



Policy for English

We aim to help children to develop a love for the English language through the spoken and written word.

We recognise that English is a core subject within the National Curriculum and a pre-requisite for educational and social progress. Mastery over language empowers children to communicate creatively and imaginatively, as well as allowing them engagement with the world at large. We view the acquisition of language skills to be of the utmost importance and so the teaching of all aspects of English is given a high priority.

The Governors and Head Teacher of Atwood School have adopted the National Literacy Strategy Framework of guidance for the teaching of literacy across the school.

Aims

We aim to develop pupils' abilities within an integrated programme of speaking and listening, reading and writing. Pupils will be given opportunities to interrelate the requirements of English within a broad and balanced approach to the teaching of English across the curriculum, with opportunities to consolidate and practice taught literacy skills.

Children come to school with varying levels of language skill which we extend and deepen and provide them with a variety of language experiences. All literacy teaching will contribute to skill development in the following areas

- Speaking and Listening
- Reading
- Writing.

Speaking and Listening

We aim that children will:

- Think critically and logically
- Order their thoughts and express them clearly
- Develop skills of oracy giving the children confidence and understanding, equipping them for work and leisure
- Express and justify their feelings and opinions with increasing clarity and effectiveness and respect the opinion of others
- Communicate with ease in many varied circumstances for different audiences and purposes.

The above aims are developed through:

- Providing a range of opportunities for children to talk and listen in formal and informal settings
- The use of drama and role play to explore imagined settings
- Links between language and music exploring rhythm
- A story time – 15minutes at Key Stage 1 and 20 minutes at Key Stage 2- when the teacher or other adult reads aloud to the class
- Class discussion and debate on topical issues
- Circle time
- Showing times or news sharing when pupils are encouraged to speak to their assembled classmates
- Class assemblies
- Interviewing and hot seating as part of a topic or literacy hour.

Reading

We aim that children will:

- Read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding
- Be able to use a full range of reading strategies e.g. phonics, word recognition, graphic knowledge, picture and context clues
- Have an interest in books and read for enjoyment and provide them with a wealth of texts and story patterns for their own writing
- Develop the skill of silent reading
- Develop imagination and critical awareness through reading experiences of the best examples of traditional and modern literature
- Have experience of group, shared and individual reading. A guided reading programme was introduced in January 2005.

Reading skills are developed through:

- Providing a wide range of reading material and opportunities for children to select from this for information and for entertainment
- Use of structured reading schemes – main schemes: Oxford Reading Tree and Longmans, additional schemes: Cambridge, All Aboard and Sunshine - to support all pupils until they are capable of independent reading
- Regular one-to-one reading support for all children who have not yet reached the stage of being able to read independently
- A daily programme of word-recognition development in the early years and Key Stage 1(Reception use Jolly Phonics and Progression in Phonics, Years 1 and 2 use Progression in Phonics)
- A daily period of Guided Reading is being developed in Years 1 to 6
- A Home-School Reading Project – Years 1 and 2 take home their reading book each day, Reception as appropriate
- A home – school lending scheme- Reception may choose and change a home school reader when they wish; Years 1 and 2 change their books weekly as part of a library skills lesson supported by parents.

Writing

We aim that children will:

- Have an interest in words, their meanings; developing a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms
- Understand a range of text types and genres - be able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the situation
- Be developing the powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.
- Have a suitable technical vocabulary to articulate their responses
- Produce independent pieces of writing using correct punctuation and sentence construction
- Write extended pieces of text
- Have knowledge of the work of a range of authors, poets and playwrights
- Develop a fluid and well formed handwriting to allow an easy writing style.

Writing is developed through:

- The guidelines for the Literacy Framework
- A wide range of contexts for writing from role play to assembly productions
- Punctuation, grammar and spelling, which are taught in the first part of the literacy hour on a daily or regular basis
- Providing opportunities for collaborative writing.

Spelling is developed through:

- The marking of work and feedback to pupils
- The teaching of spelling patterns at the beginning session of the literacy hour
- Regular learning of spelling lists allocated according to ability groups from Year 1 upwards
- Encouragement of dictionary use.

Handwriting is developed through:

- Weekly teaching and practise sessions (Penpals for Writing) using printing in Reception and developing a cursive form in Key Stages 1 and 2
- Introduction of the use of pens when children are ready
- Discouragement of the use of rubbers.

Time Allocation

There are 5 allocated literacy hours per week. There are also two and a half hours for the provision of the wider English e.g. drama, extended writing, book studies, specific library time, assemblies, circle time and guided reading introduced from January 2005.

Planning

Medium term planning is undertaken by year group teams. The NLS Framework is the core scheme of work to ensure balance and progression across the key stages. Staff meetings are used to discuss the English curriculum and to ensure consistency of approach, standards and expectations.

All class teachers are responsible for weekly planning, based on the agreed medium term plans.

They will:

- Identify the appropriate teaching and learning strategies required
- Provide a balance and variety within the classroom- of context and organisational learning opportunities for children
- Assess and plan for the specific needs of children within their own class whilst adhering to the progression laid down in the Literacy Framework.

Plans are monitored by the Curriculum Team. Weekly lesson plans are worked, evaluated and then collected by the Team, monitored and filed for reference.

Teaching and Learning

English teaching in our school is based on:

- The National Curriculum Programme of study for English
- The National Literacy Strategy
- The QCA Document for Speaking and Listening in Key Stages 1 and 2
- The Foundation Curriculum Guidance.

Our children are taught in a literacy-rich environment where the all-encompassing nature of literacy will be reflected in the cross-curricular links for reading, writing and speaking and listening.

The English curriculum draws on a variety of teaching/learning approaches and we strive for a balance between those that concern the child's individual developing use of language and those that concern the knowledge about language and literature.

