

Nene Valley Primary School

English Policy

Introduction

"English is a vital way of communicating in school, in public life and internationally... the study of English helps pupils to understand how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Using this knowledge, pupils can choose and adapt what they say and write in different situations". DCSF

Aims and Objectives

The study of English develops children's abilities to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, so using language to learn and communicate ideas, views and feelings. It enables children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as non-fiction and media texts. Access to literature from a variety of cultures enables children to enrich and broaden their experience. 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.

Our school aims to develop literate pupils who:

- speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of the listener, and adapting speech to reflect a range of circumstances.
- listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard
- reflect on their own and others' contributions and the language used
- evaluate their own and others' contributions through a range of drama activities
- read with confidence, fluency and understanding, orchestrating a range of independent strategies to self monitor and correct
- understand the sound and spelling system and use this to read accurately
- have an interest in a wide range of text and read for enjoyment and information
- write with confidence and fluency, organising the content and style of what is written to suit the purpose and audience
- use spelling, punctuation and syntax appropriately
- develop a legible, cursive handwriting style and be able to use word processing skills

Teaching and learning styles

At Nene Valley School we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English lessons, as recommended by the National Literacy Strategy. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding in English. We do this through a daily lesson that has a high proportion of whole-class and group teaching. They have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts and use a range of resources such as dictionaries, thesauruses and phonic materials to support their work. Children use ICT in English lessons where it enhances their learning, as in drafting their work and

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.

There are children of differing ability in all classes at Nene Valley Primary School. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the individual child. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons we do it through differentiated group work, while in other lessons we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use teaching assistants to support some of the children.

English curriculum planning

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the National Literacy Strategy as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English; reading, writing, speaking and listening.

We carry out the curriculum planning in English in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The Renewed National Literacy Strategy Framework for Teaching details what we teach in the long-term. We use curriculum guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage to teach children in Reception.

Our medium-term plans, which we also base on the Framework, 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. The English subject leader is responsible for monitoring and reviewing these plans.

Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan for the teaching of English. This lists the specific learning objectives for each lesson. It also identifies what each group of children will be learning, support arrangements for SEN pupils and details use of ICT to support learning. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, and the class teacher and subject leader often discuss them on an informal basis.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

We teach communication, language and literacy 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, although whole class and group work is organised and delivered through a play based approach. As the reception class is part of the Early Years Foundation Stage 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 up 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 range of vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore, enjoy, learn about and use words and text in a range of situations.

Teaching English to children with special educational needs

At our school we teach English to all children, whatever their ability. 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 progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against the expected levels.

When progress falls 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. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

Intervention through School Action and School Action Plus may lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs. The IEP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to English.

There are times when some children need additional intervention in order to support or maintain satisfactory progress. This may be provided by additional programmes of work for individuals or groups. The programmes may be delivered within the classroom, but in some instances will be provided by withdrawal work alongside a trained teaching assistant.

Teachers provide help with communication and literacy through:

- using texts that children can read and understand
- using visual and written materials in different formats
- using ICT, other technological aids and taped materials
- using alternative communication, such as signs and symbols
- using translators and amanuenses
- learning outside the classroom

We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning English. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a theatre trip, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Record Keeping and assessment

Early Years Foundation Stage

Ongoing assessment of reading and writing against Early Learning goals in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

Termly phonological assessments where appropriate

Termly high frequency word knowledge assessments where appropriate

End of Early Years Foundation Stage profile assessment

Key Stage One

Ongoing assessments during guided reading sessions using group reading records linked to termly objectives

Termly assessment of high frequency words and phonic checks

End of KS1 SATs

End of Unit writing assessments linked to level descriptors

Targets in reading and writing are set for each ability group

Daily home/school reading record

Annual reading test for Y1-Y2

Key Stage Two

Ongoing assessments during guided reading sessions using group reading records linked to termly objectives

Targets set for each ability group in reading and writing

End of Unit writing assessments linked to level descriptors

Where needed termly assessment of high frequency words and phonic checks

End of KS2 SATs at Y6

Annual reading test

Children's reading logs for independent reading and reflections may be used

Pieces of work are assessed by all members of staff at regular intervals against level descriptors and national exemplification materials produced by the QCA and DCFS to ensure continuity and progression in writing.

