



MARSHBROOK FIRST SCHOOL

English and Literacy Policy

April 2013

The study of English develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including the communication of their ideas, views and feelings. Children are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as of 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, listening and writing across a range of different situations.

It is our view that the pupils in our school should be taught in a safe, secure and stimulating environment, enabling them all to achieve their potential in the areas of English and Literacy regardless of their gender or ethnic background.

The aims of teaching English and Literacy are:

- To develop pupils' confidence in themselves as skilled communicators, to make relevant contributions and learn how to listen attentively to others.
- To enable pupils to adapt their speech to a widening range of circumstances and demands.
- To develop enthusiastic and reflective readers, through contact with challenging and substantial texts, so that they can read independently, understand the meaning and express preferences about their reading.
- To ensure that pupils read with fluency, accuracy and understanding across a range of texts, both fiction and non-fiction.
- For pupils to enjoy writing and to see the value of it.
- To provide stimulating opportunities for pupils to be creative writers of text and to express themselves, in writing, with confidence.
- To enable pupils to become independent writers of texts, in which spellings are accurate, punctuation is correct and which communicate meaning in narrative and non-narrative forms.
- To develop pupils' understanding that writing is essential to thinking and learning across all curriculum areas.
- To enable pupils to use the planning, drafting and editing processes to improve their written work and sustain their writing of fiction and non-fiction.
- To enable pupils to use non-fiction and non-literary texts in order to access information for themselves including ICT based information texts.
- For pupils to be able to use ICT as an effective means of communication and an effective tool for learning.
- To set suitable learning challenges.
- To respond to pupils' diverse learning needs.
- To overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.
- For all children to develop a legible style of handwriting in both joined and printed styles, with increasing fluency, confidence and speed.
- To make provision for left handed children to develop free flowing writing.

Organisation and Methodology

English is a core subject of the National Curriculum. The fundamental skills, knowledge and concepts are set out in “English in the National Curriculum” where they are categorised into three attainment targets:

1. Speaking and Listening
2. Reading
3. Writing

English is primarily delivered through the National Literacy Framework (renewed 2007). All pupils take part in a daily Literacy session, which covers the programmes of study for English as set out in the National Curriculum.

Wherever possible we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

Children use ICT in lessons where it enhances their learning, as in drafting their work and in using multimedia to study how words and images are combined to convey meaning.

Pupils are taught as individuals, in groups and as classes. The key skills are approached in varied and systematic ways in order to ensure that pupils have a wide range of strategies at their disposal. Various approaches are adapted and integrated to meet the needs of the individual. A flexible approach is taken in the use of different methodologies and materials.

Ability and mixed ability groups are used for different purposes and planned to meet specific objectives.

Speaking and Listening is developed through:

- Story telling.
- Describing and listening to events and experiences.
- Speaking and listening appropriately to different audiences including peers, teachers and other adults.
- Speaking and listening appropriately in a variety of contexts across the curriculum.
- Group discussion and interaction.
- Drama and role-play activities.
- Reading aloud.
- Debate and presentation.
- Worship and music.
- Helping children to reflect upon and evaluate their own talk and that of others.

Reading is developed through:

- Using a wide range of both scheme and non-scheme books which allows for a flexible but structured approach.
- Pupils making their own books and using them as general reading material.
- Pupils having access to a wide range of literature and non-fiction texts in classrooms and the school library.
- The use of ICT based reference materials on television, video, computers and interactive whiteboards.
- Providing a print rich environment and interactive displays in order to stimulate pupils' reading.
- Sessions of shared and guided reading.
- Sessions of independent reading when pupils have the opportunity to read, enjoy and share texts with other pupils and adults.
- The involvement of parents, in and out of school, thereby ensuring a home/school commitment to the encouragement and value of reading.
- Pupils being able to borrow books from the school library.

- The use of a variety of story sacks, author boxes and topic related non-fiction books, loaned termly from Staffordshire Library Service.
- Worship.
- A structured programme of the teaching of phonics and the systematic development of a sight vocabulary.

Writing is developed through:

- The provision of a wide range of purposes for writing, including communication with others, exploring experience and organising and explaining information.
- The provision of opportunities to practise a wide range of forms of writing, including narrative, poetry, reports, instructions, captions and lists, persuasive writing and play scripts.
- Providing opportunities to write appropriately for a range of audiences.
- Teaching pupils the main rules and conventions of written English.
- Teaching pupils to be self-critical and to use planning, drafting and editing processes to improve their work.
- Teaching pupils to use a range of spelling strategies in order to become independent and accurate spellers.