The mode of working in English is a balance between whole class teaching, teacher directed group work and independent working as defined in the National Literacy Strategy, the National Curriculum and the Foundation Stage Guidance.

Teaching assistants are used in English to assist:

- In the classroom, by hearing children read in a one-to-one context
- In group and guided reading
- On outings and visits by fostering discussion and questioning among small groups
- In individual or small group special needs teaching.

Homework is used to support English through:

- The Home-School Reading Project which involves each child not yet reading independently in Years 1 and 2 taking a book home to read every evening. Reception children are involved in the scheme when appropriate
- The learning of spelling lists (expected of all pupils from Year 1 onwards)
- Specific tasks set by teachers as indicated in the Homework Policy.

The emphasis in our teaching of English is in extending pupils' knowledge about language, starting from what the children can do, from their positive achievements in language and from the implicit knowledge about language that all children possess. We work together in order to make the learning experiences of our pupils as smooth and continuous as possible. And as diverse and exciting as possible.

Excellence in English is celebrated in display, performance and presentation.

Entitlement / Equal Opportunities

All children have equal access to the English curriculum, irrespective of race or gender.

All children cover the content made statutory by the Programmes of Study within the National Curriculum.

Children access the curriculum at the appropriate level, thus ensuring progression and differentiation.

Suitable resources and learning environments will be made available to enable children access to the learning required.

Special Educational Needs

Differentiated activities are given to support less able and to extend more able pupils. Children with learning difficulties are diagnosed and have provision made for their particular needs.

Teaching Assistants are used to give support to children with IEPs in all years. Pupils may be withdrawn to work in small groups or individually. They follow a structured but stimulating programme within the guidelines of the Literacy Framework.

Parents are kept informed through meetings with the class teacher and SENCO when appropriate.

Resources

Classroom Resources in English are kept clearly labelled in appropriate areas. There is a class library, which contains fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Appropriate Big Books and group readers are allocated to each year group.

The Infant reading schemes, Oxford Reading Tree and Longmans, are kept in year groups at the appropriate levels. Support schemes, Sunshine readers, All Aboard and Cambridge, are located centrally in the Infant Hall in labelled boxes. Junior reading schemes are part of each class library.

The junior library is the central non-fiction resource and it is the responsibility of the Curriculum Team.

The infant library is used as a non-fiction and fiction resource by Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes. Parents help the children select home readers on a weekly basis. The library is the responsibility of the Curriculum Team.

The school is planning to build a joint library for both Key Stages and a programme to develop library skills will begin when this is completed. All children are taught how to make the best use of reference materials, encyclopaedias and dictionaries within the classroom.

Writing is supported by:

1. Grammar for Writing
2. Developing Early Writing
3. Cornerstones for Writing.

Handwriting is supported by Penpals for Writing throughout the school.

Spelling is supported by:

- Spelling Bank
- Searchlights for Spelling
- In Years 2 and Year 3 support can be offered through the exemplification and Spelling Programme.

Phonics is resourced through PIPS and Jolly Phonics.

In Year 5, support can be offered through the Further Literacy Support Programme. In Year 3, support can be offered through the Additional Literacy Support Programme.

In Years 1 and 2, support can be offered through the Early Literacy Programme Resources are kept in the appropriate classes.

Teacher resources are allocated to each year group.

Visiting speakers, including local librarians, storytellers and Drama Workshops are an integral part of the programme of study for English and are carefully planned to support classroom activities.

ICT is a major resource which is used in English for:

- Word-processing, involving the drafting and redrafting of work originated at the computer – not simply for the typing up of fair copy of work already completed
- Desk-top publishing of materials for a variety of audiences
- Information access using our stock of CD-ROMs and the Internet.

Assessment and Recording

Formative assessment, carried out by the class teacher, is an integral part of their role and is used on a weekly basis to inform future planning. It involves identifying children's progress against teaching objectives, determining what a child has already achieved and moving them on to the next stage of learning.

Teachers annotate their weekly plans to assess progress by groups within the class, to record achievement and to highlight areas of concern for the future.

Writing is assessed and levelled each term. The writing is kept in a book which follows the child through the school. Scores are recorded on a continuous tracking sheet to monitor progression from Reception to year 6. The Curriculum Manager and Strategy Manager moderate this and regular staff meetings are used to moderate the levelling.

All class teachers are developing the use of written records for guided reading progress. They include objectives and aims of the sessions alongside any necessary comments for future action. The aim is to develop a consistent format used throughout the school.

Children using the Reading schemes are assessed through our own termly Reading Behaviour Sheet and regular one-to-one sessions recorded in a teacher's record. Copies of the Reading Behaviour assessment are sent to the Curriculum Manager to monitor progress. A termly record is kept of stages within the reading scheme and a copy is sent to the Manager at the end of each year to check for progress.

Children's achievement in Speaking and Listening is recorded in a consistent format for the whole school as the programme is adopted through the year.
(Speaking, Listening, Learning: working with children in Key Stages 1 and 2. Page 34.)

The Croydon QDI document for Assessment and Target Setting will be completed this year. It provides a record of continual assessment and progress in reading and writing. It supports teachers in tracking individual progress and managing target setting. This assessment will be updated in November, February and May. Levels will be monitored by the Strategy Manager.

Formal summative assessments are carried out at the end of each key stage in accordance with National Curriculum assessment requirements. At the end of Years 1, 3, 4 and 5, the children undertake the appropriate tests for their year group.

Reporting procedures are in line with DfES regulations. Parents receive an annual written report and are invited to two parental interviews throughout the academic year.

September 2004 (Revised October 2006)

This policy was compiled through a consensus of opinion of the whole teaching staff and as a result of staff discussion.

Date for review: During the academic year 2006-2007 this policy will be reviewed in line with the new Primary Strategy.