

## English Policy

### 1 Aims and objectives

**1.1** 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. 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.

**1.2** The aims of English are:

- to enable children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners;
- to encourage children to listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard;
- to enable children to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands;
- to develop children's abilities to reflect on their own and others' contributions and the language used;
- to enable children to evaluate their own and others' contributions through a range of drama activities;
- to enable children to become successful early readers and spellers through the implementation of the simple view of reading, as described in the New Primary Framework.
- to encourage children to become enthusiastic and reflective readers through contact with challenging and lengthy texts;
- to help children enjoy writing and recognise its value;
- to enable children to write with accuracy and meaning in narrative and non-fiction;
- to increase the children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work.

### 2 Teaching and learning style

**2.1** At Parrett & Axe Primary School we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English lessons, as suggested in the New Primary Framework. 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. During these lessons children could experience a whole-class shared reading or writing activity, a differentiated group session of high quality phonic teaching, a guided group or independent writing activity, a speaking or listening activity and a whole-class session to review progress and learning where appropriate. They have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts in print or on screen, and use a range of resources such as dictionaries and thesauruses to support their work. Children use ICT in English lessons where it enhances their learning. For example, using photographs or other images, drafting their work using a word processor, 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.

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In addition to the daily lesson, children often receive a daily Reading Workshop of thirty minutes. This takes place immediately after lunch and involves the children in a range of activities including independent reading, handwriting, personal spellings, listening to story tapes, reading and spelling activities on line and writing their personal response to books read. A group guided reading session led by the teacher may take place as part of this workshop.

**2.2** There are children of differing ability in all classes at Parrett & Axe Primary School. Most classes contain children from two academic years. In order to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children, matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child, we have formed three ability groups for literacy in the junior classes. Each group is supported by a teaching assistant working alongside the class teacher. The full range of texts is experienced and objectives are closely matched to the needs of individual children. In the Infant classes we use a range of strategies to ensure that children are suitably challenged. Children are ability grouped for guided reading, and group and independent tasks may be differentiated. Phonic work is delivered in ability groups and regular assessment undertaken. Classroom assistants are used to support some groups of children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

**2.3** English homework is set on a two weekly or three weekly basis for all children except for those in the Foundation stage. Children receive a weekly list of spellings to learn. At Key Stage One these are linked to the ongoing Letters and Sounds work. At Key Stage Two they are taken from Letters and Sounds. Spelling Bank and the Year 2 and Year 3 Planning Exemplification and Spelling Programme.

### **3 English curriculum planning**

**3.1** English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the New Primary Framework as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English.

**3.2** We carry out the curriculum planning in English in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The New Literacy Framework details what we teach in the long-term. Key stage 1 has adopted a 2 year rolling programme for the mixed Yr 1 and 2 class in order to cover all the units detailed in the New Framework. Key stage 2 is in the process of compiling a new medium term plan to ensure all appropriate units are covered within the three ability groups.

**3.3** Teachers base their termly planning on the 2, 3, or 4 week units of work published in the new electronic framework. Teaching sequences are developed which cover the appropriate objectives and learning outcomes for that unit. Weekly plans show differentiated objectives where needed, teaching activities and children's outcomes. They will also show how other adults in the classroom will be deployed and what resources will be used. Where possible, links to other curriculum areas are exploited. Assessment is going and on completion of each unit, the children's work is assessed and levelled. The English subject leader will regularly scrutinise and discuss these plans.

## **4 The Foundation Stage**

**4.1** We teach English in Corfe Class as an integral part of the school's work. 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. There is a daily phonic session using Letters and Sounds.

## **5 Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas**

**5.1** The skills that children develop in English are linked to, and applied in, every subject 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 in school.

### **5.2 Mathematics**

English contributes significantly to the teaching of mathematics in our school. Children in the Foundation Stage develop their understanding of number, pattern, shape and space by talking about these areas with adults and other children. Children in Key Stage 1 meet stories and rhymes that rely on 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.

### **5.3 Information and communication technology (ICT)**

In line with the New Framework, children use an ever increasing variety of ICT applications to enhance their learning. For example, at KS1 children will use digital photographs to help them write a recount or construct a narrative following a drama session. Film, video clips and audio tapes are used to inspire writing or to provide a performance to analyse and respond to. They may also use a keyboard tutor to develop manual dexterity and keyboard fluency. Older children may use downloaded music to find aural stimulation for writing and drama, or produce electronic books for specific audiences, combining text, pictures and sound. Manipulating text on screen can be used for teaching a variety of text and sentence level objectives for both key stages, and children may use online and CD rom based dictionaries and thesauruses. Children's work is regularly published on the school web site.

### **5.4 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship**

English contributes to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. Through our participation in the Seals project, we encourage all children to take part in class and group discussions on many pertinent issues. In their science work they talk about things that improve their health and about rules for keeping them safe around the school. Older children research and debate topical problems and events. They discuss lifestyle choices and may meet and talk with visitors who work within the school community. Planned activities within the classroom encourage children to work together and respect each other's views.

### **5.5 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

The teaching of English develops skills through which our children can give 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 texts from other cultures. The organisation of lessons allows children to work together and gives them the chance to discuss their ideas and results.

## **6 Teaching English to children with special educational needs**

**6.1** 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 expected levels.

**6.2** When progress falls significantly 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 will 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. Various intervention programmes like Quest, FLS and PAT can be delivered by a trained teaching assistant when appropriate.

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.

**6.5** Teaching assistants provide help with communication and literacy by:

- using texts that children can more easily read and understand;
- using visual and written materials in different formats;
- Using ICT, other technological aids and taped materials or by acting as a translator or amanuenses.

## **7 Assessment and recording**

**7.1** Teachers assess children's work in English in three phases. The short-term assessments that teachers make as part of every lesson help teachers to adjust their daily plans. Teachers match these short-term assessments closely to the teaching objectives. After each unit of work, the children are assessed in relation to the intended outcome for each phase of the teaching sequence. Teachers also track the progress of children each term during a staff meeting when individual progress is evaluated and targets set. Teachers make long-term assessments towards the end of the school year, and they use these to assess progress against school and national targets. With the help of these long-term assessments, teachers are able to set targets for the next school year and summarize the progress of each child before discussing it with the child's parents. These long-term assessments are made using end-of-year tests and teacher assessments. Children undertake the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, plus the optional national tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5.

## **8 Resources**

**8.1** There is a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. Classes have digital cameras, videoing equipment and many items of appropriate computer software. Three interactive whiteboards enable children to have access to a wide range of literary experiences and participate fully in their learning. All classrooms have dictionaries and a wide range of age-appropriate equipment, for example reading and phonics games and story sacks in the infant classrooms. Guided reading sets are available for all reading levels, and for a wide range of text types. There are speaking and listening centres and a range of audio texts for the use of younger children. The school has a large selection of Big Books for both key stages. All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts for independent reading, and good use is made of the Schools Library service to support the curriculum. The junior library contains a range of books to support children's individual research. Children have access to a range of online resources through their classroom computers.

## **9 Monitoring and review**

**9.1** Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the English subject leader. The work of the subject 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 has specially-allocated regular management time in order to enable her to review samples of the children's work and undertake lesson observations of English teaching across the school.