

Eastcroft Park



English Policy

Rationale & 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.

The National Curriculum (2014) clearly states that teaching the English language is an essential, if not the most essential role of a primary school. At Eastcroft Park school we recognise that without effective communication, little achievement can be made. We know that we have a duty to ensure that English teaching is a priority and we recognise that this is necessarily cross-curricular and a constant through-out school life and beyond. It is part of the 'essential knowledge' (p6 National Curriculum) that is needed in society: 'Teachers should develop pupils' spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for pupils, understanding the language provides access to the whole curriculum. Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects.' (p10 National Curriculum)

The aims of 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.

We are an inclusive school; we set high expectations and recognise the importance of accurate and regular assessment in order to support individuals at every part of their learning journey and in whatever circumstances. We use 1:1 support, small groups and cross-phase work to help with this. We plan teaching opportunities to help those for whom English is an additional language and those with disabilities outlined in the SEN code of practice.

Teaching and Learning Styles

At Eastcroft Park School we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our English lessons. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding. We do this through a daily lesson in which children may experience: a whole-class reading session, a whole-class focused sentence accuracy or specific grammar activity and a guided/independent activity; although the content can be flexible depending on the objectives and focus of learning. 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 learning.

Pupils 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 computing and technology in English lessons where it enhances their learning, as in drafting their work and use 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 and through extended writing pieces of work. 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, using a variety of resources, tasks and starting points. In others we provide a starting point or intended outcome and encourage children to explore their preferred or chosen method of recording, be it a verbal presentation, a written report or a multimedia project. We deploy teaching assistants to support both SEN and AGT children to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

Spoken language and oracy

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be '*taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently in Standard English*' (p10). They should:

- Justify ideas with reasons;
- Ask questions to check understanding;
- Develop vocabulary and build knowledge;
- Negotiate;
- Evaluate and build on the ideas of others;
- Select the appropriate register for effective communication;
- Give well-structured descriptions and explanations;
- Speculate, hypothesise and explore ideas;
- Organise their ideas prior to writing.

Our aims and connected provision

We encourage our pupils to speak clearly and confidently and articulate their views and opinions with panache, using higher level vocabulary. We teach children to express themselves orally in an appropriate way, matching their style and response to audience and purpose, listening and responding to literature, giving and receiving instructions. Children develop the skills of participating effectively in group discussions. At this time, we are exploring the pedagogy and strategies around oracy and key staff are engaged in CPD to enhance our current practice.

Ways in which we support this include:

- Activities which are planned to encourage full and active participation by all children, irrespective of ability;
- Children with specific speech and language and auditory problems will be identified and specialist help sought, where appropriate;
- Encouraging talk-time at home through termly Homework Challenges and by encouraging reading and discussion about books;
- Talk Boost & Early Talk Boost;
- School plays and class assemblies;
- Class debates;
- Weekly assembly;
- Events within the community;
- School Council;
- Talk partners;
- Drama/role play;
- PSHE and circle time.

Children who are in need of extra support in this area benefit from interventions (such as Talk Boost & Early Talk Boost.)

Reading

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose and be encouraged to read for pleasure. Reading is singled out as of extreme importance since through it *'pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually'* (p13).

Reading allows pupils to 'acquire knowledge' and to *'build on what they already know'* (p13). Schools are expected to have library facilities and support and encourage reading at home. The 2014 Curriculum divides reading skills into two dimensions: Word reading/decoding and comprehension.

We recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods. We recognise that these areas are

clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, writing, grammar and vocabulary. We also understand that reading is a developmental process and part of life-long learning and we encourage and praise children at every stage of their development.

Our aims and connected provision

- Pupils learn to read easily and fluently through daily phonics in EYFS & Key Stage One, regular reading to adults in school, guided reading and incentives to read at home;
- Pupils develop skills in reading for understanding using a number of books which we have in school. We adapt which books we use to meet the needs of our pupils. In whole class reading sessions, they read texts and extracts which are more challenging than those which they might be able to read independently;
- Pupils are encouraged to read widely, through our use of differing class texts, library visits and high quality attractive books in classrooms and reading areas;
- We advocate reading for pleasure and pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure through using reading partners, quiet reading time, listening to an adult read and a rich variety of reading materials;
- Pupils also need to read to find information in all lessons and comprehension is assessed in a formal way every term;
- Pupils are exposed to a range of texts from their literacy heritage during their school career. Each class has three authors whom they study and immerse themselves in each year;

Children who are struggling or all falling behind their peers in reading and phonics benefit from extra reading and phonics session delivered on a regular basis.

