



Literacy Policy

Aims

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. We acknowledge that if a child does not have the skills to speak, read and write fluently, they are disenfranchised in society.

The aims of teaching English are: (NC 2014)

- 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

Teaching and learning style

At Meadowbank Primary School, we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our English lessons, catered to the individual needs of our children. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding. As talk is a precursor to grammatically correct writing, we use the framework of talk for writing of imitation, innovation and invention, where appropriate, as a tool to aid children in learning, editing and independently writing texts from a range of different genres. In our daily lessons, children experience a range of independent, paired and group activities structured to support them in developing their own flair and writing style. Children experience targeted grammar, punctuation and spelling practice to develop basic skills, often as the starter to a lesson. In Key Stage 2, children have discrete grammar based lessons, which are often linked to a learnt text or the current genre they are writing, allowing children the opportunity to deconstruct a text and practise appropriate sentence types to meet the needs of the genre. Drama is also used throughout the school as a way of engaging children and further enhancing their Literacy skills. The learning environment in classroom supports this teaching method as all classrooms are equipped with reading corners, writing stations and a learning area designed around the theme of the half term topic to enable children 'real' opportunities to write from.

Children learn at least one text per term via Talk for Writing. Teachers plan imitation (learning a text through a range of kinaesthetic methods), innovation (using the learnt text to write another one), and invention (fiction) and independent application (non-fiction) which involves writing their own text based on everything that they have internalised.

Children have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts, and to support their work with a variety of resources. 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. They can use ICT programmes to create animations, short films and other multimedia to write from. We have high expectations of our children and their works,

encouraging them to use and apply their learning with English to other areas of the curriculum. Children's work is all recorded in their half term topics books in order to promote this.

In all classes, children have a wide range of abilities, and we endeavour 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 different strategies. In some lessons, teachers differentiate through group tasks and learning objectives; while in others we ask all children to work from the same starting point before moving them on to develop their own ideas through careful questioning. We use classroom assistants to support the learning of all children, working in small groups with targeted activities matching their individual needs.

English curriculum planning

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the National Curriculum 2014 as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English.

We carry out the curriculum planning in English in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The school text type overviews details what we teach in the long-term, outlining units to be covered in specific phases. The spelling pathway on the assessment sheet details the spelling objectives to be covered in each year group.

Our medium-term plans are written termly based on our curriculum planning; this is influenced by what the children wish to learn and our staff follow the text type overviews to ensure coverage across a phase. These plans define what we teach, and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term. The subject leader is responsible for keeping and reviewing these plans.

Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan for the teaching of English. This lists the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes for each lesson, and gives details of how the lessons are to be taught. It also includes details of what each group of children will be learning. It also includes questioning which deepens the children's thinking based on Bloom's Taxonomy. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, and the class teacher and subject leader often discuss them on an informal basis.

Where possible, teachers ensure that Literacy planning and teaching links with the topic for the term, enabling children to see a purpose to their learning.

Handwriting – Staff will use Letter Join resources from September 2016 to teach handwriting across school, following a progressive cursive style from Year 1. Children will be supported to develop sound letter formations from Foundation and undergo key exercises to develop their fine and gross motor skills. As much as possible, teacher handwriting is modelled correctly to the children to meet their needs along the development stages and handwriting sessions are planned into lessons where appropriate. For those struggling with handwriting, targeted intervention takes place to support the child in mastering pen grips, letter structures and to develop a legible writing style.

The Foundation Stage

We teach English in reception classes as an integral part of the school's work. The format for the daily lesson is similar to that used in the rest of the school. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the English aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals, 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 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.

Spelling and Grammar teaching

As the teaching of spelling and grammar has become more important in the curriculum, staff use the spelling pathway and the assessment grids to ensure that children learn the spelling patterns appropriate to their year group. These are taught as both discrete sessions in a top-down manner: spelling and grammar patterns are taught and then applied to texts, but also in a bottom-up manner: texts are deconstructed to model to children a real application of spelling and grammar. We recognise the importance of both processes working alongside each other, but especially value deconstructing texts to support understanding the real application of spelling rules and patterns. Phases balance the time spent on each process dependent on the needs of their year groups.

Teachers mark age appropriate spellings and give children the opportunity to practice the spellings and/or find them in a dictionary and record them in their spelling log for future use, (see marking and feedback policy).

