



## Shaftesbury Park Primary School



### Literacy Policy

#### **Aims and objectives**

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 encourage children to develop spelling strategies and give weekly spelling practise and tests to years 1 to 6

Our objectives in the teaching of 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 foster positive attitudes towards reading for pleasure
- to provide children with an understanding of the English language so they can write using their knowledge of grammar.
- to help them to 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.

#### **Teaching and learning style**

At Shaftesbury Park School, we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our literacy lessons, as recommended by the National Literacy Strategy and the revised Primary Framework for literacy and mathematics. There is a strong focus on setting lessons in a relevant context for the children so that their writing is purposeful. The subject leader is also working with staff to encourage creativity within the literacy curriculum through the use of pictures, high quality texts and objects as starting points for writing.

Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding. We do this through daily literacy lessons where there are shared, guided and independent activities. 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 their learning. They have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts, and to support their work with a variety of resources, such as dictionaries, thesauruses and phonic paddles. 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 classroom assistants to support some children, and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals. Children also have their own individual writing targets which allow them to focus on the skills which will move their learning forward.

### **Guided Reading**

All classes have a guided reading timetable to ensure that over a week, children have a guided reading session with an adult. Teachers record children's progress on sheets with APP objectives. These objectives are highlighted when a child successfully achieves their reading targets/objectives. During guided reading sessions the other children in the class are working on other reading related activities such as comprehension, reading for pleasure and follow up tasks linked to the book they are reading. These allow children to independently apply and develop their reading skills and enjoyment of reading.

### **Grammar teaching**

At Shaftesbury Park Primary School learning about and exploring languages is valued. We want children to enjoy experimenting with the English language and recognise the effect that this can have on their writing. A ten minute grammar focus session each day is something which the subject leader is working on implementing across the school with a high emphasis on speaking, listening and game style activities to keep the subject fun and engaging. In order for children to progress through the school and prepare them for the Spelling, grammar and punctuation test a whole school approach to the vocabulary used when teaching grammar is required and will be developed with the teaching staff in the summer term.

### **Literacy curriculum planning**

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the National Literacy Strategy and the revised Primary Framework for literacy and mathematics 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 National Literacy Strategy Framework for Teaching and the revised Primary Framework for literacy and mathematics detail what we teach in the long-term. Our yearly teaching programme identifies the key objectives in literacy that we teach to each year.

Where possible our medium-term plans link objectives, from the Framework, with topic themes. 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 literacy. This lists the specific learning objectives (WALT) and expected outcomes (WILF) 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. The class teacher keeps a copy of these plans and hands in an annotated copy to the subject leader, by a Monday morning. These individual plans are monitored and feedback is given to individual teachers.

We plan the activities in English so that they build on the children's prior learning. While we give children of all abilities the opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding, we also plan progression into the scheme of work, so that there is an increasing challenge for the children as they move up through the school.

### **The Foundation Stage**

We teach English in the Foundation stage classes as an integral part of the school's work. The Foundation stage classes follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, which underpins the curriculum planning for children from birth to the end of Reception. The aspects of the Foundation stage curriculum which relate closely to the National Curriculum English curriculum is the Prime area of Communication and Language and the Specific area of Literacy. The Nursery curriculum is designed with a high priority given to language enrichment activities e.g. An embedded phase one letters and sounds program, daily story sessions and small group reading, adult modelling correct language and extending vocabulary during role play and small world play. Children are also given many opportunities to mark make and begin to write. By the end of nursery the school aim is that majority of pupils can write their own name.

The Reception curriculum is designed with a high priority given to teaching letters and sounds, reading and writing in each day's program. With the class teacher modelling reading and writing throughout the day, differentiated letters and sounds group sessions. Guided reading and writing group time, individual reading support, and a play based curriculum designed to encourage children to read and write in real contexts.

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.

### **Letters and sounds**

The school prioritises the teaching of synthetic phonics as the principal method of teaching pupils to read and write. The letters and sounds program is followed systematically from Nursery to the end of year two. In year three the program is continued for those pupils who are not yet secure at phase six.

Phase one of the program is implemented in the Foundation stage and is used to plan intervention support for children with SEN further up the school. When pupils

are ready, for many this will be in the Summer term of Nursery or Autumn term of Reception, phase 2 is introduced and children are systematically taught to recognise phonemes, blend to read words (CVC words) and segment to spell and write words. The reading materials and scheme books available enable children to read simple captions and sentences as soon as they begin to work on phase 2. Alongside phoneme recognition children are taught to correctly form their letters. High frequency non decodable words, 'tricky words' are also taught to the pupils in a systematic way.

Children's progress through the phonic phases is closely tracked and any children falling behind receive additional small group or individual support. The year one pupils complete the Phonics test in the Summer term which gives additional information about pupil's phonetic awareness.

### **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.

#### *Mathematics*

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 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.

#### *Personal, social and health education (PSHCE) Circle time and SEAL*

English contributes to the teaching of PSHCE and SEAL by encouraging children to take part in class and group discussions on topical/social emotional issues. The children are given opportunities to 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*

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 bring 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.