Resources

There are a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries, thesauruses, interactive displays and a range of age-appropriate equipment. All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts. Children have supervised access to the Internet through their desktop computers. The library contains a range of books to support children's individual research. (See App 1)

Monitoring and review

Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the English Leader. The work of the leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, being informed about current developments in the subject and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The leader gives the Headteacher and the named governor with the responsibility for Literacy an annual summary report in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement.

Parental contribution

The school values the importance of parental contribution and support in its teaching of Literacy. At Early Years Foundation Stage and KS1 parents are requested to share books or play literacy based games with their children on a regular basis and record their observations in their child's reading record or liaison book as stated in the home school agreement. At KS2 we expect the children to continue to read with more independence and parents are requested to sign their child's reading log on a regular basis.

The role of the governors

The governing body has an identified governor to have specific oversight of Literacy. The named governor responsible for Literacy meets on a regular basis with the Literacy Leader to review progress made over the year.

Reviewed : Spring 2009

Reviewed by: Teaching Staff, Governors

Next Review: Spring 2012

Library Policy

Introduction

'Learning how to use books and resources is essential if young people are to take responsibility for their work and develop into independent learners'

Better Librarian DFES 1989

The school curriculum develops enjoyment of, and commitment to, learning as a means of encouraging and stimulating the best possible progress and the highest possible attainment by all pupils. The role of the school library is central to supporting our children's learning. It plays a key role in helping our children to develop their communication and information-handling skills. It also offers them a view of the world that is free from stereotyped and promotes equality of opportunity for all.

Our library helps our children become independent and lifelong learners through offering the opportunity for the children to take responsibility for their own learning. The resources in our library support the aims and objectives of the National Curriculum by promoting the ability in children to read fluently a range of literary and non-fiction texts, and to reflect critically on what they read.

Aims and objectives

The aims of our library are:

- to extend the children's learning experiences:
- to develop children's skills as independent learners:
- to encourage the reading of a variety of books and multi-media materials for information and for pleasure:
- to support teaching and learning in our school, and to enrich the curriculum:
- to provide opportunities for children to access resources for themselves and to prepare children for reading and research in adult life:
- to be a peaceful and relaxed place within the school building where children can spend time enjoying books

Organisation

Our school library is a centre of learning that we make accessible to all the children and staff at our school. The resources within it promote equality of opportunity for all our children.

The physical environment of the library is designed to stimulate our children. This motivates them to explore resources for their work in school and for personal study.

The library has collections of fiction and non-fiction resources. These include story sacks, story tapes and internet access. Each classroom also has a small fiction and non-fiction collection. We

classify all the books according to the Dewey Decimal Classification System. We use coloured labels to identify general themes within the collections.

Our library is open during normal school hours. Each class has a time each week that is used to develop children's information-handling skills.

Resources

The subject leader for English is also our library co-ordinator. The library co-ordinator manages the school library and library resources across the school. We use the Schools Library Service to provide specialist advice and support where necessary.

All teachers are involved in the purchasing of library resources. Teachers involve the children in this process. The library co-ordinator consults staff and children when formulating the library development plan. We use our library resources to positively promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our children and to reflect the needs of our pupils.

Book Provision

We are committed to providing books and resources which:

- are attractive and child friendly
- are appropriate to the age and ability of the children in school
- give relevant and up to date information
- are non racist
- promote and reflect the multi-cultural nature of our society and the world
- give positive images of both sexes
- are in good condition
- have means for children to access information, i.e. contents, index etc

Evaluation

The library co-ordinator reviews the effectiveness of our library on an annual basis.