



Slaley First School

English Policy 2021-2022

Nurturing Ambitious Individuals



Vocabulary

Incremental

Self-Reviewing

SLALEY FIRST SCHOOL ENGLISH POLICY

INTENT

A Vocabulary and Knowledge Rich Curriculum

"Communication and language are the foundations of learning and thinking. Words describe and define the limits of our understanding." (Education, Endowment foundation 2019).

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.

National Curriculum 2014.

Children at Sleafy First School have a real thirst for new vocabulary. Terminology is taught and built up over time as the children progress through the school. Children are challenged to apply their use of **vocabulary** in written work and our curriculum is set out in **small incremental steps** in order to minimise the scaffolding needed. Research by the Education Endowment Foundation indicates that it is just as important to avoid over-scaffolding as it is to ensure all pupils are adequately supported. It also indicates that it is important to take account of the prior knowledge that children bring to lessons and to help them to build upon this understanding. Our curriculum is therefore designed to build upon prior knowledge and skills. It is **self-reviewing** whereby knowledge gained is consolidated and revisited in order to support retention and recall.

Aims and Vision

Our aims in teaching English are that all children should:

- develop positive attitudes towards books so that reading is a pleasurable activity
- read a varied selection of texts whilst gaining an increased level of fluency and understanding
- use reading as a means of gathering information to support their learning throughout the entire curriculum
- enjoy writing in different contexts and for different purposes and audiences, including themselves
- write with increasing awareness of the conventions of grammar, punctuation and spelling
- form letters correctly, leading to a fluent and legible, cursive handwriting style
- develop listening and comprehension skills through a variety of means including reciprocal and nonreciprocal situations
- develop their spoken language skills in drama activities and as a valuable tool and progression to develop their writing skills.

- Express opinions, articulate feelings and formulate appropriate responses to increasingly complex questions and instructions.

THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

- the structure of English teaching is based upon the English National Curriculum guidelines and covers all of the recommended objectives to ensure that a broad and balanced English curriculum is taught to all pupils at Slaley First School
- we ensure that there is adequate time for developing reading, writing and grammar, punctuation and spelling skills
- each class in KS1 and KS2 has a dedicated English lesson each day,
- Phonics is taught throughout Reception and KS1.
- The English skills that are developed are utilised and supported in every area of the curriculum and can be directly linked with other subjects. For example, formal letter writing within English may be developed within a history topic and instructional writing could be linked to work completed in Science.

STRATEGIES AND PLANNING

- Each year group has a range of teaching materials available from which the teacher plans lessons. However, we have planned our teaching of English around our curriculum topic headings and key texts and the planning ensures coverage of the National Curriculum.
- Work is differentiated to meet the needs of the pupils and to ensure progression within each year group.

PROVISION AND DIFFERENTIATION

- By recognising that some children may need specific help with their English skills
- By giving extra support to children who need extra opportunities for reinforcement.
- By ensuring that pupils with particular ability and flair for English are extended through the use of additional, more demanding, open ended tasks and planned challenges within each lesson.

APPROACHES TO READING

- Teachers model reading strategies during shared reading sessions, whilst children have the opportunity to develop their reading strategies and to discuss texts in detail during guided reading sessions
- In KS1, children also have the opportunity to read 1-1 or in a small group with an adult
- As the children move through the school, opportunities to read independently for a sustained period of time are offered to them.
- 'Dandelion Readers' are used to support early readers as well as book banded 'free readers' and banded guided reading books.
- Teaching assistants support reading activities to ensure that children have more frequent opportunities to read with adults.

- Where possible, visits by: published authors, performances by professional theatre groups are organised in addition to making books and the use of drama to illustrate the texts studied.
- In Key Stage 2, children choose books to take home and read within a selection which are appropriate to the level that the child is operating at.
- Those children still learning to read have access to decodable books which are two units behind the phonics level they are working on. This helps all children grow in confidence as readers and develop fluency
- We encourage all readers to read their books at home with an adult
- Throughout the Key Stage, children become more independent in recording what they have read in their reading record books.
- We recognise the value of adults (both in school and at home) reading aloud to children, in order to improve their grasp of story language; enthuse them with a love of books and to inspire them to become great authors themselves.
- All children have regular access to our school library and are encouraged to choose a book independently
- Core books are held in both EYFS and KS1 and these are read regularly to the children in order to encourage familiarity with a range of quality texts

