



Ashdon Primary School

English Policy

Date adopted by
Governing Body:

February 2021

Next Review:

February 2024

SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

Ashdon Primary School takes seriously the responsibility to protect the welfare of the children in its care, believing that “The welfare of the child is paramount” Children Act 1989.

This policy plays an integral part in our aim to safeguard the children and ensure their wellbeing in order to promote optimum development.

Intent

At Ashdon School we strive for excellence in English achievement. We develop children’s English skills within a cross-curricular approach to Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening and non-core subjects. Across all classes, pupils are given opportunities to develop their knowledge, understanding and use of spoken and written English within a balanced curriculum. Above all else, we wish children to enjoy reading and writing in their future lives.

It is our intention to:

- Provide a language rich environment that promotes a culture of reading and writing
- Develop in pupils a love of books and high-quality literature that will not only support their learning across the curriculum, but also extend beyond the classroom environment to enrich their lives
- Choose books for discussion which challenge viewpoints and develop empathy by touching on challenging areas e.g., Holocaust
- Explicitly teach reading skills throughout the school that develop children’s understanding and enjoyment of texts
- Teach children writing skills which develop their confidence and enable them to write for a range of purposes and audiences
- Teach the basics of spelling, grammar, handwriting and punctuation so children are equipped for effective communication
- Foster in pupils the confidence, desire and ability to express their views and opinions both orally and in writing
- Value and celebrate diversity in culture and language

Implementation

Statutory Requirements

The statutory requirements for English are set out in the National Curriculum in England (2013) and in the Communication and Language literacy sections of the Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage (2012).

EYFS Phonics

All pupils within the Early Years Foundation Stage receive phonics teaching in line with the DFE document ‘Letters and Sounds’.

From Reception onwards, pupils receive a daily phonics lesson, targeted at their current level of attainment, and are encouraged to apply this learning in their reading and writing. Pupils continue to receive daily phonics teaching until they are confident with using and applying the skills taught within phase five of the 'Letters and Sounds'. Pupils who are making slow progress are identified through formative assessment during lessons and intervention is immediately put into place, alongside the usual phonics teaching. Children are sent home with reading books which are fully decodable. Supplementary readers, which are 90% decodable are sent home later to reinforce the sounds. Children also have access to the online Bug Club reading resources.

KS1 (Year 1 and Year 2)

In KS1 the phonics programme Letters and Sounds is taught in groups according to age and/or ability with an increasing focus on spelling and spelling rules. Y1 focus on phase 5 Letters and Sounds (having reviewed phase 4) and Y2 focus on phase 6 (having reviewed phase 5.) Some children may be supported with Read, Write Inc resources to supplement Letters and Sounds. Children are also taught to read and spell the appropriate High Frequency Word (HFW) lists. Phonics and English are taught daily in KS1.

English is taught by a variety of genre units which are covered over a sequence of weeks. These units cover fiction, non-fiction and poetry texts as outlined in the National Curriculum. The units develop reading skills, sentence formation focusing on grammar and punctuation and writing and re-drafting skills. They may link directly to the teaching of non-core subjects when appropriate. The meaning of vocabulary is explored and glossaries are developed from reading material.

KS2 (Years 3-6) Continuity and Progression in Phonics and Spelling teaching

The key resource used to support children's spelling learning in KS2 is The Spelling Shed. Daily spelling practice and rule teaching takes place in KS2 moving on from and referring back to phase 6 Letters and Sounds. A weekly spelling test takes place in each class.

Across Years 3-6 Letters and Sounds may still be used where needed to support children's learning, in addition to Read, Write Inc resources to support children where appropriate.

Quality texts chosen by class teachers are the central focus of three week or so English genres taught covering fiction, non-fiction and poetry. These units continue to develop reading skills outlined in the National Curriculum requirements. Vocabulary meaning is further explored by the development of glossaries and wherever possible texts are matched to non-core subjects.

Approaches to Reading

Letters and Sounds is used to deliver discrete daily phonics lessons in EYFS and KS1 enabling children to decode efficiently. Reading strategies are modelled daily by teachers and TAs and children have the opportunity across '5 a Day' reading experiences to develop these and discuss texts in detail. In addition, a range of Collins Bug Club fully decodable books support early readers. These are supplemented later by Reading Colour Band books. This colour band scheme supports the transition in to KS2. The class teacher in EYFS/KS1 reads a quality text daily to the class as part of the '5 a Day' experience.

In EYFS and KS1 children have the opportunity to read 1:1 with an adult at least once per week. This is more frequent for children who read less often at home, or who may need additional support to reach national curriculum expectations. Children's reading progress is reviewed weekly in EYFS/KS1 by the class teacher and more formally, with all staff present including the SENCO, half-termly at a whole school progress review staff meeting.

As children move through the school, or become more able readers, opportunities for sustained independent or group reading are provided. Initially, colour band books are used from a range of publishers covering both fiction and non-fiction. Every child in the school takes a reading book home

and parents record daily home reading in a Reading Record book. These books are selected from fully decodable Collins Bug Club or the school colour band system. Once children are ready to become independent readers the class teacher directs the children to particular authors or titles to scaffold their choices to ensure quality texts are accessed. Class 3 have a range of books bought specifically because they have been prize winners, or highly recommended by publishers, or the children, to ensure reading is pleasurable and worthwhile.

Each class teacher in KS2 reads regularly to their class a quality text which may be connected to topics studied each term.

