

English policy

Stradbroke CE Primary School



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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.
- Develop a range of reading strategies for approaching reading including: using and applying phonological, contextual, grammatical and graphic knowledge.
- Use reading as a means of gathering information to support their learning throughout the whole curriculum.
- Write in different, meaningful and engaging contexts and for different purposes and audiences.
- Write with increasing awareness of the conventions and importance of accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Form letters correctly, moving towards a fluent, legible and joined handwriting style.
- Develop listening and comprehension skills through a variety of means.
- Develop their speaking and listening abilities at their own level, with increasing confidence and individuality.
- 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 adequate time is given for developing English skills, each class has a dedicated English lesson each day, lasting approximately 60 minutes.

Within and beyond this time, opportunities for more extended writing are given and extra reading is planned for. Phonics is taught through KS1 and into KS2 when it is necessary and appropriate.

The English skills that the children are taught explicitly are reinforced in all other areas of their learning throughout the curriculum. The children are required to apply their reading skills in all other subjects to gain new understanding, and opportunities for writing within other contexts, such as Topic (History and Geography) or RE, are promoted regularly.

Reading

Reading is a key tool for life. Teaching children to become confident and fluent readers, by developing a love and passion for reading is at the heart of what we do at Stradbroke CE Primary School. We have lots of opportunities for reading exciting books and materials – supported by a rich, well-resourced library. Phonics lessons are taught daily throughout the EYFS and Year 1.

Early Reading

The teaching of early reading is a priority at Stradbroke CE Primary School. We follow Letters and Sounds as well as an adapted version of Jolly Phonics to ensure that children all children learn letter, digraph and trigraph sounds; how to blend sounds in words; and how to read common exception words. Children's reading books which they read to adults in school and take home to read with parents are matched closely to their phonic ability to ensure they practise the sounds they have learnt. We use a range of popular and well-established reading scheme books which provide the

children with reading material that is pitched at exactly the right level. 'Oxford Reading Tree' is used as the 'core resource', which is supplemented with books from other schemes, for example Tree Tops and Songbirds, in order to provide an extensive library of books at every stage, to ensure children have a broad and rich reading experience. In our EYFS, the children are read to from a range of engaging texts daily to foster a love of reading. We have worked hard to develop our reading areas (both indoors and outdoors) in our EYFS classroom to create a safe and engaging place for all children to explore a range of reading books.

Reading Fluency

Phonics is used to teach children to decode in Early Years and Key Stage 1. Where necessary and appropriate, it continues to be used into Key Stage 2 to support all children in making progress with their decoding. Children read individually with adults in school to support their progress in decoding. If children are not meeting age-related expectations in reading, extra individual reading is planned for to support these children.

We have a fantastic working relationship with the Dyslexia Outreach Team and all teachers use a wide range of Wave 1 strategies to support children who may find reading tricky, whether due to dyslexia or other learning needs. Coloured overlays are used by many children throughout the school to support reading fluency and strategies for decoding unfamiliar words are taught to all children as well as those who need extra support.

Whole Class Guided Reading

From Year 1-6, all children have a weekly whole class guided reading session. The structure of these sessions has been carefully planned to ensure a whole-school approach for developing children's reading comprehension. The session can be taught in its entirety or broken down into each element depending on the needs of each individual class and cohort. At the heart of each session is a high-quality text, chosen by the teacher to stretch the most able readers. When selecting texts, the teacher (in collaboration with the English subject lead) considers the vocabulary, genre and style of the text to ensure that a broad range of texts are explored. An appropriate extract is chosen as the basis for the guided reading session.

Structure:

- 1) Vocabulary task – The teacher pre-selects vocabulary from the text which they want the children to be familiar with by the end of the session. The number of words chosen depends on the age and ability of the class. In Year 1 this may be 4 or 5 words whereas in Year 6 this may be up to 12 words. The children complete a range of activities to help them understand these words (e.g. match with definition, look up meaning in a dictionary, use in a sentence)
- 2) Context – The teacher uses a range of strategies (e.g. pictures, videos, discussion) to give children the context of the text. This is to enable the children to build a schema in their minds which they can refer to when reading.
- 3) Reading – The teacher reads the extract aloud. They model how to read effectively including rereading to check meaning, reading with expression, making connections with previous parts of the text, making predictions based on what has been read. The children follow the text with a ruler. When they hear a word from the vocabulary task, they raise their hand and the word is discussed in context. Children may be asked to reread parts (e.g. dialogue between two characters) and are encouraged to ask questions throughout to further their understanding. Pupil voice is recorded to aid teacher assessment.
- 4) Questions – Using the 'Reading with RIC' format, children complete written questions based on a short part of the extract. All children are expected to complete the retrieval and

inference questions with the challenge being to answer the choice questions. Where necessary, teachers model how to answer specific questions, particularly focusing on referring to the text for answers.

