



Hatherley
INFANT SCHOOL

English Policy

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Introduction

At Hatherley Infant School, English is at the forefront of all our teaching and learning. We firmly believe that its mastery is a prerequisite for life, since it empowers the learner and is essential for independent learning and most aspects of everyday life.

We teach pupils to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes and to a variety of audiences since this allows them to use language to learn and communicate ideas, views and feelings. It enables children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as non-fiction and media texts.

Our intent is for children to be self-motivated, enthusiastic learners who are supported and challenged to be successful in their speaking and listening, reading and writing.

Aims

At Hatherley Infant School our aims in teaching literacy are that all children will:

- Be able to communicate effectively and confidently in standard English;
- Be able to listen to the spoken word attentively with understanding, pleasure and empathy;
- Be able to read a range of materials fluently, critically and with understanding for enjoyment and for information;
- Be able to write effectively for a range of audiences and purposes using spelling, punctuation and grammar accurately and confidently;
- Have equal access to the curriculum to achieve their full potential;
- Ensure that vulnerable children such as PP and SEND children make significant progress and that all have access to an engaging curriculum;
- Develop confidence, understanding and enjoyment through a positive attitude and growth mindset
- Develop literacy skills which will promote everyday life situations and give children a 'real' purpose for learning

Provision

The Early Years Foundation Stage

In the Foundation Stage children are taught English as an integral part of the EYFS curriculum. Aspects of English are related to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals (ELGs), which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three 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.

KS1

English is a core subject within the National Curriculum. We use the planning format advised to us by M. Richards, a 'talk for writing' consultant.

Long term planning is outlined within our 'non-negotiables' document, with different genres of writing. An English focus for each genre has also been identified e.g. characterisation for story writing.

Each genre is planned for in three stages, based upon the 'talk for writing' phases of 'imitate', 'innovate' and 'independent application'. A cold task is undertaken at the beginning of each new unit, followed by a 'hot task' at the end, so that teachers can monitor progress and identify any gaps that need addressing.

On occasions, 'stand alone' lessons are planned for to ensure accurate and appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum for each year group.

Speaking and listening

We believe that speaking and listening underpins the development of children's reading and writing as well as their cognitive, social and linguistic development across the whole curriculum.

Speaking and listening aims:

- To provide a range of opportunities for children to talk and listen in formal and informal settings
- To provide a range of topics for discussion which encourage children to speak with confidence and expression
- To develop children's ability to listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers, demonstrating mutual respect
- To develop children's ability to ask relevant questions to extend their knowledge and understanding
- To use a range of strategies to build the children's vocabulary
- To demonstrate to the children how to prepare their ideas before they write
- To use drama and role play to develop the children's confidence when addressing an audience
- To create an environment in which children feel safe when speaking about their thoughts and feelings

Teaching and learning of speaking and listening will include:

- Use of talk partners
- Talk for writing
- Class discussions and debates
- Listening, responding and evaluating their own and others' contributions
- Circle times
- MTYT (my turn your turn)
- Role play and drama
- Story time

Reading

We believe that creating a love of reading is one of the most powerful ways of improving children's chances in school thus creating a passport to the wider world.

The National Curriculum for reading consists of two dimensions: word reading and comprehension. Skilled word reading involves both the speedy pronunciation of unfamiliar 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. Therefore, we place great emphasis on phonics in the early teaching of reading. *See separate Phonics policy for teaching of phonics and reading.*

Reading aims:

- To develop pleasure in reading by promoting a culture that celebrates a love and enjoyment of books
- To provide a range of high, quality reading materials (e.g. non-fiction books, fiction books, poetry books, encyclopaedias, posters) appropriate for each age group.
- To develop children's phonic knowledge and skills as the route to decode words.
- To promote high quality discussion about books, whilst encouraging children to take turns and listen to what others have to say.
- **Teaching and learning of reading will include:**
- Modelled reading including 'thinking out loud'

- Use of question stems for comprehension
- Shared reading of a wide range of texts
- RWI lessons
- Guided reading sessions using texts appropriate to children's level
- Interventions when appropriate
- Story times, to include high quality age appropriate texts
- Opportunities for independent reading both at school and at home
- Reading charts and rewards to encourage children to read at home
- Focused author of the term
- Use of volunteers

Writing

From the earliest stage we treat our children as writers, who have something they want to communicate using their knowledge of print from the environment. The National Curriculum is split into composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing) and transcription (spelling and handwriting).

Writing aims:

- To develop a positive attitude and stamina towards writing by providing activities that will engage and excite.
- To provide opportunities for children to write in a range of genres including fiction, non-fiction and poetry.
- To develop children's understanding of the importance of audience and purpose.
- To develop children's understanding of writing and associated skills through quality modelling.
- To develop children's understanding that drafting, proof reading and redrafting are an essential part of the writing purpose.
- To begin to develop distinctive features of Standard English and embed the technical terms needed, appropriate for each phase of learning. *See map of 'skills progress'.*

Teaching and learning of writing will include:

- Use of 'hooks' to hook children into their writing.
- Speed words to extend and develop children's vocabulary.
- Story maps, non-fiction and poetry maps to develop retelling.
- Toolkits to develop children's knowledge and understanding of different text types and aspects of non-fiction writing.
- An 'all the time' toolkit, to ensure expectations are maintained when writing in other curriculum areas.
- Modelled, shared and guided writing.
- SPAG activities as part of every lesson to promote spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Grammar lessons to promote specific skills.
- Opportunities to publish work for a range of audiences.
- Learning walls to act as an aide memoire.
- Opportunities to write from real life experiences.

