

English Policy



Together We Learn

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English Policy

Policy Statement

This policy reflects the school's aims and objectives in relation to the teaching and learning of English. It sets out a framework within which teaching and non-teaching staff can operate. It gives guidance on planning, teaching and assessment. The policy should be read in conjunction with the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and the National Curriculum. These set out the rationale for teaching each area of the English Curriculum and specify the skills that will be developed for the majority of pupils in each year group.

Purpose of study

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 Ernesettle Community 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 a constant through-out school life and beyond. It is part of the 'essential knowledge' (National Curriculum: p6) that is needed in society:

English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils, therefore, who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised (National Curriculum: p13)

Aims

The overarching aim for English in the National Curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The National Curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate

The Approach to the Teaching of English at Ernesettle Community School

At Ernesettle Community School, opportunities for English learning and the application of skills are woven into our thematic curriculum. Through linking subjects and planning additional opportunities to apply knowledge and skills across the curriculum, English is brought alive to stimulate and engage children.

Ernesettle Community School has adopted the National Curriculum programmes of study for English as a basis for our English curriculum. Every class in Key Stages 1 and 2 have a daily session of English. Discrete Whole Class Reading, Phonics and Spelling is also taught daily. Throughout the week, time is also given to handwriting, individual reading, and listening to, and reading, stories and poems. The Nursery and Reception classes follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

Early Years

At Ernesettle Community School, pupils in the Early Years start to learn basic key skills that will enable them to begin to read and write independently, as well as have time to develop vocabulary, interact with others and listen well. Much of this learning takes place through play and 'real life' situations. The children also have discrete Phonics lessons daily.

Key Stage One

As pupils move into Key Stage One, learning becomes more formalised. English is delivered as an individual subject but also through cross-curricular themes. In Key Stage 1 daily discrete Phonics lessons (Letters and Sounds) which are taught in ability groups, while children have daily English lessons with an emphasis on real texts. Children take part in whole class reading session, guided sessions, individual reading sessions and have regular story times to develop a love of reading. Provision is made for children who require extra support through intervention programmes and differentiated class teaching and extended Phonic sessions.

Key Stage Two

In Key Stage 2 Children have daily English Lessons including Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar for writing. Additional English sessions include Whole Class Reading, handwriting and a class novel which is read at the Teacher's discretion at a time throughout the day. The children's lessons incorporate an equal balance of speaking and listening, writing and reading, through fiction (in a variety of genres), non-fiction, poetry, plays, advertisements, magazines, letters, song lyrics diaries and dictionaries. All pupils are given work at their ability level and challenged where necessary. Provision is made for children who require extra support through intervention programmes and differentiated class teaching.

When planning and teaching the English curriculum the following elements are considered:

- Differentiation to meet the needs of all pupils including setting, the careful planning of lessons to include a range of teaching strategies with a balance between audio, visual, and kinaesthetic techniques
- Computing and cross-curricular links are made where appropriate
- High quality and engaging texts
- The careful marking of work in accordance with the school's marking policy
- Using and sharing learning challenges with the children to ensure progress is made

Spoken language

The National Curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. Teachers therefore ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills. Pupils are supported to develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write. They are assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others and teachers ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions. Pupils are also taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate.

All pupils are enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Pupils are supported to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to

others in role. They have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances. The statutory requirements which underpin all aspects of spoken language across key stage 1 and key stage 2 are also reflected and contextualised within the reading and writing domains which follow.

Reading

The National Curriculum programmes of study for reading at key stages 1 and 2 consist of two dimensions:

- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading).

The teaching at Ernesettle Community School focuses on developing pupils' competence in both dimensions; different kinds of teaching are needed for each.

Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. Phonics is therefore strongly emphasised in the early teaching of reading when children start school.

Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills develop through pupils' experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction texts. All pupils are encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum. Reading widely often increases pupils' vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. Reading also feeds pupils' imagination and opens up a treasure-house of wonder and joy for curious young minds.

It is our aim that, by the end of their primary education, where appropriate, all pupils are able to read fluently, and with confidence, in any subject in their forthcoming secondary education. Creative and engaging class libraries also provide reference and reading materials for children and encourage a love of reading.

