



Melbourne Infant School

English Policy

Rationale

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.

Aims

At Melbourne Infant School we aim to develop pupils' abilities within an integrated programme of Speaking and Listening, Reading, Writing and the discrete teaching of Phonics. Pupils will also be given opportunities to develop and consolidate their application of English across the broader curriculum.

The aims of teaching English are to ensure pupils are able to:

- speak clearly and audibly, and to take account of their listeners
- listen with concentration, in order to identify the main points of what they have heard
- show children how to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands
- teach children effective communication, both verbal and non-verbal, through a variety of drama activities
- read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding, developing a range of independent strategies to self-assess and correct
- use phonic knowledge to blend and segment to aid reading and writing
- learn to read by sight and spell common exception words
- acquire an interest in books and read for enjoyment
- develop an interest in words and their meanings, using a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms
- understand a range of text types and genres and be able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the situation
- develop the powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness
- use a suitable technical vocabulary to articulate their responses
- develop a clear, fluent handwriting style.

Statutory Requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National curriculum in England (2013) and in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2014) in the areas Communication and Language, and Literacy.

Subject Organisation

The National Curriculum is used as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English in Key Stage one. The Early Learning Goals are followed to ensure continuity and progression from the Early Years Foundation Stage through to the National Curriculum.

In all classes children have a wide range of abilities, and teachers seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. This is achieved through a range of strategies. In some lessons this might be through differentiated group work, while in others children are asked to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. Teaching assistants are used to support children, and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

The curriculum planning for English is carried out in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The National Curriculum for English details what we teach in the long-term.

The medium-term plans, which are also based on the National Curriculum for English, give details of the main teaching objectives for each term. These plans define what we teach, and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term. In Key Stage 1 the medium term plans are structured around three writing styles: Narrative, Non-fiction and Poetry.

Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan for the teaching of English. This lists the specific learning objectives 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. Group activities are differentiated by the code:

- HA - Higher Ability
- AA - Above Average
- A - Average
- BA - Below Average

Weekly planning is monitored by the Headteacher and the subject co-ordinator.

Organisation in the Early Years Foundation Stage

English in the Early Years Foundation Stage is taught as an integral part of the children's learning. Teachers relate the English aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. All children are given 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 and use them in various situations. Children have opportunities to develop reading and writing skills in a range of child-led and adult-led activities.

Approaches to Spoken Language

Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. Children are given a variety of opportunities to practise their spoken language in a range of situations. For example, talking partners, role play, drama. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils, and to raise reading and writing standards. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life.

Reading

At Melbourne Infant School it is our aim to ensure that all children are given the opportunities and support to become independent readers, to gain enjoyment in reading for a wide range of purposes. Staff endeavour to provide children with a wide and varied range of reading opportunities and activities.

Approaches to Reading

Refer to the Reading Policy for more detail.

Shared Reading

All children will have the opportunity to read together during the week either through English lessons or in other curriculum areas e.g. reading Maths word problems, instructions for playing a game, information about famous people from history, road names on a map.

Guided Reading

All children have the opportunity to participate in a guided reading session with the teacher or Teaching Assistant once a week. Children may discuss and read a text associated with the current English focus, or practise a reading skill linked to the week's English focus.

Independent Reading

All children will read to their class teacher or teaching assistant on a one-to-one basis at least once a week. Reading records are kept by the class teacher to help track their progress. Children also have the opportunity to read independently during the week as part of their 'learning choice' activities. Children are encouraged to select their own library book from the school library to read at home each week. Parents are encouraged to read frequently with their children at home.

Phonics

At Melbourne Infant School all teachers broadly follow the National Strategy 'Letters and Sounds' scheme of work for phonics. Word-level objectives are also present in the National Curriculum for English. Children follow a six-phase teaching programme throughout Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Children are differentiated within learning teams and are taught the appropriate phase for their ability. Phonics teaching takes place four times a week for 20 minute sessions. Both teachers and Teaching Assistants are involved in delivering phonics teaching. Each session follows the sequence of teaching: Introduction, Revisit and review, Teach, Practise, Apply. Children may move between groups depending on the progress they are making.

Comprehension

Reading and comprehension (reading for meaning and understanding) are closely linked. Every child must have an understanding of the text they are reading and be able to answer simple and complex questions about the text. During all shared and guided reading opportunities, teachers are able to assess comprehension skills as they are embedded in the teaching and learning. Comprehension skills are also taught explicitly on a regular basis in Key Stage 1.