Spelling

Spelling is an integral part of the writing process; children who spell with ease are able to concentrate on the content of their writing. Spelling strategies are taught explicitly and important links between spelling and handwriting are made. Spelling is also taught through our synthetic phonics programme; Read, Write, Inc. *See our phonics policy.*

Spelling aims:

- To segment spoken words into phonemes and then represent these by the appropriate graphemes.
- To develop children's understanding of word structure.
- To foster a love of words to extend children's vocabulary.

Teaching and learning of spelling will include:

- RWI and use of 'Fred fingers' (children are encouraged to pinch the sounds onto their fingers and letter names are used to memorise)
- RWI photocopiables sent home for children in EYFS
- Spelling books sent home for children in KS1 to practise the spelling focus of the week (these encompass a variety of activities)
- Encouragement of dictionary /thesaurus use
- Use of mnemonic rhymes
- Revision of spellings within writing books matched to children's needs
- The use of 'try outs' (children are encouraged to try a word with different representations of the same phoneme, before choosing which one looks right)

Handwriting

We recognise that handwriting is an important skill and children's ability to write fluently for the rest of their lives depends on a good foundation of taught handwriting in the early years of their education. We believe that children should be introduced as early as possible to the making of letters through pattern and then discover letter shapes and movements in these forms. The shapes and movements should then be developed into making letters in connected forms. We use a precursive script, copies of which are displayed in every classroom. *Please refer to our 'Handwriting Policy' for further information.*

Planning

- High quality children's literature is carefully chosen as a basis for rich learning experiences and to provide opportunities for writing with a purpose.
- Teachers in KS1 use the 'talk for writing' planning format
- Plans include a short spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPAG) activity, direct teaching, activities and a plenary where knowledge and skills taught are brought together
- Plans are monitored by the English subject leader according to the monitoring timetable.

Inclusion

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 good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this.

How we cater for children who are more able

More able pupils will be taught with their own class and stretched through differentiated group work and extra challenges. When working with the whole class, teachers will direct some questions towards the more able to maintain their involvement. Very occasionally, special arrangements will be made for an exceptionally gifted pupil, in order for them to broaden and deepen their understanding. For example, they may be given a different text to read than their peers.

S.E.N.D /EAL provision

Teachers aim to include all children fully in their daily English lessons. All children benefit from participating in modelled, shared and guided sessions. However a pupil for whom English is an additional language or who is experiencing difficulties may need to be supported with an individualised programme in the main part of the lesson or through an intervention programme.

Assessment, marking and feedback

All learning will be continually assessed in order to identify gaps in learning, identify next steps and set targets, acknowledge and celebrate achievements and to inform future planning. (See Assessment Policy) Work will be marked and feedback given in line with our Marking and Feedback policy. Children are especially encouraged to respond to teacher's marking through the use of 'growing green', particularly in the 'innovate' phase of the 'talk for writing' process.

Assessment sheets related to the objectives for each year group are attached to the front cover of children's writing books. These serve as an assessment tool for teachers, enabling them to track the progress of each child, whilst highlighting any gaps that need teaching. They are also a useful resource for a range of stakeholders when monitoring English across our school.

Resources

The following resources will be readily available:

- Book corner/area in every classroom, which includes picture books, range of fiction, books made by children, poems, comics, variety of non-fiction, dictionaries and thesauruses.
- Cushions, toys, dressing up boxes and story visuals should also be available in each classroom.
- Variety of writing essentials easily accessible within each classroom e.g. pencils, spelling mats, speed charts etc.
- High quality picture books to inspire reading and writing located within the bottom corridor
- Graded reading and guided reading books within the corridors and little library
- A range of teaching resources within the staff room cupboard e.g. handbooks, computer resources.
- Story sacks and puppets located within the learning zone
- Big books within the learning zone
- Posters highlighting the precursive script adopted by school clearly displayed within every classroom, as well as the learning zone.
- Alphabet frieze and high frequency word walls and learning mats
- Learning walls in every classroom dedicated to English.
- English non-negotiables document.

- Subscription to the Oxford Owl website.

Equal Opportunities

At Hatherley Infant School, every child is provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities that enable all children to make good progress regardless of gender, ethnic background, E.A.L. (English as an Additional Language), learning ability, disability, religion or belief.

We select books and other resources that will appeal to both genders and represent a range of cultures and disabilities. Oral discussion helps the children to begin to accept other points of view, beliefs and customs and can be used to challenge stereotypes in a sensitive manner. We make every effort to use English learning and resources to exploit the full potential for multi-cultural education that celebrates cultural diversity.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the English subject leader in conjunction with the SLT.

The role of the subject leader also involves:

- supporting colleagues in their planning and teaching
- modelling good practice
- being informed about current developments in the subject
- organising resources and events/opportunities to promote and enhance literacy e.g. book week, book fair, workshops
- providing a strategic lead and direction for English in the school

The subject leader produces an action plan indicating areas for further improvement each year.