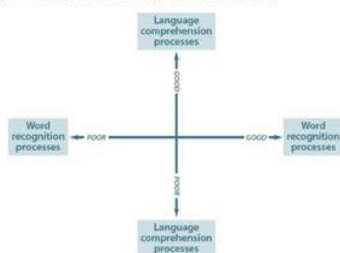
We teach English using a range of strategies which include:

- Group Discussion – Children discuss and interrogate new ideas in a small group or whole class setting. They listen to and value each other’s ideas. They receive and offer feedback to improve their own explanations.
- Partner Talk – Children work in partners to discuss their ideas. They explain their ideas about texts they have read and formulate ideas before they write.
- Questioning – Teachers use a range of questioning strategies to establish children’s current understanding and develop their learning. Higher level questioning is used to elicit a deeper understanding.
- Modelled Writing – Teachers model writing and editing processes to demonstrate their high expectations and to develop children’s understanding of the processes involved in writing. They verbally ‘think aloud’ to make the writing process explicit and to provide a rich and varied vocabulary for the children to utilise in their own work.
- Shared Writing – Teachers use the ideas from the children to create shared pieces of writing. This enables the children to see the writing process in action as well as having pride and ownership over their contribution to the finished piece.
- Comparing, Analysing and Evaluating – Children review a wide range of written texts, speech and drama and compare, analyse and evaluate them. They establish the strengths and weaknesses of different examples and incorporate these ideas into their own work.

Reading

At Pilsley CE School, we aim for all children to become fluent readers with a life-long love of literature. In order to promote a passion for reading, teachers and children regularly take part in inspiring conversations about books. Reading areas in classroom should be inviting and interesting. Reading areas should be regularly updated to ensure children meet a wide range of texts and inspirational reading materials. Class texts should be great examples of brilliant books and read regularly in all classes.

Figure 1: The Simple View of Reading (Source: DfES, 2006, p. 53)



Our teaching of reading adopts the Simple View of Reading. For a child to be a successful, independent reader, they need to possess a secure knowledge of word reading and comprehension skills. These include:

Decoding

A good visual memory.
 A good auditory memory.
 A recognition of the letters in the English alphabet.
 Knowledge of the grapho-phonetic construction of words.
 Familiarity with the syntax (sentence structure and grammatical arrangement) of English text.

Language Comprehension

A familiarity with the genre of stories and an ability to make links between stories.
 Comprehension of a range of word meanings
 Inference and Prediction skills

Reading in EYFS and KS1

In Reception children are introduced to letter- sound relationships using the highly successful 'Read Write Inc' phonics programme. Children learn how to discern the sounds in words and how those sounds can be written down. This is essential for reading, but it also helps children learn to spell well. The children also practise reading (and spelling) 'tricky words' (words which do not have a obvious letter – sound relationship) such as 'once,' 'have,' 'said' and 'where'. Once children can blend sounds together to read words, they practise reading books that are carefully matched to their phonic ability and the 'tricky words' they know. Children are encouraged to use pictorial cues to help their comprehension of word context. Texts are carefully chosen to ensure children develop confidence as readers. As they read, children are encouraged to talk about the text, including the characters and events to develop their comprehension skills.

As well as taking part in daily half hour phonics sessions, children access the grapheme phoneme correspondences and High Frequency Words covered across their continuous provision. This encourages reading opportunities to happen spontaneously and to be a part of purposeful play. The classroom environment provides a rich context for literacy learning. Songs, word games, key words, props, small world activities, role play, linked texts, artefacts and other stimuli offer children many ways to deepen their understanding of core texts. Taught English lessons centre on a core text each week along with targeted Read, Write Inc reading books which the children read in pairs during the phonics session. Each week, every child reads individually to a teacher or teaching assistant.

Up until the end of Year 1, children will have a dedicated phonics teaching session to develop their phonic understanding. During the summer term of Year One, children undertake the phonics screening test. Some older children will continue to access Read Write Inc groups if they need further consolidation and development of reading skills. We check children's reading skills regularly so we that we can ensure planned activities are carefully matched to children's ability. Children's progress is regularly assessed so that support can be targeted towards children who need it.

In Key Stage 2, the children undertake regular guided reading sessions with the staff in their class. Classes have a wide selection of reading materials to choose from and have projects linked to reading to give context and inspire the children, adding depth and breadth to their understanding of texts.

Teachers regularly read aloud to all the children in school, so children become familiar with a rich variety of literature including stories, poetry and information books. Hearing the teacher read aloud helps to demonstrate good reading and thinking strategies. Teachers model reading with expression and intonation, engaging the audience. Reading exposure is accompanied by supportive and engaging discussions to extend children's world view and

develop vocabulary, comprehension and critical thinking skills. It also helps to develop their understanding of writing.