Reading for Pleasure:

To foster a love of reading in our children, we utilise a wide range of strategies. As well as stage reading books, children are encouraged to choose and read books from our library and also from within their classes. Teachers read to their class daily with picture books being used primarily in EYFS and KS1 and class novels being selected carefully in KS2 to cater for a wide range of interests. We celebrate World Book Day annually, have a reading club which is run by our Year 6 librarians and run a book fair each year with the money raised being used to buy new books for each class.

Spelling/Phonics

There are four main purposes to this part of the policy:

- To establish an entitlement for all pupils
- To establish expectations for teachers of this subject
- To promote continuity and coherence across the school
- To state the school's approaches to this subject in order to promote public, and particularly parents' and carers', understanding of the curriculum.

Spelling is an integral part of the writing process. Pupils who spell with ease are able to concentrate more fully on the content of their writing and ensuring it makes sense. While spelling is not the single most important aspect of writing, confidence in spelling has a positive impact on the writer's self-image. It also improves overall presentation, implies consideration for the reader and recognises the importance of spelling which we as a society promote.

Entitlement and curriculum provision

Spelling is taught following the requirements of the National Curriculum. It is the entitlement of Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 to a daily session of phonics). In Key Stage 2, children have regular explicit spelling sessions, with weekly spellings being sent home and tested which follow the spelling patterns or rules learnt. Alongside this, children will be exposed to and taught the Statutory Spelling List as outlined in the National Curriculum.

Teaching and Learning

Teaching aims to show pupils how to become accurate and more natural spellers. We approach this in three ways. Firstly, by using a structured approach as outlined in Letters and Sounds and the National Curriculum. Secondly, by ensuring that pupils learn and practise those words which they find tricky and most frequently misspell. Thirdly, by increasing their spelling vocabulary by learning how to spell and by using the technical and subject-specific words which occur across the curriculum.

Implementation

- All children are given opportunities to practise and reinforce the learning of spellings using a range of different activities.
- Children will be taught to look for common letter strings, patterns in words and spelling rules.
- Where possible, children will be encouraged to identify their own spelling errors, edit them accordingly and regularly check their own spellings.

- Sound out words using their phonemes (KS1) and moving towards using syllables and known spelling rules (KS2).
- Draw on analogies to known words, roots, derivations, word families, morphology and familiar spelling patterns.
- Identify words which they find particularly challenging and learn them by using mnemonics, multi-sensory re-enforcement and other practical methods.
- Use the first 3 or 4 letters of a word to check their spelling in a dictionary with increasing confidence.
- Make effective use of a spell checker when appropriate.

The school's approach to spelling will be applied across the curriculum. Children will be taught in groups appropriate to their ability. To assess the pupils, they have an informal 'test' each week to identify the extent to which they have learnt the spelling rules they have been working on.

All teachers will be responsible for the planning and teaching of spelling in accordance with the National Curriculum.

The learning of spelling will be encouraged as part of the home-school partnership, with weekly spellings being sent home to practise, to prepare and be ready for in-school tests. Children will be given words according to their learning and developmental needs, so the amount and level of difficulty will vary.

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Some children, who may experience specific learning difficulties, will have additional spelling support as necessary and appropriate. For those with specific learning difficulties, TA or HLTA support may be needed on an individual daily basis. Support staff and teachers will work closely to ensure that appropriate spellings are set.

Continuity and Progression

Foundation Stage

The emphasis at this stage is on systematic, multi-sensory, high quality phonics work, which is embedded within a rich language experience. The phonics programme used, Letters and Sounds, is firmly based upon the above principles and reflects the renewed Early Years Foundation Stage framework. Phonics is taught daily. During the first term in the Reception Year, children participate in activities from phase 1 and 2. They are taught at least 19 letters and how to segment and blend two-syllable words and simple captions. They will also learn to read some high-frequency 'tricky' words. The children move onto phase 3 then 4 during the year.

The application of phonics in writing is offered through shared and guided writing and independent writing opportunities related to the six areas of learning. Where children are in danger of not meeting age-related expectations, appropriate action will be taken to support the child in making progress. If at the end of the reception year children have not met age-related expectations, appropriate support will be put in place in Year 1.

Key Stage 1

Letters and Sounds continues to be taught on a regular basis. For spelling purposes, the emphasis is on the pupils' ability to segment words into phonemes and then match the most likely letter or letters to each sound.

Year 1 and 2 (and some Year 3) are split into differentiated groups for their phonics sessions. The Class Teacher plans these sessions and regular, on-going assessments are carried out to measure children's progress.

In addition, pupils continue to learn how to spell a number of high frequency words and irregular words to enable them write with increasing fluency. They investigate and learn how to use common spelling patterns, and frequently used prefixes and suffixes in their own writing.

Pupils become increasingly independent. They begin to identify their own misspellings and are taught how to use a simple dictionary, word banks and other techniques to help with this. Pupils are encouraged to independently spell as many words as possible, and only seek assistance from an adult when necessary.

Key Stage 2

At Key Stage 2, there is an emphasis on developing a range of strategies which children can use to remember how words are spelt. Different word resources are used and the morphology (form) of words is developed further. Where necessary, children are supported in continuing to develop their KS1 phonic knowledge, through the use of resources, such as sound mats, and extra support if appropriate.