#### *Topic*

Where possible we link our topic teaching with literacy. We consider how we can deliver literacy objectives through the teaching of topic work.

### *English and ICT*

The use of ICT, with clear learning objectives, will promote, enhance and support the teaching of English at word, sentence and text levels. It also offers ways of impacting on learning which are not possible with conventional methods, e.g. interactive and non-linear stories.

ICT is used at whole-class, group and independent levels. 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).

The everyday use of ICT is developing rapidly, with new technology and ways of communicating being produced all the time. It is important that in our school we provide opportunities for our pupils to acquire these skills. In response to this both the Year 5 and 6 classes have set up class blogs this year for children to write and respond to comments on

### **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. For further details, see separate policies: Special Educational Needs; Disability Discrimination statement; Gifted and Talented Children; English as an Additional Language statement (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 - 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 School Action and School Action Plus will lead to the creation of a provision map for children with special educational needs. The provision map may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to literacy.

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.

Teaching assistants 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;
- alternative communication, such as signs and symbols;
- translators and amanuenses.

### **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. They match these short-term assessments closely to the teaching objectives. Written or verbal feedback is given to help guide children's progress. Older children are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own work through self and peer assessments.

In KS2 a pink and green quality marking policy has been introduced. Teachers highlight in pink aspects of children's writing that indicate progress towards targets or show evidence of the WILF being met. A green for growth comment or scaffold is also written to extend the children's learning. Children respond to these comments in green pen in a dedicated response to marking session

In KS2 all children have a writing target card which clearly states the skills they are working towards to make progress with their writing. Children have these out in front of them when they are writing and are encouraged to mark them off when they think they have met that target. The teacher then dates this when they marking the work to agree with the child's self-assessment.

In the medium term, teachers use APP objectives to assess learning and to help them plan for the next unit of work. A levelling writing sheet is highlighted to show children's progress and to establish a level as well as the next steps for the child.

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, and to summarise the progress of each child before discussing it with the child's parents or carers. 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.

The subject leader keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio. This demonstrates what the expected level of achievement is in English in each year of the school. Moderation meetings happen to support teachers in their assessments.

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**

The school has recently invested in a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school.

Six new CD players (EasiListeners) have been purchased one for each FS and KS1 classroom along with a set of audio books. These allow six children at a time to listen to audio texts and will support speaking and listening aspects of the curriculum as well as promote an enthusiasm for stories.

A set of fairy tale character finger puppets was purchased for KS1 to enhance speaking, listening and drama opportunities when retelling stories.

The school has subscribed to a weekly newspaper 'First News' Each Y2-Y6 class receives a copy of the paper each week for their book corner and teachers can also access online resources which have activities linked to the news stories. This resource provides teachers with relevant topical non-fiction texts which they can link to written work in all subjects.

Grammar games and text books have been purchased for upper KS2 to help prepare children for the new Spelling, punctuation and grammar test which now forms part of their English assessment in Year 6.

There is a set of dictionaries and thesauruses which are accessible to

## KS2

All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts. Children have access to the Internet through their classroom computer. Access. Audio-visual aids are available from the central storage area. The library contains a range of books to support children's individual research.

### Monitoring and review

The coordination and planning of the English curriculum are the responsibility of the subject leader, who also:

- supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping them informed about current developments in English and by providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject;
- gives the headteacher a termly summary report in which she evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in English and indicates areas for further improvement
- uses specially allocated regular management time to review evidence of the children's work, and to observe English lessons across the school.

A named member of the school's governing body is briefed to oversee the teaching of literacy. The literacy governor meets regularly with the subject leader to review progress and discuss ideas for further improvement in the subject.

This policy will be reviewed and revised every year. The subject leader will liaise regularly with staff, both at staff meetings and informally, to monitor the effectiveness of the policy and identify issues which need addressing. Meetings with other subject co-ordinators will also ensure that literacy across the curriculum is planned for, evaluated and kept up-to-date.

The Literacy Co-ordinator produces an action plan each year outlining the targets for that year. This action plan will take account of the whole school priorities as outlined in the School Development Plan.

### **Celebrating success**

At Shaftesbury Park Primary School great importance is placed on raising the aspirations of our pupils and promoting self-esteem. With this in mind the subject leader is dedicated to seeking out opportunities (within and outside of school) which enable children's reading and writing achievements to be recognised and celebrated.

A Remarkable Writer challenge has been introduced each half term. All children within the school produce a piece of writing based on an interesting picture and one child is selected from each class as the Remarkable Writer. These children receive a certificate and small prize in assembly and their work is displayed centrally within the school for the half term.

Taking part in local and national literacy competitions (especially those which provide opportunities for children's work to be published) will be promoted by the subject leader and members of staff to further enthuse and engage children with reading and writing.

**Reviewed: March 2017**

**Reviewed by: Hannah Sotudeh, Literacy coordinator**

**Next review date: March 2019**