Emergent readers read to their teacher at least once a week they are also listened to regularly by teaching assistants and volunteers. Each week, children explore a shared text as a class, linked to the half term's theme. This introduces them to new language and vocabulary. Children enjoy listening to the class novel, or series of books read for 20 minutes at the end of each day.

Reading in KS2

Reading Lessons take place for 30 minutes, at least four times a week and cover the National Curriculum reading and oracy and discussion objectives. Lessons are taught discretely in year groups. Two days per week the children work in mixed ability pairs to read and analyse a class book at the age expected level, led by the Class Teacher. Two/three days per week the children work individually or in ability pairs to read and analyse a text at their instructional level. The reading skills explicitly taught are:

- predicting
- clarifying
- asking questions
- summarising
- inferring
- making connections
- evaluating

The children record their reading progress in a Reading Journal.

In addition to this, all children have an individual reading book which is read regularly at home and in school. Their reading is recorded in a Reading Record and teachers check the records regularly to ensure that children are reading appropriate, challenging and varied books. Teachers ensure that any children working below age-related expectations read individually, on a weekly basis with the teacher. They also have reading practise with support staff and volunteers. Teachers hear all children individually at least twice per half-term.

Writing

In the EYFS fine motor skills are developed through a wide range of Continuous Provision activities. Specific work on motor development, pencil control and letter formation is practised daily as part of the phonics and English taught programme. Children's progress in physical development and letter formation are regularly reviewed and where individual children need further support to develop these skills, activities are planned accordingly. Planned writing opportunities are integrated throughout Continuous Provision to inspire children to practise their writing skills in a range of practical contexts. Adult-led writing activities demonstrate letter formation and provide children with the opportunity to hear sounds being segmented and blended. Modelled writing helps the children to understand how to segment words before writing, and how to plan and check their work. As children

develop their early writing skills, writing opportunities are planned to respond to the core text each week.

From Year 1, children are taught SPaG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar) objectives in discrete year groups during a dedicated lesson. Objectives are matched to text and genre type, giving children the opportunities to practise the knowledge and skills learned in their independent writing.

Extended writing takes place across the curriculum and occurs either weekly or fortnightly depending on the level of text. This provides children with the opportunity to demonstrate their literacy knowledge and skills, showing depth and mastery and allows them to write about a familiar topic without explicit literacy success criteria guidance.

Initially, children are taught to print letters and the correct formation is taught throughout Reception and Year 1, using the read write inc. handwriting formation. Once children can demonstrate control over size and spacing, they are taught individual joins, usually during Year 2. In KS2, children are rewarded for having neatly presented, joined writing. Cursive handwriting is taught from Year 3 upwards.

Speaking and Listening

We recognise that knowledge and use of spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils are exposed to is directly related to their spoken vocabulary, grammatical understanding and the development of reading and writing skills. Choosing the appropriate words to express their thoughts, to rationalise their ideas, and talk about their feelings and viewpoints are essential for all facets of education. The teaching of speaking and listening skills has a key role in all subjects and areas of learning.

Teachers ensure pupils' confidence and competence in their knowledge of spoken language and listening skills is constantly evolving. Vocabulary is extended through carefully chosen texts and is often linked to the topic focus. Opportunities are given to rehearse new words and phrases, and to re-enact them in role-play. Children are taught to articulate and explore their ideas and emotions through spoken language. Rhymes, poetry and songs widen vocabulary in context and help them see patterns in language.

Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities and experiences to use spoken language and to demonstrate their skills including dramatic play and performances, reading aloud, responding to texts, presentations and debates. Regular activities are planned to promote discussion and responses are encouraged through open questions. Children are given opportunities to use language skills across the curriculum for example for problem-solving tasks or creative endeavours to enhance children's communication skills and help them practice using language as a tool for communicating. Whole class or group discussions and the use of talk partners encourage children to use active listening skills, such as looking at the person who is speaking, and to respond appropriately to others asking and answering questions.

Children are encouraged to speak clearly and audibly with an awareness of the listener. For example, by monitoring and responding to their audience. All pupils participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Pupils have opportunities to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role. They 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.

Assessment

Children are assessed formatively through thorough effective questioning, marking and feedback to ensure teachers understand where children currently are in their learning and the next steps in their development. This means that English teaching is carefully tailored to children's developmental levels so that children make excellent progress in English teaching throughout the school.

In addition to this, termly summative assessment opportunities are planned into the academic year to ensure that the progress in knowledge and skills that each child makes is accurately measured. Summative assessment opportunities are used to support teachers in their assessment judgements and should not replace teacher judgement based on experience of the child in everyday lessons.