Within the English lessons, the focus shifts from word level teaching to teaching at sentence level. However, it remains that spelling is still explicitly taught through regular and ongoing teaching and assessment.

Building on the approaches introduced in Key Stage 1, confidence and independence continues to be developed. Pupils assume an increased responsibility by identifying their own spelling corrections, making reasoned choices about likely alternatives and using a range of resources (such as dictionaries, spell-checkers and word banks) to support them in making corrections.

Assessment and Monitoring

Phonics tracking is used for children receiving specific phonics teaching from Reception into KS2. The results will be discussed among staff and realistic, but challenging, action points will be implemented accordingly.

Spelling will be assessed regularly throughout the whole school and used to inform future planning and support. Assessment from Year 6 will be forwarded to secondary schools on transition.

Writing

Writing is an essential part of our curriculum offer and highly important at Stradbroke CE Primary School.

Handwriting:

In EYFS children learn how to hold a pencil correctly and begin to form letters, words and sentences. In Reception, children are shown how to form letters correctly in order to prepare them for using a joined style of handwriting in Key Stage 1. Our expectation is that during Key Stage 1, most children will be able to write neatly and fluently. During Key Stage 2, children will continue to use neat, joined handwriting, developing their own style.

Composition:

In order to enable children to be successful writers, teachers use a range of strategies. These include, but are not limited to, teaching children to analyse the features of a text; teaching children to plan, draft and edit their writing; teaching spelling, punctuation and grammar explicitly so that children develop a more secure understanding of the technical aspect of writing.

Writing is always taught in context and where appropriate links are made to our curriculum topics, finding real-life purposes for children's writing to enthuse and engage them. The children learn the 'skills' needed to write different genres and teachers engage the children through topic links, film, drama, Talk for Writing strategies and exciting 'Curriculum Theme' days.

Spoken Language

Speaking and Listening opportunities are utilised regularly, to improve children's understanding of texts, increase their engagement with their learning and to inspire their writing. They are taught to communicate their ideas and opinions in a range of contexts and to different audiences, doing so with increasing confidence as they progress throughout the school.

Differentiation

Provision is made for the full range of abilities:

- By recognising that some children may need specific help with English skills (e.g. if they are dyslexic), although they may have other strengths within the subject.
- By giving extra support to children who need extra help or opportunities for reinforcement of their learning.
- By ensuring that pupils of a high ability or who show a flair or passion for English are extended appropriately, for example by being given opportunities to complete more extended, open-ended tasks and working with other children who will challenge and stretch them in their learning.
- Provision for Pupil Premium children is tailored to their individual needs.

English Assessment

Formative assessment occurs throughout every lesson through observation, discussion and evaluation of the children's work. This is invaluable in enabling the teacher to check children's understanding as well as informing future planning so that teaching and learning is most effective.

More formal records for each pupil will consist of:

- Regular pieces of more extended writing which are assessed in line with the Not As We Know It assessment objectives (our chosen assessment without levels approach). In Year 2 and 6, we will also assess writing in line with the End of Year statutory assessment objectives, as outlined by the DfE.
- Pupils' work is moderated within the school regularly and between schools at least termly.
- Within each piece of work, children are given personal targets which they are encouraged to self-assess against throughout their writing. These are explicitly

referred to when marking the child's writing by acknowledging objectives which have been met and setting clear, achievable yet challenging next steps.

- Spelling tests are carried out weekly. Phonics screening is undertaken at the end of Year 1 and, if necessary, at the end of Year 2. Year 2 and 6 children complete SATs spelling tests.
- Children in Years 1, 3, 4 and 5 complete NFER assessments.
- Regular teacher assessments are made in reading and writing and the data is analysed (using Pupil Asset) and shared regularly to inform future planning.
- Pupils on the SEN register are monitored closely. Progress towards their targets on IEPs are analysed by teachers and the SENCo.

Cross-Curricular Links

Cross-Curricular links are made in all subjects.

The Role of the Headteacher

In consultation with the English Subject leader, 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 and identifies an English subject leader.

The Role of the English subject leader

The English subject leader should:

- Ensure that English planning follows the National Curriculum, covering all aspects including Reading, Writing and Spoken Language.
- 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.
- Analyse data to identify strengths and weaknesses in outcomes, planning for improvement accordingly.
- Identify areas of English which are a priority for the School Improvement Plan and complete action plans as necessary.
- Lead INSET within the school, and investigate suitable courses elsewhere.
- Act as a contact point between the school and support agencies, including the LA.
- Provide technical expertise.
- Lead 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 English subject leader in the first instance and then by the Senior Leadership Team and the Executive Headteacher. SATs results are analysed and areas for development prioritised. Governors are kept informed via a subject report as scheduled in the Monitoring and

Evaluation programme. The Governors assigned to monitoring English will be kept abreast of developments, progress and changes within the subject.

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