Children are given spellings to learn at home across each half term. This link with the spelling patterns that they are learning in class. In KS1, these spellings are linked to the letters and sounds grapheme-phoneme correspondences and spelling patterns, and in KS2, these are based on the spelling word lists and spelling patterns in the appendices of the national curriculum.

Throughout the year, teachers plan in activities to assess the independent application of the required spelling patterns in a year group. These can be in the form of dictations, in independent pieces of writing, or occasionally as word lists. (Children are expected to be able to spell a word in a sentence and the short term retention of words in spelling 'tests' are not seen as the best way of assessing a child's true spelling capability).

Reading

We endeavour to take a consistent and structured approach to the teaching of reading across our key stages which best supports the children and aids the transition between year groups and phrases to maximise optimum progression. Children are involved in shared and guided reading during daily timetabled group/individual reading time and Literacy lessons. Teachers follow a structured planning format across the school for guided reading where children receive at least one session a week where they engage within a group discussion about a text they have read with the teacher. This allows the teacher to use targeting questioning to individuals within groups in order to develop their higher order thinking skills. Dependant on their accuracy and fluency, children will read independently before the discussion takes place or with an adult to support them to decode unfamiliar word.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, phonic skills are taught through high quality, short discrete daily sessions using the recommended synesthetic phonics programme 'Letters and Sounds.' This provides us with a multi-sensory approach that accommodates all learning styles. Children learn a range of strategies to decode words, with an emphasis on phonological knowledge and word building skills. The children are taught within the appropriate phonic phase with 'Letters and Sounds' continuing in Key Stage 2 to support the needs and ability of individual children if necessary.

Throughout Key Stage 2, a structured guided reading procedure is followed, supporting children in the development of their understanding of a whole text. They explore a range of questioning techniques; make predictions from what they have read; inference characters thoughts, feelings and behaviours using evidence from the text and practise skills of skimming and scanning for finding specific information quickly. They are also exposed to unfamiliar texts in addition to their independent and group reading books, allowing them opportunities to apply learnt skills. Children are encouraged to develop their answers in detail, making references to the text they are reading and identifying key quotes from the text that have supported their inference/deduction - this is reinforced in teacher discussion groups, where children are also encouraged to challenge each other ideas. As part of their guided reading cycle, children complete a range reading activities linked to their text in which they are reading.

In school we have a variety of reading books including fiction, non-fiction and poetry for children to borrow and take home. These are organised so that they are aligned to a progressive national, colour banded levelling system. The teaching teams regularly observe and assess children's reading skills to ensure the children take home books that are carefully pitched to their reading ability. In key stage 2, gifted readers are encouraged to share their chosen books from home in school and a selection of higher level texts are available for the children to take home, designed in supporting them to develop a more mature voice to their writing.

The teaching team receive regular training in the teaching of reading and phonics which enables them to deliver quality first teaching with interactive sessions that engage and motivate the children. Parents are also invited into school during the year to engage in reading and phonic workshops in order for them to understand the strategies we use. We also recognise and value the significant role that parents play in further developing children's reading skills and fostering a love of books.

The subject leader conducts regular learning walks to ensure the delivery of guided reading is consistent across year groups and that children are exposed to a wealth of effective questioning techniques to support their development of comprehension. Feedback is shared with staff with next steps agreed upon for future teaching.

All teachers record weekly planning and ongoing assessment (AFL) within a designated file with easy access to the ARE of the year group.

Areas in school have been set up to promote a love of reading, with high quality resources available along with regular in-school events and competitions to engage both children's and adults at home.

Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas

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

Literacy skills are also highlighted and specifically targeted in reading and writing across the curriculum to enable the children to practise and embed their skills and write with a clear purpose.

Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy

The teaching of English contributes significantly to children's mathematical understanding, in a variety of ways. Children in the Foundation Stage develop their understanding of number, pattern, shape and space by talking about these matters with adults and other children. Children in Key Stage 1 read 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 the whole lesson, and they communicate mathematically through the developing use of precise mathematical language. Children in all phases use questioning, and speaking and listening strategies to reason and justify about their mathematical thinking.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

The skills taught in English contribute greatly to the children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Children are able to draw on their Literacy skills in order to further enhance their scientific historical and geographical knowledge and understanding. Literacy enables children to predict, explain, evaluate and conclude when carrying out investigations and studies.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

English contributes to the teaching of PSHE and citizenship by encouraging children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues. Older children are also taught to research and debate topical problems and events using their inferential reading skills. They discuss lifestyle choices, and meet and talk with visitors who work within the school community. The teaching of 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.