APPROACHES TO WRITING

- We aim to develop the children's ability to produce well structured, detailed writing in which the meaning is made clear and which engages the interest of the reader.
- Attention is paid throughout the school to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling.
- Our approach to teaching writing covers the 'transcription' and 'composition' requirements of The National Curriculum (2014).
- Teachers model writing strategies and the use of phonics and spelling strategies in shared writing sessions. Guided writing sessions are used to target specific needs of both groups and individuals, whilst children have opportunities to write at length in extended independent writing sessions at regular points during a term.
- The children are given frequent opportunities, in school, to write in different contexts using quality texts as a model and for a variety of purposes and audiences.
- The text types, which are required to be covered by The National Curriculum (2014), are outlined in our long-term plans for each year group to ensure that there is a breadth of coverage.
- They may be asked to produce their writing on their own or as part of group. We recognise the important role that computing has to play in our school in the development of English skills.
- There are many opportunities for children to improve their writing inspired by drama techniques and film clips.
- Interactive technology is used regularly to enhance the teaching of English. We use the Letter-join Handwriting Scheme in school to help children develop fluent, cursive, clear and legible joined up writing (see Handwriting Policy for further details).

APPROACHES TO GRAMMAR AND SPELLING

- The teaching of Grammar and Spelling is in line with the requirements of The National Curriculum (2014).
- Our expectations are outlined in a progression grid. It details the expectations for the teaching of grammar and the agreed terminology (from the NC glossary) which must be used by each year group.
- Grammar is taught discreetly each week and embedded within English lessons where appropriate.
- To be able to spell correctly is an essential life skill. When spelling become automatic, pupils are able to concentrate on the content of their writing and the making of meaning.
- Whilst we note that spelling is not the most important aspect of writing, confidence in spelling can have a profound effect on the writer's self-image.
- We aim to use explicit, interactive teaching which draws children's attention to the origins, structure and meaning of words and their parts, the shape and sound of words, the letter patterns within them and the various ways they can learn these patterns.
- In the Early Years and KS1, daily phonics is the key to the children's learning of spelling.
- This is taught using the 'Sounds-Write' programme.
- Children are taught to blend sounds to read and segment to spell. At the same time, they learn words which are not phonically regular (common exception words).
- Children move towards using their phonic knowledge to help them to understand spelling rules and patterns.
- We teach children to use their growing understanding of the morphology and etymology of words to support their spelling.
- Helping the children to understand how to use and apply known spelling patterns (and to develop strategies to tackle tricky words) is the key to helping them to become successful spellers. Spelling skills are taught each week and are also embedded in English lessons so as strategies and rules can be taught in the context of writing.
- When actually writing, children should be concentrating on higher order thinking skills and should simply 'have a try' at spelling in their HAT (Have a Try) spelling books.
- When marking children's work, we do not correct all spelling errors, instead we focus on high frequency words, topic words and those studied in spelling sessions.
- The teaching and development of spelling will be encouraged as part of the home-school partnership and weekly spellings will be sent home to practise, in readiness for an informal test in school.
- Children will be given words according to their developmental needs, so the amount and level of difficulty will vary.
- Grammar and spelling are assessed using NFER assessments in Years 3 and 4 which are then recorded on our tracking system and used to gain a secure teacher assessment and to identify areas that need further teaching and consolidation.

SPELLING STRATEGIES

- All classes have a set of spelling activities to support regular opportunities for children to practice learning spellings that they need next.
- The 'Look, Say, Cover, Write and Check' approach to learning the spelling of words will be taught and encouraged however, this approach alone will not be suitable for every pupil.
- Children will be taught to look for common letter strings, patterns in words and spelling rules.
- Where possible, children are encouraged to identify their own spelling errors and edit accordingly and check spellings.
- Sounding out words phonetically and breaking them down into syllables are strategies for pupils to be aware of.
- Drawing on analogies to known words, roots, derivations, word families, morphology and familiar spelling patterns creates a fascination into the English language.
- There is an emphasis on exploring syllables in polysyllabic words in line with the 'Sounds-Write' approach.
- The effective use of a dictionary is taught to find words beyond the initial letter and the use of a thesaurus is taught and encouraged to expand their vocabulary awareness and choice.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

- Children with SEN are taught within the daily English lesson. When additional staff are available to support groups or individual children, they may withdraw small groups to use intervention materials. Within the daily English lesson, teachers not only provide activities to support children who find English difficult, but also activities that provide appropriate challenges (eg more open-ended tasks) for children who are high achievers in English.