We advocate “Reading for Pleasure” at Eastcroft Park, to ensure that our children are encouraged to develop a love of reading. We promote and model a ‘Reading for Enjoyment’ ethos throughout the school through the use of class readers, ERIC time, class author studies, competitions and a rich variety of reading materials to promote and stimulate reading for pleasure.

Reading is developed through shared, whole class guided and individual reading, both within English lessons and across the curriculum. Children in Foundation Stage and Key Stage One follow the **Read, Write Inc.** phonic based programme, which promotes speaking and listening, phonological awareness and oral blending and segmenting as well as reading comprehension.

At Key Stage Two, children are encouraged to develop their skills in inference and deduction and analyse the use of author’s language to establish further understanding of texts. All children across the Key Stages follow a structured reading scheme and take home a variety of phonic based and other reading books to create a healthy balance, and children are expected to read their book every night.

Comprehension of texts is taught three times a week through our guided reading sessions. Teachers choose book extracts and texts carefully, ensuring that they are rich and challenging. Children are shown how to read using specific reading skills, and answer one question per session based on that skill.

*** Please see separate Reading policy for more information ***

Writing

The National Curriculum states that pupils should:

- Develop the stamina and skills to write at length;
- Use accurate spelling and punctuation;
- Be grammatically correct;
- Write in a range of ways and purposes including narratives, explanations, descriptions, comparisons, summaries and evaluations;
- Write to support their understanding and consolidation of what they have heard or read.

The 2014 Curriculum divides writing skills into two dimensions: Transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas in speech and writing). We recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods. We recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, reading, grammar and vocabulary.

Our aims and connected provision

- We teach grammar as a separate, discrete lesson and in the context of text; this enables children to focus purely on the functions of grammar and then see/use it within writing;
- We correct grammatical errors orally and in written work (where appropriate);
- We have a systematic approach - we revisit key learning and build upon it in all areas from phonics, through to grammar and spelling;
- We use high quality texts, modelling and shared/collaborative writing to demonstrate good practice;
- We provide scaffolds (such as word banks, writing frames etc) to support the least confident;
- We provide time for planning, editing and revising;
- We mark extended pieces of work in-depth and set targets;
- We use checklists for pupils to self-assess or peer-assess, when appropriate so they can evaluate effectively;
- We encourage joined handwriting to support spelling and speed;
- We use drama and hot-seating to help pupils to think about another point of view;
- We support for pupils with learning and motor difficulties.

We have recently introduced the Literacy Counts “**Ready Steady Write**” programme to enhance the delivery of all aspects of writing.

Ready Steady Write encourages the high-quality teaching of writing through high-quality literature. These units of work centre on engaging, vocabulary-rich texts, with a wealth of writing opportunities within and across the curriculum and also signpost wider curriculum enrichments.

These units provide:

- Clear sequential lessons;
- Daily sentence accuracy work which focuses on specific SPAG objectives;
- Model texts which give children an example of an excellent piece of writing based on the outcome genre;
- Specific vocabulary teaching;
- Wider reading for the wider curriculum;
- A wealth of resources;
- Explicit links to the national curriculum.

Ready Steady Write is evidence-based teaching of writing. These units have been carefully mapped out so the entire statutory curriculum for English is covered for each year group. They also enable us to draw upon the wider curriculum, which supports schools to build rich curriculums. Each year group aims to deliver a mix of narrative and non-narrative writing, providing breadth.

Each half-term, children aim to complete two extended pieces of writing which consolidates their learning of the current unit of Ready Steady Write and allows them the opportunity to apply and further developing their SPAG skills. In addition, it provides opportunities for teachers to consolidate and enhance understanding and focus upon any particular areas requiring further attention. The context of these pieces of writing is usually linked to the current book study but can be enhanced through links to the children’s current curriculum topic.