Reading at Ernesettle Community School is taught through:

1. Whole class reading that develops comprehension skills, reading styles, listening skills and reading for pleasure. All children are immersed in high-quality literature and with the class teacher they learn to retrieve information, interpret meaning and explore the author's choice of vocabulary or style. In Years 3-6 this happens on a daily basis. In Years 1-2 this happens twice a week. All of the activities link to the programmes of study for reading and are recorded in the child's Whole Class Reading book.
2. Shared reading that immerses children in the pattern of story and features of text types. This happens in English lessons when introducing text and prior to writing. The teacher models as an expert reader and draws out the key elements of the content.
3. Guided reading that targets children's reading skills. In KS1, Guided Reading takes place in small groups with either the Class Teacher or Teaching and Learning Assistant (TLA). In KS1, children complete reading focussed activities during Guided Reading sessions three times a week. All of the activities link to the programmes of study for reading and are recorded in the child's Whole Class Reading book. In Years 3-6, Guided Reading is targeted at children who require extra support with decoding; these sessions take place in the afternoon as an intervention.
4. Independent reading in school and at home. Books are sent home with a reading record or log for communication with Parents/Carers. Books are changed on a daily basis (if required) by Teaching and Learning Assistants. The expectation at Ernesettle Community School is that children get their record signed at least three times a week.
5. Class libraries provide a wide variety reference and reading materials for children and teachers.

Reading Schemes

All our reading scheme books are labelled and sorted into coloured book bands, this helps us monitor the reading progression of our pupils throughout their entire school life.

Reading Schemes used at Ernesettle Community School:

- Project X (aimed at accelerating progress in boys reading)
- Bug Club (phonics scheme)
- Collins Big Cat
- Oxford Reading Tree (selective titles for guided reading)
- Letter & Sounds

Writing

The programmes of study for writing at key stages 1 and 2 are constructed similarly to those for reading:

- transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing).

The teaching at Ernesettle Community School develops pupils' competence in these two dimensions. In addition, pupils are taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. These aspects of writing are incorporated into the National Curriculum programmes of study for composition. Writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription: that is, on spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words. Effective composition involves forming, articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting.

Writing at Ernesettle Community School is taught through:

1. Shared writing that is modelled by the teacher as the expert writer with contributions from the children. This is teacher-led writing with children watching and contributing ideas. Shared writing is not exclusive to English sessions and can be taught through the foundation subjects. The emphasis may be on the generation of ideas, grammatical awareness, spelling and phonics, compositional, transcriptional, presentational and text level skills or other key strategies needed in writing. Not all of these can be modelled in one session, but the teacher as the expert writer leads the cumulative writing process. The teacher also used supported and shared composition writing in the shared sessions.

2. Guided writing that targets children at their point of writing. Guided writing takes place in small groups with a teaching focus using targets and writing already modelled. The main part of the session is spent by the child writing with the adult intervening as appropriate. In the Early Years the child receives more individualised support from the teacher at the point of writing.

3. Opportunities for developmental writing. In the Early Years, children should experience writing in a range of settings. Opportunities for writing should be available through all areas of learning and throughout the learning environment. Children's own attempts at early writing should be celebrated and promoted, alongside the direct teaching of the key skills that will enable the children to progress through the stages of writing development. In the Early Years and KS1, children's writing that needs interpretation must be scribed by a teacher or adult working with the group.

4. Independent writing - Throughout the school children need opportunities to develop their confidence and practise their writing skills. All writing activities should have a clear purpose and quality should be promoted through book making, publication or presentation to another audience. Independent writing is supported through the use of dictionaries, word banks, writing frames and plans. Editing and redrafting is key part of the writing process and is set out in greater detail in the Editing Policy.

5. Writing environment - The school environment celebrates quality writing through displays of work in both handwritten and typed form as well as signs and labels. All classrooms should have attractive and well-equipped resources for writing that children can access independently. Opportunities for writing are planned for and accessible throughout the learning environment and school day.

Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar, Punctuation and Glossary

The two statutory appendices in the National Curriculum – on spelling and on vocabulary, grammar and punctuation – which an overview of the specific features that should be included in teaching the programmes of study inform our teaching at Ernesettle Community School.

Opportunities for teachers to enhance pupils' vocabulary arise naturally from their reading and writing. As vocabulary increases, teachers show pupils how to understand the relationships between words, how to understand nuances in meaning, and how to develop their understanding of, and ability to use, figurative language. They also teach pupils how to work out and clarify the meanings of unknown words and words with more than one meaning.

Pupils are taught to control their speaking and writing consciously and to use Standard English. They are taught to use the elements of spelling, grammar, punctuation and 'language about language' listed in the statutory appendices. These do not constrain or restrict teachers' creativity, but simply to provide the structure on which they can construct exciting lessons.