Writing

At Melbourne Infant School it is our aim to ensure that all children are given the opportunities and support to become independent writers, to gain enjoyment in writing for a wide range of

purposes. Staff endeavour to provide children with a wide and varied range of writing opportunities and activities.

Approaches to Writing

Mark making

During this very early stage of writing development, children are encouraged to experiment with making marks in a range of contexts, with a variety of different media. This may include mark making in sand, soil, play dough, on paper, with water, paint, crayons, pencils, felt tips, etc. This helps to develop fine motor skills and co-ordination.

Emergent Writing

During the next stage of their writing development children are given opportunities to develop writing skills through emergent writing. These are often child-initiated tasks to develop children's understanding that writing has a purpose as well as developing their fine motor skills. Children are encouraged to write the initial letter of a word and gradually build upon this, attempting to write the whole word. The encouragement of emergent writing leads to a smooth transition with Key Stage 1.

Shared Writing

During English lessons, children work as a whole class, individually or in mixed ability pairs on a given writing task, led by the teacher. This is an opportunity for teachers to develop sentence structure, vocabulary, application of phonics knowledge and punctuation. Teaching assistants often support shared writing by interacting with the teacher and supporting specific children.

Guided Writing

All children have the opportunity to participate in a Guided Writing session with a teacher or Teaching Assistant during English lessons. This provides a chance for teachers to model a specific writing style and give additional guidance to a group of children in relation to all aspects of writing at their particular ability level.

Independent Writing

Teachers ensure opportunities for pupils to undertake a variety of writing tasks without adult support. This encourages pupils to learn habits of independent working as well as developing confidence and creativity. Independent writing activities take place during English lessons and teachers ensure additional opportunities for independent writing are available through 'Learning Choice' activities and through the use of Puff the Dragon in all classrooms. Teachers use an independent piece of writing (**Cold write**) to help plan a unit of work. Children are then asked to do another piece of independent writing at the end of the unit to celebrate and demonstrate all their learning (**Hot write**). The two pieces of writing can then be compared by the children and teacher.

Extended Writing

The school uses 'Big Write' to give children the opportunity to compose a piece of extended writing. The 'Big Write' lesson takes place in Key Stage 1 and is used to consolidate the skills and knowledge taught during a series of English lessons or in conjunction with topic work. Children are encouraged to work independently. The amounts of time children are given to complete a piece of 'Big Write' work increases during the key stage as they become more confident writers.

Spelling

The principles of spelling are taught through phonics, English and SPAG (Spelling, punctuation and grammar) lessons, and during the discreet spelling activity time each morning. Time is spent in phonics lessons learning spelling patterns and rules, and putting words into context. Children are encouraged to spell words by hearing, discriminating and segmenting sounds. Children are encouraged to 'have a go' at spelling words using these strategies within all curriculum subjects. Children gradually develop knowledge of correct spelling choices for words over time, but until this stage in their development are encouraged to use their segmenting skills and knowledge of sounds to spell words they are unsure of. There are also words which children are encouraged to learn how to spell- these are called common exception words, as they do not follow the taught phonics patterns but are used frequently in their writing.

Handwriting

At Melbourne Infant School, we base our handwriting scheme of work on the '*Collins Primary Focus*' programme for handwriting. Letter formation and order of teaching is closely linked to the guidelines in this programme. We aim to provide systematic, consistent teaching of handwriting. Children are taught to write in a clear, legible style, with letters correctly formed and the eventual development of a fluent, joined style.

Refer to the Handwriting Policy for more detail.

Cross-curricular opportunities

Teachers seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links with English. They plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

The use of Computing

The use of Computing, with clear learning objectives, will promote, enhance and support the teaching of English. Computing is used at whole-class, group and independent level. A wide variety of electronic devices and programmes are used to enhance the teaching and learning in English.

Resources

There is a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have a listening area with a CD player and a variety of audio texts and songs and rhymes. All classrooms also have a reading area with a selection of fiction, non-fiction and poetry texts. Each classroom has a writing area equipped with a variety of media to which teachers add specific activities every week. Children have access to classroom computers and ipads. Other learning choice areas also often have an English focus.