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPAG) lessons are delivered each week. These consist of a discrete weekly lesson with weekly SPAG checks to consolidate learning. Discrete teaching and learning enables the teacher to explicitly focus on the technicalities of spelling, punctuation, grammar and sentence construction. This is then consolidated and enhanced through highlighting and identifying where and how the SPAG focus has been used within the context of the current book study. This allows children to understand the purpose of SPAG and recognise how writers use SPAG components within text.

Language Acquisition, Oracy & Vocabulary Development

The National Curriculum makes clear that learning vocabulary is key to ‘*learning and progress across the whole curriculum*’ (p11) since it allows pupils to access a wider range of words when writing and for them to understand and comprehend texts efficiently.

Vocabulary teaching needs to be:

- Active;
- Progressive/systematic;
- Making links from known words;
- Develop understanding of shades of meaning;
- Include 'instruction verbs' used in examinations;
- Subject specific - accurate mathematical and scientific words.

Our aims and connected provision:

We encourage our pupils to have a wide and growing vocabulary in a number of ways, these include:

- Spelling lists/key words to take home and learn;
- Display of key words linked to topics and subjects;
- Using and pronouncing higher level vocabulary correctly and in context;
- Using dictionaries, thesaurus and similar programmes;
- Carrying out systematic testing and providing feedback to pupils;
- Targeted small group support, where appropriate.

Each week children in all year groups are exposed to higher level words through their Ready Steady Write units and reading lessons. They study the word class, the correct pronunciation, the definition, synonyms and antonyms and how the word can be used in context. This word power impacts upon Spoken English and the quality and standard of dialogue modelled and expected on an informal level; the children are encouraged to use their newly acquired words within day to day dialogue and within their writing. As well as having a positive impact on writing, we have found that children are becoming more confident to articulate themselves accurately.

Spellings, key words and spelling rules are taught systematically across the school. In Foundation Stage, spellings are predominately taken from the **Read Write Inc** programme, where children are largely encouraged to spell by sounding out words phonetically.

In Key Stages One & Two, the focus lies more with spelling patterns and spelling rules; children in KS1 and SEND children are still encouraged to apply their phonological skills and knowledge. In KS1 & KS2 children participate in daily spelling and handwriting practice. The spellings used are either Common Exception Words or Statutory Spellings; children are given individual lists depending in their age and ability. Each day, children spend at least 10 minutes practicing how to spell them using correct handwriting and letter formation. Children are tested on their list each term.

Children in Years 2-6 take part in specific spelling lessons at least three times a week, learning year group spelling rules and patterns with a variety of strategies. Weekly spelling lessons

focus on the expected spelling rules and patterns for each specific year group. These form the lists of weekly spellings children take home to practice and learn for their weekly test. Children with SEND or SPLD participate in additional Precision Teaching, which may include daily probes, toe-to-toe and LST withdrawal groups.

***** Please read the Spelling appendix for more information *****

Planning and Assessment

We carry out the curriculum planning in English in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The National Curriculum details what we teach in the long-term. Our yearly overview teaching programme is informed by Ready Steady Write and identifies the key objectives in literacy that we teach in each year. Our progression of skills charts gives details of the main teaching objectives for each term. Our curriculum overviews define what we teach, and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term. The subject leader is responsible for monitoring and reviewing these plans.

Class teachers follow the Ready Steady Write teaching units, which map out specific lessons which eventually leads to the writing outcome for the unit. However, teachers are responsible for using their professional judgement when deciding what lessons are essential to the unit, and if any extra lessons or learning is required. The class teacher keeps the plans and may choose to annotate the plans based on the needs of their cohort.

Staff are encouraged to promote English within the school environment through language rich displays. Within classrooms/teaching areas, these should include a **Ready Steady Write** working wall. These working walls should show the class's journey within the four phases of the unit: Immerse, Analyse, Plan and Write. These displays may contain key vocabulary, the unit's example text (providing a WAGOLL for pupils), modelled writes and more. In other areas of school where displays are possible, use of language and literacy skills are incorporated and promoted.

Assessment:

Our rigorous assessment process monitors and tracks a range of aspects:

- Staff assess pupils' learning during and as part of every session - they adapt their practice accordingly;
- Writing attainment is assessed using the Literacy Counts assessment materials – these are tracked termly and monitored;
- Weekly spelling lists and Common Exception Words/Statutory Spellings are assessed and tracked;
- Reading Ages are assessed on a termly basis using Salford Reading test;
- Phonics levels are assessed on a half-termly basis and RWI materials respectively and are tracked and monitored;
- SPAG is assessed weekly during our weekly SPAG check;
- Formal assessments of Reading Comprehension ability are carried out, tracked and monitored termly;

- End of Key Stage Assessments are analysed by the Head Teacher and Subject Leader and feed into the school Self Evaluation Form (SEF), School Improvement Plan (SIP) and performance management.

