

## Netherleigh and Rossefield School

# English Policy

September 2016

### 1 Aims and Objectives

**1.1** The English Curriculum develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including the communication of their ideas, opinions and feelings. Children are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as of non-fiction and media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations.

**1.2** The aims of English are to:

- enable children to speak clearly and audibly, to communicate effectively through speech, and to take account of the perspective of those to whom they are speaking;
- to encourage children to listen with concentration, in order to identify the main points, and sometimes the detail, of what they have heard;
- to show children how to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands;
- to enable children to become effective communicators, both verbal and non-verbal, through a variety of drama activities;
- to help children become confident, independent readers, developing their understanding of meaning conveyed at word, sentence and whole text level;
- to enable children to develop as enthusiastic and reflective readers, through contact with a wide range of different types of material, including challenging and substantial text;
- to foster the enjoyment of writing for a wide range of purposes, and a recognition of its value;
- to encourage accurate and meaningful writing, be it narrative or non-fiction;
- to develop skills in planning, drafting, evaluating and editing their writing;
- to engender in children a love of literature and an appreciation of our literary heritage;

- to enable and encourage children to apply their literacy skills across the whole curriculum.

## **2 Teaching and Learning Style**

- 2.1** We use a variety of teaching and learning approaches in English lessons. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to English. Our timetable ensures that pupils have a substantial daily lesson which focuses specifically on the development of literacy skills, for example, engaging in a whole class reading or writing activity, a whole class focused word or sentence analysis activity, a guided group or independent reading or writing activity, or a whole class session to review progress and learning. Whilst there is a high proportion of whole class and group teaching, the independent activity gives an opportunity to talk and collaborate, and so embed and enhance children's learning. They have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts, and to support their work with a variety of resources, such as word banks, phonic resources, dictionaries and thesauri. Wherever possible, we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum, and will often use incidental opportunities to teach and reinforce English skills in other subject areas.
- 2.2** In all classes, there are children of differing ability. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies: differentiated group work, differentiated text books, and through open ended tasks.

## **3 English Curriculum Planning**

- 3.1** English is a core subject in the curriculum, and we use the Primary National Curriculum (2014) as a basis for our provision, adapting it to recognise our emphasis on traditional methods.
- 3.2** We carry out our curriculum planning in English in three phases: long-term, medium-term, and short-term. The long-term plan maps the text types studied in each year group during the Key Stage. The subject leader works this out in conjunction with teaching colleagues in each year group.
- 3.3** Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. The subject leader keeps and reviews these plans. As we now have some mixed-age classes, we ensure complete coverage of the curriculum without omitting or repeating topics.
- 3.4** The class teacher is responsible for writing the daily lesson plans for each lesson (short-term plans). These plans list the specific learning objectives of each lesson. The class teacher keeps these individual plans and reviews them after each lesson.
- 3.5** We have planned the work in English so that lessons build upon prior learning. We ensure that there are opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills

and knowledge in each unit and we also build progression into the English scheme of work, so that the children are increasingly challenged, and their knowledge deepens as they progress through the school.

#### **4 Foundation Stage**

- 4.1** We teach literacy skills in Reception classes as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. Progressive skill development is outlined in Communication, Language and Literacy (CLL), one of the areas of learning in the EYFS curriculum. In particular, in the EYFS, the CLL curriculum cannot be covered in isolation from the other areas of learning. Opportunities to practise literacy skills, for example, reading labels, responding to written instructions, mark-making and early writing as part of play-based learning will be provided throughout the learning environment in the Reception classroom and outdoor area. Children have a daily phonics lesson as a crucial element in developing their early reading and writing skills.
- 4.2** We plan the teaching and development of literacy skills to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals, which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged two 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 vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore words and texts, to enjoy them, to learn about them, and to use them in various situations.

#### **5 The Contribution of English to Teaching in Other Curriculum Areas.**

- 5.1** The English skills that children develop are linked to, and applied in every area 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 at school.
- 5.2 Maths, Science, and DT:** The teaching of literacy skills contributes significantly to children's mathematical understanding, in a variety of ways. Children in the EYFS develop their understanding of number, pattern, shape and space by talking about these matters with adults and other children. Children in Key Stage 1 meet stories and rhymes that involve 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 plenary sessions, and they communicate mathematically through the developing use of precise mathematical language. Pupils will be expected to engage in research as part of their learning in science and DT, to write a range of types of report on their work, and to explain and communicate verbally about their learning, to the teacher and to each other.
- 5.3 History, Geography, and RE:** While these subjects involve significant subject specific knowledge, skills and conceptual understanding, the medium for researching, learning about and communicating is, of course, the English language. Pupils will constantly call upon their literacy skills in finding information, ordering and making sense of what they have learned and communicating orally and in writing.

- 5.4 PSHEE & C:** The teaching of literacy skills contributes to the teaching of PSHEE & C by encouraging children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues. Older children also research, debate and write about topical social problems and events. They discuss lifestyle choices, and meet and talk with visitors who work within the school community.
- 5.5 Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development:** The teaching of literacy skills enables our children to offer critical responses to the moral questions they meet in their life, both within and outside school. Their understanding and appreciation of a range of texts bring them into contact with their own literary heritage and with texts from a diverse range of cultures. The organisation of our lessons and break times allow children to work and play together, giving them the chance to use their speaking and listening skills in developing social collaboration and understanding.
- 5.6 ICT:** The selective use of computer software, with clear learning objectives, will promote, enhance and support the teaching of English at word, sentence and text levels. It also offers ways of developing learning which are not always possible with conventional methods, for example, through individualised interactive learning.

## **6 Teaching English to Children with Special Educational Needs**

- 6.1** At our non-selective school, we teach English to all our children, whatever their ability. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our differentiated teaching of English, we provide learning opportunities that enable all children to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels.
- 6.2** When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors - classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation –so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the children's needs.
- 6.3** Intervention may ultimately lead to the creation of a School Support Plan (SSP) for children with SEN. The SSP may include specific targets relating to maths.

## **7 Assessment and Recording**

- 7.1** We assess children's work in English by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher marks the work, and comments as necessary. These judgements are used to inform and adjust planning as necessary. At the end of a unit of work, s/he makes a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to the National Curriculum level of attainment. The teacher records the attainment grades on the class tracker sheet.

We use these grades as the basis for assessing the progress of each child, and we pass this information onto the next teacher at the end of the year.

**7.2** Children in Years 1-6 complete:

- a PIRA assessment every term, which gives an age-standardised score Reading score;
- a termly spelling, punctuation and grammar assessment, which grades the children in relation to age related expectations;
- a termly writing assessment, which assesses an individual piece of writing in relation to age related expectations;

**8 Resources**

**8.1** There is a range of resources for teaching English in the school. Dictionaries are kept in individual classrooms, and each room has a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts. There is also a central store of textbooks and workbooks in the Archive Room, and pupils have regular, timetabled access to the Library.

**9 Monitoring and Review**

**9.1** It is the responsibility of the Senior Management and/or staff as delegated to monitor the standards of children's work and the quality of planning and teaching in English. This may also involve supporting colleagues in their knowledge and understanding, keeping up to date with developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school, as well as reviewing strengths and weaknesses, and indicating areas for development.