The reading Scheme used at Melbourne Infant School is a colour banded scheme. The scheme is progressive with books being graded by colour. Children can also choose from a selection of books from a variety of schemes including Oxford Reading Tree, Ginn, Sunshine and Storyworlds.

A wide variety of 'Big Books' and multi-modal texts are used within English lessons. Teachers have access to a large number of guided reading books which are levelled to support differentiation. Guided reading books are colour coded with each colour representing an ability level.

All teachers and TAs are able to access and use a variety of phonics resources e.g. flashcards, games, whiteboards, magnetic letters.

There are a number of dictionaries and thesauruses stored in classrooms and centrally located.

Melbourne Infant School maintains a library which is accessible to all children. It contains a variety of narrative and non-fiction texts.

In order to ensure that all children have access to appropriate support in English teachers utilise both TAs and Parent Helpers to guide individual and group activities.

Assessment and Target Setting

At Melbourne Infant School children's progress in English is assessed in the following ways:

- Initial assessment when the child first starts school and at the start of each school year
- Early Years Foundation Stage Profile
- Pupil discussions
- Independent writing- Big Write and Puff books
- Marking strips highlighted for each piece of work
- Peer assessment and self-assessment
- Plenary
- Assessment grids updated on an ongoing basis
- Teacher assessment is inputted on Classroom Monitor three times a year (Autumn, Spring and Summer terms). This allows the Headteacher, English subject co-ordinators and teaching staff to track a child's progress in English across the year and across their time at Melbourne Infant school.
- Termly phonics assessment
- Interim statements
- SATs
- The P scales
- Moderation of writing across school

Inclusion/SEN

English is taught to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. The school aims to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. Teachers identify pupils or groups of pupils who are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment.

The schools assessment procedures identify children whose progress falls outside the expected range. These children will require support through additional staffing, modified teaching methods and specialist resources. Their needs are addressed through interventions within School Action and School Action Plus leading to the creation of an Individual Education Plan. A statement of special needs may make provision for additional resources to ensure that individual needs are met. However, all teachers will aim to modify teaching and learning strategies to ensure the needs of all children are met. Teachers provide help by using:

- 'Booster' groups to support specific pupils with their English targets
- Interventions to support a specific requirement- eg. Jungle Journey, Physical Literacy, Talk Boost, PTP.

- Texts that children can more easily read and understand
- Visual and written materials in different formats
- Alternative communication e.g. signs and symbols
- Specific differentiation for pupils
- Activities to support IEP targets at home and school.

Children who are identified as higher ability in English are given suitable learning challenges. These might include challenging reading materials, additional and extended tasks and additional stimuli.

Pupil Premium

All pupil premium children are monitored in class and tracked by the subject leader and headteacher.

Equal Opportunities

All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

Parental Involvement

At Melbourne Infant School, we value the Home/School partnership and believe that it is vital to the progression of the children's achievements in reading. Parents are informed of their children's reading progress on a regular basis through comments made in the home/school liaison diary. Parents are encouraged to hear their children read 'little and often' at home. It is suggested that they re-read books to ensure the consolidation of vocabulary. They are asked to record each reading session in the liaison diary to help teachers monitor progress.

In addition to this, parent helpers offer support with reading in school. All parents who hear children read within school are given support by class teachers and written guidelines are also available to ensure children are receiving consistency when they participate in reading sessions.

Parents are informed of the term's English focuses in the termly curriculum leaflets, and encouraged to support their children in a variety of ways. They inform parents of open classrooms events, which may have an English focus.

Parents are encouraged to attend annual English workshops to support them in how to help their children and to gain an understanding of how English is taught.

Parents are informed of their child's progress in English through parents evenings, termly reports, an end of year report and informal chats whenever the needs arises.

Teachers are able to use the support of Parent Helpers to extend the degree of adult support available to children during lessons.

The Role of the Subject Co-ordinators

The Subject Co-ordinators are responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through:

- Leading the development of English within the school
- Providing support and guidance to colleagues in planning and delivery of lessons

- Keeping up to date with local and national developments in English
- Disseminating relevant information and good practice to the staff as part of a continuing programme of professional development
- Reviewing and monitoring the success and progress of the planned units of work
- Organising and maintaining resources
- Learning walks
- Scrutiny of planning
- Scrutiny of work
- Moderating writing
- Monitoring assessment and progress of groups of children, including Pupil Premium.