Reading Assessment

On entry to Reception, children are assessed to establish their knowledge of GPCs, High Frequency Words and blending skills. In Foundation Stage and Year One, children are assessed termly to establish which sounds they are confident in and which strategies they employ to effectively read familiar and unfamiliar words. These include common irregular words and 'alien' nonsense words. In Year 2 and KS2 classes complete a comprehension activity each term.

Writing Assessment

As well as ongoing formative assessment (see Marking policy), teachers from Year 1 to Year 6 assess the writing of every child termly. Teachers also review work completed throughout the term against National Curriculum objectives to help them form judgements for this assessment. In Reception, children's progress in writing is regularly assessed against the Development Matters statements. Ongoing observations and teacher judgement of the child's recent writing are used to form a professional opinion of each child's stage of development within Writing each term used to track children's writing development.

Planning and Resources

The Cornerstones curriculum is used throughout the school as a foundation for creating exciting and varied English lessons which link to the topic children are studying. Teachers plan using the Cornerstones termly coverage sheets for reading and SPaG, which indicate attainment for each year group. These are then used to support the assessment process. These help to ensure that coverage of the National Curriculum is secure and that year group expectations are met.

Working Walls are used throughout the school to promote reading, writing and discussion. We recognise the important role working walls have in the teaching and learning of literacy. Every classroom has an attractive book corner to promote and celebrate a love of reading.

Equal Opportunities

All children have equal opportunities to reach their full potential across the English curriculum, regardless of their race, gender, cultural background, and ability, or of any physical or sensory disability. Our earliest perceptions of the world and its cultures are shaped by the books we read. We believe it is essential that children see a true reflection of our society in the literature recommended and available to them. Texts are chosen to celebrate diversity, inclusivity and to include a wide range of role models and characters from minority backgrounds so that all children can experience the joy and enrichment a love of reading can bring.

Inclusion

Children with English as an additional language:

It is vital that children who have English as an additional language have English modelled accurately by all staff at school. Collaborative work with peers (where English is their first language) is essential and EAL children should be provided with consistent opportunities for this verbal interaction. Each classroom should have on display key words associated with current topics being studied. All teachers include a range of strategies to support children with EAL which includes: teacher and peer modelling and consistent use of visual support, repetition and recasting of language features, word banks and scaffolded speaking and listening activities.

Teachers work with the SENDCo to best meet the needs of individuals within their classes. Children who are new to English are assessed and support is put in place to help them make rapid progress.

In addition, class teachers use their teaching assistants to provide targeted support and the use of home language support and peer-buddying is encouraged.

Special Educational Needs

Some children experience learning difficulties, which affect their progress in literacy. Class teachers inform the SENDCO if they are concerned that a child may have underlying learning difficulties. Some children then receive SEN support.

This may include:

- Volunteer readers
- Reading buddies
- Nurture groups
- Booster classes

(see SEN policy for further details).

High Achievers

Children who achieve highly in English will be supported and given opportunities to deepen their knowledge and skills through differentiation. The success criteria for the lesson also

indicates how greater depth has been taught within the context of the lesson and how this can be demonstrated by the child in outcomes of work.

Role of the Subject Leader

The role of the subject leader in English is to coordinate the teaching of reading, writing and communication across all phases of the school. This is in order to secure high quality literacy provision for every child, including outstanding English teaching and learning, effective use of resources and the highest standards of achievement for all.

Some key duties that the English subject leader should undertake over the course of the year include:

- Monitoring of English, reading, handwriting and spelling books
- Reading walks and other lesson observations where necessary
- Planning and organising literacy enrichment opportunities and competitions
- Helping identify and facilitate the professional development needs of staff
- Liaising with SLT to help implement school improvement priorities
- Liaising with the school SENDCO to best support children with literacy difficulties
- Organising, maintaining and cataloguing resources
- Keeping abreast of new initiatives in English teaching

Parents

We recognise how crucial the home/school link is for supporting children to have the highest standards of achievement in English.

In Class 1, there is a parents' meeting at the beginning of every academic year, where the English teaching of the year group are explained. A phonics workshop is also held in the Autumn Term to help parents understand how phonics is taught, how it helps teach their child to read and how to support their child in this.

Homework is also part of the school's successful home/school link and is organised as follows.

Reception

- Phonic sound book to practise newly taught phonics and a reading book which matches their phonic ability to be taken home.
- High frequency words are sent home for the children to learn to read.

KS1

- Phonics book to be read at home appropriate to the child's level
- One book chosen by the children from the library to be taken home each week
- Spellings to be practised at home.

KS2

- One book chosen by the children from the library to be taken home (to be changed as and when it is has been read.
- Spellings to be practised at home.

References:

English programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2 National curriculum in England (September 2013).

Development Matters 2012

Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework 2021