ENGLISH ASSESSMENT

Assessment for learning

- The learning objective is referred to during the lesson to gauge progress and at the end of the lesson to assess progress. The learning objective is visible throughout the lesson to ensure the children have clarity of the learning focus. Teachers monitor and assess children throughout the lesson, and through marking their work, identifying any misconceptions that need to be addressed.
- pieces of unaided and levelled written work are kept in the moderation file
- teachers provide accurate teacher assessments; based on their analysis of pupils' work and the use of NFER assessments.

- We moderate pupils' work, as a whole staff, at least termly. Levels are agreed between professionals. We seek to moderate with other schools whenever possible.
- Identified children who have not made expected progress across the year are targeted within intervention groups and sessions.
- Children who we feel have been adversely affected by Covid-19 are given specific 'Catch Up' sessions
- Work is assessed via marking and improvements encouraged through highlighting and response to this.
- Spelling Tests are carried out weekly.
- Phonics screening is undertaken at the end of Year 1 and Y2 if necessary,
- Reading and writing assessments are recorded on a tracking system which is kept updated and analysed
- Pupils on the SEN records are identified and monitored.
- Progress towards targets in their individual IEP passport is analysed
- Cross-curricular links are made in specific subject areas

Self-Assessment

Children are encouraged to assess their own understanding at the end of their work by the use of a smiley or 'straight' face.

Record Keeping

Teachers complete their own assessment sheets every term within all aspects of mathematics which indicate a detailed resume of what each child can and cannot do. Pupil progress meetings are held half termly and each and every child's attainment is discussed within these. These meetings ensure that teachers reflect upon progress, have a more strategic overview of pupil attainment and a focused conversation in which they are encouraged to identify and plan for gaps in learning.

Formal Assessment

NFER Assessments have been adopted to enable the teaching staff to gain a more detailed and accurate picture of each child's current level of attainment. Each child will complete three tests – one in the Autumn Term; one in the Spring Term and one in the Summer term. This information will also inform pupil progress meetings and planning for the upcoming academic year.

Reporting to Parents

Parents are given the opportunity to discuss their child's progress on three official occasions but understand that the school's 'open door' policy enables them to address concerns throughout the year. Reports are completed before the end of the summer term. Teachers use the information gathered from their assessments to help them comment on individual children's progress.

ROLE OF THE HEADTEACHER

In consultation with other teachers on the curriculum team, the Headteacher:

- determines the ways English should support, enrich and extend the curriculum
- decides the provision and allocation of resources;
- decides ways in which developments can be assessed, and records maintained;
- ensures that English is used in a way to achieve the aims and objectives of the school;
- ensures that there is an English policy,

ROLE OF THE ENGLISH SUBJECT LEADER

The English subject leader(s) should:

- ensure the development of a long term and medium term English curriculum. This will follow the New Primary Framework guidelines and will be built around the school's curriculum topics and cover aspects of the English National Curriculum statements.
- promote the integration of English within appropriate teaching and learning activities;
- manage the provision and deployment of resources and give guidance on classroom organisation support,
- inspire colleagues to deliver high quality teaching and learning opportunities;
- aid the evaluation and review of the school's English policy,
- monitor and review the English provision within the school,

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- The teaching of English will be monitored through the School Improvement Plan by the Headteacher
- Governors are kept informed via FGB Meetings
- The Governor(s) assigned to monitoring the curriculum will be kept abreast of developments, progress and changes within the subject.

EQUALITY STATEMENT

At Slaey First School, we actively seek to encourage equity and equality through our teaching. As such, we seek to advance the equality of opportunity between people who share any of the following characteristic:

- gender;
- ethnicity;
- disability;
- religion or belief;

- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy or maternity.

The use of stereotypes under any of the above headings will always be challenged.