One piece of homework is dedicated to English in the termly Homework Challenges. This is in addition to home readers and weekly spelling lists. As children progress to Years 5 & 6, this increases to allow for extra revision and for end of Key Stage tests.

Inclusion

At Eastcroft Park, 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.

Teachers provide help by using:

- texts that children can more easily read and understand;
- visual and written materials in different formats;
- ICT, visualisers, iPads, other technological aids and recorded materials;
- alternative communication, such as signs and symbols; translators and amanuenses

Specific groups

Analysis of English achievement is carried out termly; pupils who are slow moving or making little or no progress are discussed during pupil progress meetings and provision is made.

Appropriate 'Wave 2' intervention is also put in place for those children who are not achieving age related expectations; these include Precision teaching, daily Probes, Toe-to-Toe, Talk Boost, Early Talk Boost and additional Phonics sessions. All are intended to accelerate progress and are identified on Year Group Provision maps and PPPs.

Pupils entitled to Pupil Premium are given additional English support, if required, and the impact is monitored termly. Pupils with SEND will have English based targets on their EHC (Education & Health Care Plan). These are reviewed termly. Intervention and provision for children with Education & Health care plans (EHC Plans) may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to English. Children who are Wave 3+ are withdrawn outside the literacy lesson to work in small groups and specifically focus on their EHC plan targets. Pupils with EAL are given additional support, if required, in all aspects of English and this is tracked and monitored termly. Pupils who are AGT (able, gifted or talented) receive additional intervention to support and challenge them further and are encouraged to attend initiatives run by local secondary schools.

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) safeguarding procedures are put into practice, such as the completion of a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

EYFS

We teach English in Reception classes as an integral part of the school's work. 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. Children in Reception participate in daily English learning and use the Power of Reading approach to deliver sessions. Nursery staff ties their themes and books into the Reception book studies in order to create and enhance links in continuous provision and to create a sense of consistency throughout the Foundation Unit. RWI is introduced to Nursery children when developmentally appropriate. We place a large emphasis on the development of Speaking & Listening skills, which is ongoing throughout the day, and particularly focused upon during directed activities. 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.

Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas

The skills that children develop in English are linked to, and applied in, every topic 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 and singing 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 plenary sessions, and they communicate mathematically through the developing use of precise mathematical language.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE)

English contributes to the teaching of PSHE by encouraging children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues. Older children also 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 (SMSC) and British Values

From September 2014, promotion of British Values includes:

"acceptance and engagement with the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; the pupils develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain"

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, gives them the chance to discuss their ideas and results and ensures that all pupils within the school have a voice that is listened to.

Computing

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.

ICT and media equipment is used at whole-class, group and independent level. The screen projection of text enables it to be read and shared. The projection of text also enables the reading and writing processes to be modelled effectively. A wide variety of text types are available through the Internet or various computing programmes to encourage the framing of explicit questions. Groups can work independently on laptops or iPads and input text via standard or overlay keyboard. 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 (e.g. via multimedia presentation or the school website).

Resources

There is a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries, thesauruses and a variety of age-appropriate small apparatus, located in class which aims to promote independent learning.

All classrooms have a selection of fiction, non-fiction and poetry texts in class libraries and/or quiet reading areas. Each year group have author packs which contain various books by the chosen author. Children have access to the Internet, Interactive Whiteboards and various computing devices belonging to that class/year group and the school library contains a range of books to support children's individual research.

Monitoring and review

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of subject leader.

The work of the subject leader also involves:

- regular lesson observations in accordance with the school's monitoring cycle;
- taking an active role in disseminating best practice and making recommendations for staff development;
- supporting colleagues in their teaching;
- being informed about current developments in the subject;
- providing a strategic lead and direction for English in the school.

The subject leader gives the Head teacher an annual summary report evaluating the strengths in the subject, and indicating areas for further improvement. The named governor responsible for English also receives a copy of the annual report in order to review progress.