The school follows the definitions provided in the non-statutory glossary in the national curriculum. Throughout the programmes of study, teachers teach pupils the vocabulary they need to discuss their reading, writing and spoken language. Pupils therefore learn the correct grammatical terms in English and these terms are integrated within teaching.

Equal Opportunities

All children have an entitlement to participate fully in English, regardless of gender, race, age or ability, in accordance with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy. Children for whom English is an additional language will receive additional support as appropriate.

School Curriculum

At Ernesettle Community School the programmes of study are taught through fiction, non-fiction and poetry blocks lasting 2 or 3 weeks. These are identified on our curriculum maps. Additional elements of the English curriculum are taught discretely:

- Daily Phonics in the Early Years and Key Stage One.
- Daily Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar lessons in Key Stage One and Key Stage Two.
- Daily Whole Class Reading sessions.
- English teaching through the creative curriculum and non-core subjects.

The curriculum map for each year group is available online at our school website.

Planning

Each curriculum map outlines the texts and aspects of English that will be taught across the year groups aligned to the National Curriculum. Carefully chosen texts stimulate and enthuse the children to read and write. The audience and purpose for any writing outcomes are clearly identified. Weekly plans exemplify the objectives for the week. These plans show differentiation where appropriate and progression across the week. Additional plans outline the discrete areas of English that are taught in addition to the daily English lesson, e.g. Whole Class Reading and Phonics and spelling. At the end of each week evaluation informs future planning.

All plans are read and reviewed on a weekly basis by the Unit Leaders.

Assessment and Recording

Assessment for learning underpins teaching and learning in English. Children's work is regularly assessed through observation, discussion, scrutiny of work and evaluating outcomes.

- Termly Pupil Progress Meetings are used to track the progress of each child in reading and writing across the year.
- Pupil Trackers are updated regularly electronically.

Formative Assessment

Teacher assessment is an integral part of good practice. Assessment is carried out on a daily and weekly basis. It involves identifying children's progress against teaching objectives and targets, determining which children have achieved and moving them on to the next stage of learning. Where appropriate, additional support and interventions are identified for children not making the expected progress. Teachers record the progress of groups and individuals each week in the prior knowledge box on their planning.

Summative Assessment

This includes:

- End of year screening in Reception.
- Writing baseline in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Creative writing tasks are levelled at the end of every unit and progress is tracked.
- Phonics screen in Year 1
- Year 2 NC tests.
- Years 3, 4 and 5 optional tests.
- Year 6 NC tests.
- Spelling Test of the National Curriculum Must Learn Words – spelling and reading.

Recording

- Tracking in reading and writing against targets.
- English and Whole Class Reading books.
- Phonics check through Letters and Sounds word checklist- spelling and reading.
- Reading records.
- Reading Tracker.
- Spelling and Phonics Tracker.

Links with Outside Agencies/ Providers

Each year group will participate, where possible, in a school trip or visiting workshop relevant to their theme. These experiences will support and enhance children's learning in an active and engaging way through speaking and listening or written outcomes.

Marking

Marking in English is part of the assessment process. Please refer to the Marking Policy.

The Role of the Subject Leader

The role of the English Subject Leader is defined in the job description.

Resourcing

The English Subject Leader, with the Headteacher, is responsible for the ordering, costing and allocation of resources to support the teaching of English. A review of resources is carried out periodically which leads to a prioritised list of requirements. This is funded within the school's budget plan for the financial year.

Reporting to Parents/Carers

Parents receive regular informal or verbal feedback as to their children's progress in English. Each child has a reading record book to record progress in reading at home and school. Spelling lists are also given in accordance with the Home Learning Policy. In addition, Parents/Carers also have the opportunity to meet with the staff to discuss progress and to see learning. Parents receive an annual written report at the end of the school year. This includes details of their children's progress and areas for development.

Monitoring and Evaluation

In order to monitor standards and progress the following systems are in place:

- Each teacher meets with the Headteacher, Assessment Leader and English Subject Leader three times a year to discuss progress in reading and writing. Particular attention is paid to children working below age related expectations, children with SEN and disadvantaged children.
- The English Leader is given time to monitor English through a range of activities which includes: analysis of tracking data for reading and writing, lesson observations, scrutiny of work, review of planning and interviews with stakeholders.
- Staff meet at least twice a year to scrutinise and level writing (across the school) and participate in moderation with at least two local schools.
- SEN pupils will be assessed regularly by the class teacher and the SENCO. Steps are taken to provide additional support where appropriate. The SENCO and English Leader meet regularly to discuss identified pupils.
- The school's English action plan is part of the whole school development plan and is updated regularly by the English Leader and School Leadership Team.

Monitoring/Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years.