



English Policy 2023 - 2024

St. Michael in the Hamlet Primary School

Intent

At St. Michael in the Hamlet primary school, the study of English develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including the communication of their ideas, views 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.

The objectives for teaching English are:

- to enable children to speak clearly and audibly, and to take account of their listeners;
- to encourage children to listen with concentration, in order to identify the main points of what they have heard;
- to show children how to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands;
- to teach children effective communication, both verbal and non-verbal, through a variety of drama activities
- to help them become confident, independent readers, through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text level knowledge;
- to develop enthusiastic and reflective readers, through contact with challenging and substantial texts;
- to foster the enjoyment of writing, and a recognition of its value;
- to encourage accurate and meaningful writing, be it narrative or non-fiction;
- to improve the planning, drafting and editing of their written work.

Implementation

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. When implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English, we use an agreed teaching sequence based upon the 'Pathways the Write' approach. 'Pathways to Write' is a mastery approach to the teaching of writing, based upon the principles of how children learn. It is powerful because the text stimuli enables children to imitate the language they need for a particular topic orally before reading and analysing it and then writing their own version.

We carry out the curriculum planning in English in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). An agreed syllabus based upon the National Curriculum details what we teach in the long-term. Our yearly teaching programme identifies the key objectives in literacy that we teach to each year. This includes recommendations for the teaching of grammar, punctuation, spelling and vocabulary.

Our long-term plans are used by each year group to write our medium-term plans, encompassing the teaching and learning of reading and writing including grammar, punctuation, spelling and vocabulary via a strong literature spine and specific genres based upon the 'Pathway for Writing' approach. These plans define what we teach. They list the specific learning objectives and ensure an appropriate balance and

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distribution of work across each term. The subject leader is responsible for monitoring these plans. We aim to inculcate a love of reading, reading for meaning and reading for pleasure. We celebrate reading on a daily basis by reading to our children and having them read to us. We have reading clubs, reading areas, libraries, inspirational displays and reading schemes (both physical and virtual) to aid with this philosophy. Our school has committed to becoming a reading rich school. Children will experience guided and shared reading sessions, will have the opportunity to read at home with physical and virtual books and will be exposed to a rich variety of genres during their time here.

Class teachers complete a brief weekly (short-term) plan/timetable which includes what is being taught in English that week and what each group of children will be learning. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, and the class teacher and subject leader discuss them on an informal basis and at regular reviews.

Cross-curricular links

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 and speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work at school.

Mathematics

The teaching of English contributes significantly to children's mathematical understanding, in a variety of ways. Children in Key Stage 1 meet stories and rhymes that involve counting and sequencing. Children in Key Stages 1 and 2 are encouraged to read and interpret problems, in order to identify the mathematics involved. They explain and present their work to others and they communicate mathematically through the developing use of precise mathematical language.

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE) and citizenship

English in particular oracy, contributes to the teaching of PSHEE and citizenship by encouraging children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues. Circle Time and Philosophy for Children sessions, across both Key Stages, provides the opportunity for all four strands of the Speaking and Listening objectives to be explored. It helps children hone their speaking and listening skills and encourages group interaction, discussion and drama. Older children will research and debate topical problems and events. They discuss lifestyle choices, and meet and talk with visitors who work within the school community. Planned activities within the classroom also encourage children to work together and to respect each other's views.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and Philosophy For Children (P4C)

The teaching of oracy skills within English develops skills through which our children can offer 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 with texts from a diverse range of cultures. The organisation of our lessons allows children to work together, and gives them the chance to discuss their ideas and results. P4C supports our children in their thinking, reasoning and questioning, as well as the way in which children speak and listen to each other in the dialogue.

Digital Literacy

The use of Digital Literacy, with clear learning objectives, will promote, enhance and support the teaching of English at word, sentence and text level. It also offers ways of impacting on learning which are not possible with conventional methods, for example interactive and non-linear stories. We use 'Book Bugs' on school computers and for homework. Children may access interesting and interactive lessons and guidance in reading, comprehension, grammar, punctuation and spellings.