Creative Development & Physical Development

In the creative and physical areas of the curriculum children are able to use their speaking and listening skills to comment on, and evaluate, their own and others work. They are also able to draw on the skills of following and giving instructions.

English and ICT

The use of information and communication technology, 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.

Every classroom has an interactive whiteboard which greatly contributes to the effective teaching and learning of English. ICT is used at whole-class, group and independent level. The screen projection of text on the interactive whiteboard enables it to be read, shared and edited. A wide variety of text types are available through the Internet or programmes/applications to encourage the framing of explicit questions. Software is used to support independent reading (text to speech) and writing (predictive word processors, word banks and spell checkers). Lessons can focus on what pupils have achieved using ICT, or ICT can provide the means of presenting their outcomes (via multimedia presentation).

Each key stage share a class set of laptops and I-Pads to enable the children to use software in small groups to edit and improve as they write, discuss online texts and e books as a reading resource and research information with specific teaching focuses.

English and 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.

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, and 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 EHC Plans for children with special educational needs occurs in school. The Access plan/EHC plan may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to English.

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, such as video, sound buttons, talking postcards;
- alternative communication, such as signs and symbols;

Assessment for learning

Teachers assess children's work in English in three phases. The short-term assessments that teachers make as part of every lesson help them to adjust their daily plans and amend lessons where needed (AFL). They match these short-term assessments closely to the teaching objectives and children's personal targets. Written or verbal feedback is given to help guide children's progress. All children are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own work.

Teachers use end of year expectations from the NC 2014 for reading and writing on a half termly basis to measure progress against the key objectives, and to help them plan for the next unit of work. Teachers look to see progress across the children's work and mark to ensure that this occurs. This is shared during half termly pupil progress meetings with AHT and HT, where teachers assess children as emerging, developing, secure or mastering the objectives they have covered for the previous half term. This allows teachers to identify areas that need to be readdressed and consolidated.

Children assess their own or peers writing in small groups referring to the steps to success. This then enables them to create next steps in their learning. Children (especially in upper key stage 2) are regularly involved in creating their own steps to success for specific learning objectives, applying previously learnt skills.

Teachers make long-term assessments towards the end of the school year, and they use these to assess progress against end of year expectations. With the help of these long-term assessments they are able to set targets for the next school year, and to summarise the progress of each child before discussing it with the child's parents. 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 progress within books/assessment notes. Children undertake the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and progress is assessed through independent tasks within lessons in Years 1, 3, 4, and 5.

Staff are keen to improve their subject knowledge and the subject leader takes an active role in disseminating best practice and making recommendations for staff development.

Resources

There are a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries and a variety of age-appropriate small apparatus. Each classroom has a reading area, which is inviting and stimulating for the children. All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts. Every classroom has a themed area, which is changed termly or half-termly, depending on the topic and promotes speaking and listening and writing in role. This enhances children's speaking and listening skills. All classes have a writing area, which can be used in all lessons to support children with their writing. Children have access to the internet through their laptops and iPads in the classroom. Access to the Internet is also available in the library area. The library contains a range of books to support children's individual research. Around school, interactive displays are set up so that children can develop their critical thinking and speaking and listening skills based on a variety of props/objects of interest.

Continuous Professional Development

Maximising adult potential to increase capacity, authority and responsibility is the key to maximising pupil progress. Therefore, at Meadowbank Primary School CPD is an investment in our valued staff as leaders of learning, in the enrichment of our children and in the very fabric of our school. This investment will no doubt reap rewards and bring about raised standards in all that we do. CPD is supported in a variety of ways in school, internal and external training, coaching, modeling and independent learning.

Monitoring and review

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the subject leader and 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 gives the Headteacher an annual summary report evaluating the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, indicating areas for further improvement. The leader has specially-allocated regular management time in which to review samples of the children's work and to undertake lesson observations of English teaching across the school.

The governing board reviews this policy annually. The governors may, however, review the policy earlier than this if the government introduces new regulations, or if the governing board receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved.

Policy History			
Date	Document version	Document Revision History	Document Author / Reviewer
	1.0		J. Appleton
15.09.16	1.1	Detailed review, circulated to Senior Team, wider staff and Board of Governors	J. Appleton
June 2017	1.2	Annual Review – no significant change	S Taylor