Parents are also asked to read to their children every night from a book provided by a class library shelf. In Class 3 the parents of children, who are not reading at the age-expected level, are asked to read a provided paperback each night so that their child can access age-appropriate language and story type. During the course of a year reading enrichment activities take place such as older pupils paired with a younger reading partner for a period of time, World Book Day Events, visiting authors and theatre visits.

Developing Comprehension of Reading

In EYFS/KS1 this is part of the 5 a Day experience of children. It references a range of genres including poetry and choosing books for pleasure. Question types are based on the 5 W's and inference. Once a week EYFS/Y1 undertake a more formal approach to reading a text to discuss meaning giving their answers orally. Y2 also once a week work in a more formal setting with a written text and written answers using a ruler to follow the words. In non-core subjects, quality texts are also used wherever possible to research information.

In KS2 quality texts are also used to support non-core topic work wherever possible. All KS2 children experience at least 30 mins a day, four times a week, of Reading Comprehension activities either related to topic work or often using reading material supplied by Ashley Booth. The latter scheme fits well with higher order reading question types and vocabulary development. It also supports Y3/Y4 children in finding quality authors they enjoy reading as they make the transition from colour band books to independent choices. The School Library also supports Reading for Pleasure opportunities.

Approaches to Writing

Our aim is to develop children's ability to produce well-structured writing with appropriate detail and good vocabulary choices. Our approach is to instil the importance of transcription and composition as required in the National Curriculum.

Quality texts or extracts from books are chosen by the class teacher as stimuli. Often these have cross-curricular links. Text types are chosen to enable different types of writing e.g., persuasion, to inform, report or entertain. There is a balance between fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Short film clips or educational visits may also stimulate writing. Use of good vocabulary choices and the application of grammatical structures develop sentence work before the children write lengthier pieces.

Handwriting

As a school, we use the Penpals Handwriting scheme to help children develop fluent, clear and legible handwriting.

We believe that handwriting is a developmental process with its own distinctive stages of progression from readiness for handwriting, through to letter joins, practising speed and fluency and higher presentation skills. A flexible fluent and legible handwriting style empowers children to write with confidence and creativity.

Handwriting is taught explicitly in Reception and Key Stage 1. Across Key Stage 2 teachers, where appropriate, revisit this learning and provide opportunities for pupils to keep improving their handwriting.

Teachers will:

- Expose children visually to a cursive script and pre-cursive letter formation in the foundation stage alongside regular print
- Teach children to write using pre-cursive letter formation in The Foundation stage, leading onto handwriting in a joined script which is both legible and fluent.
- Help achieve this through regular, purposeful and guided practise.

Children will:

- Develop fine motor skills
- Understand the importance of correct posture and paper position whether right or left-handed.
- Hold and use a pen/pencil effectively.
- Learn how to start and finish letters correctly.
- Form letters of consistent size and shape
- Use and understand the language of writing and how to use the correct terminology
- Use regular spaces between words
- Form upper and lowercase letters correctly
- Join letters correctly
- Be able to write legibly in both joined and printed styles
- Develop greater control and fluency as they become increasingly confident

Handwriting is taught as an explicit lesson in EYFS/KS1 and LKS2.

Approaches to Grammar and Punctuation

Grammar follows the National Curriculum statutory requirements. It is either taught in discrete lessons within English units, or wherever possible incorporated in to sentence work linked to a particular genre. A document describing the progression of grammar skills taught is used by class teachers.

Approaches to Speaking and Listening

Speaking and Listening are fundamental to good communication for us all and are independent of an ability in reading and writing. We recognise the importance of building on the skills children have already acquired to build on this foundation. From entry in EYFS, children are given opportunities to develop and learn new skills in formal and informal settings, both in and outside the classroom.

Children are encouraged to:

- Listen and respond to stories, rhymes, poems, songs, games and factual programmes
- Respond to visual and aural stimuli, such as paintings, radio or film clips
- Discuss and express opinions
- Give and receive instructions or information
- Work with talk partners
- Describe and recount events
- Tell stories and read aloud
- Recite lines, poems, take part in school drama and public speaking in church
- Engage in imaginative play
- Take part in assemblies

Cross- Curricular Opportunities for English

Teachers plan carefully for children to practice and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum. Topics are organised in a two-year rolling programme. Every opportunity is taken to incorporate high quality fiction and non- fiction texts to support topic work. The topics studied play an essential part in developing a love for reading and writing.

Assessment

Pupil progress and response to learning taking place is at the centre of planning sequences of lessons by the class teacher. The needs of the pupils, recognised by pupil response in the classroom during lessons taught, along with past genre assessment by the class teacher, directs the development of the learning taking place. In addition, all staff are involved regularly at Monday subject coordinator development meetings or staff meetings, in assessing pupil progress and subject progress across the school via book trawls and discussion led by the English co-ordinator.

Staff assess pupils reading ages, reading comprehension attainment and writing attainment more formally each half term. Feedback from these sessions drives next step planning and focus areas for the following half term. Interventions are planned with all staff and the SENCO present using formative and summative assessment. Interventions are led either by class teachers or experienced TAs with a wide skill set. Writing is teacher assessed and moderated within school and across a local triad of schools. In Y1 pupils take a statutory phonics test. Any children not meeting the statutory level are retested again in Y2. Government statutory SATS test are used in the relevant year groups elsewhere in school. The latest Government Statutory testing details for primary schools can be found online.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the staff and Governing Body of the school, or sooner if deemed appropriate.

Signed: _____ (Chair of Governors)

Date: _____