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ICT is used at whole-class, group and independent level. The screen projection of text enables it to be read and shared. The projection of a word processor permits the writing process to be modelled effectively. A wide variety of text types are available through the Internet or CD-ROMs to encourage the framing of explicit questions. Groups can work at a computer and input text via standard or overlay keyboard. Word banks or word grid software speed up recording. Software is used to support independent reading (text to speech) and writing (predictive word processors, word banks and spell checkers). A range of software is used to develop specific grammatical and spelling skills. Lessons can focus on what pupils have achieved using ICT, or ICT can provide the means of presenting their outcomes (via multimedia presentation or the school website).

Teaching and learning styles

At St. Michael-in-the-Hamlet Primary School we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our English lesson. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding. Generally, we do this through a daily lesson in which children experience a whole-class reading or writing activity, a whole-class focused word or sentence activity, a guided group or independent activity, and a whole-class session to review progress and learning. Whilst there is a high proportion of whole-class and group teaching, independent activities provide the opportunity for talk and collaboration which help embed and enhance the children's learning. The structure of the daily lesson is sometimes adapted to suit the nature of the objectives being taught or to meet the needs of a particular group of children. Children experience a wide range of texts and have access to a variety of resources, such as dictionaries, thesauruses and phonic fans. Children use ICT in English lessons where it enhances their learning, as in drafting their work and in using multimedia to study how words and images are combined to convey meaning. Wherever possible we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

In all classes children have a wide range of abilities, and we seek to 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. In some lessons we do it through differentiated group work, while in others we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use learning support assistants to support some children, and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

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. For further details see separate policies: Special Educational Needs; Disability Non-Discrimination; Gifted and Talented; English as an Additional Language (EAL).

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors –

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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. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

Intervention through Early Years/School Action and Early Years/School Action Plus will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs.

We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning English. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom (a theatre trip, for example) we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Teachers provide help by using:

- texts that children can more easily read and understand;
- visual and written materials in different formats;
- ICT, other technological aids and taped materials.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

Communication, Language and Literacy is one of the six areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Curriculum. It includes communication, speaking and listening in different situations and for different purposes, being read a wide range of books, reading simple texts and writing for a variety of purposes. We acknowledge that effective teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage requires:

- observing children and planning for the contexts in which they best develop their speaking and listening and their understanding of reading and writing
- helping children to develop language for communication through interaction and expression
- modelling the use of language as a tool for thinking
- demonstrating the use of language for reading and writing
- helping children understand how text works
- planning that is flexible and informed and which involves the whole team

Children work towards early learning goals which establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Co-ordinator's Role

It is the responsibility of the co-ordinators to:

- Support staff in their implementation of the English programmes of study
- Monitor the effectiveness of planning for English
- Ensure full coverage of all English objectives across all key stages
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of the teaching of English
- Monitor pupil standards and progress in reading, writing and speaking and listening
- Be informed about current developments
- Lead school training sessions to enable teachers to become familiar with latest materials
- Establish school priorities and draw up action plans
- Analyse results and review progress

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- Manage and deploy resources
- Ensure all staff have access to quality training as appropriate
- Develop agreed guidelines on the teaching of all aspects of English
- Prioritise yearly objectives for the school's SIP

Impact

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team. As part of the SLT, the work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in their teaching, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for English in the school. The subject leader evaluates strengths and weaknesses in the subject, and indicates areas for further improvement, establishing priorities in the school's SIP. The leader reviews samples of children's work and together with the SLT undertakes lesson observations of English teaching across the school.

Assessment

Teachers assess children's work in English in three phases. The short-term using 'Balance', this helps them to adjust their daily plans. Assessments range from phonics tracker assessments within EFYS and KS1 to 'Balance' assessment of Key performance indicators across the whole school. They match these short-term assessments closely to the teaching objectives. Reflective verbal feedback is given to help guide children's progress linked to the class success criteria and 'Balance Wheel' (refer to Assessment policy). Children are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own work through the use of Assessment for Learning, guided reading and Learning to Learn techniques.

Teachers make long-term assessments towards the end of the school year, and they use these to assess progress against school and national targets. With the help of these long-term assessments they are able to set targets for the next school year. The next teacher then uses these long-term assessments as the planning basis for the new school year.

These long-term assessments are based on end-of-year tests and teacher assessments. Children undertake the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and the optional national tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5. Teachers also make annual assessments of children's progress based on the level descriptions of the National Curriculum. KS1 writing assessments are moderated by the Local Authority.

Reviewed December 2023

Next review date: December 2024