Phonic knowledge is developed through:

- Pupils in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 participating in a four part daily phonics session, as recommended in 'Letters and Sounds'.
- The sequence and phonic content of 'Letters and Sounds' is followed predominantly. Resources and stories from Jolly phonics are used to supplement the content of 'Letters and Sounds', appealing to a wider range of learning styles as the 44 phonemes are introduced and revised.
- An effort is made to apply phonic knowledge in shared reading and writing.
- Tricky words – HF (high frequency) words are introduced once children are starting to blend CVC (consonant, vowel, consonant) words
- In Key Stage 2 phonics is not taught as a discrete whole class session. However, where children are not meeting expected levels, additional adults are used to run phonic sessions for individuals or groups where necessary.
- An individual phonics assessment booklet is started in the Foundation Stage and passed onto the next teacher until completed.

Handwriting is developed through:

- Systematic and regular practice in the teaching of handwriting.
- Encouraging the development of fine motor control.
- Teaching children the importance of correct posture and paper position whether right or left handed.
- Demonstrating how to use a pen/pencil and hold it effectively.
- Teaching children to write from left to right and top to bottom on a page.
- Teaching children to start and finish letters correctly.
- Teaching children to form letters of regular size and shape.
- Demonstrating the language of writing and the use of the correct terminology.
- Teaching children to put regular spaces between words.
- Teaching children how to form upper and lower case letters.
- Teaching children how to join letters.
- Encouraging children to write legibly using a cursive style.
- Encouraging the use of different styles of writing for different purposes.
- Emphasis on the importance of neat and clear presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively.

Work in Speaking and Listening, Reading and Writing is integrated throughout English and Literacy and through all other curriculum areas and the links between these are made explicit to the pupils.

In all classes children have a wide range of abilities, and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons we do it through differentiated group work, while in others we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use classroom assistants to support some children, and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

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.

We carry out the curriculum planning in English in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The National Literacy Strategy Framework for Teaching details what we teach in the long-term. Our yearly teaching programme identifies the key objectives in literacy that we teach to each year.

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 subject leader is responsible for keeping and reviewing these plans.

Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan for the teaching of English. This lists the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes for each lesson, and gives details of how the lessons are to be taught. It also includes details of what each group of children will be 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 English 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. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, 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 aged three 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 vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore words and texts, to enjoy them, to learn about them, and to use them in various situations.

Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas

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 at school.

Mathematics

The teaching of English contributes significantly to children's mathematical understanding, in a variety of ways. Children in the Foundation Stage develop their understanding of number, pattern, shape and space by talking about these matters with adults and other children. Children in Key Stage 1 meet stories and rhymes that involve 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.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

English contributes to the teaching of PSHE and citizenship through the SEAL materials by encouraging children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues. They discuss lifestyle choices, and meet and talk with visitors who work within the school community. Planned activities within the classroom also encourage children to work together and to respect each other's views.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

The teaching of English develops skills through which our children can offer 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 with texts from a diverse range of cultures. The organisation of our lessons allows children to work together, and gives them the chance to discuss their ideas and results.

English and ICT

The use of information and communication technology, with clear learning objectives, will promote, enhance and support the teaching of English at word, sentence and text level. It also offers ways of impacting on learning which are not possible with conventional methods, for example interactive and non-linear stories.

ICT is used at whole-class, group and independent level. The use of Interactive Whiteboards enables texts to be read and shared and permits the writing process to be modelled effectively. A wide variety of text types are available to encourage the framing of explicit questions. Computers are available for individual and group use within the classroom and whole class use of ICT is enabled through the use of the school ICT Suite. Lessons can focus on what pupils have achieved using ICT, or ICT can provide the means of presenting their outcomes.

Equal Opportunities

At Marshbrook, we believe that every pupil is of equal value and has the right to equal education opportunities, irrespective of age, ability, race, creed and gender; therefore we help all our children to access the whole curriculum with respect to English/Language skills in reading, writing, speaking/listening through the provision of appropriate texts and additional support where possible.

English and inclusion

We teach English to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. 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 good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents,

and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. For further details see separate policies: Special Educational Needs; Disability Non-Discrimination; Gifted and Talented; English as an Additional Language (EAL).

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, differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels. 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.

Pupils with diverse learning needs are provided for through:

- Teachers planning for the pupils full participation.
- Setting high expectations.
- Providing opportunities for all pupils to achieve.
- Creating effective learning environments.
- Providing equality of opportunity through teaching approaches.
- Setting learning targets.
- Liaison with SENCO and the development and delivery of appropriate IEPs.
- Liaison with outside agencies, e.g. psychological services.
- Appropriate intervention (As set out in the Code of Practice)
- Allowing pupils access to specialist equipment and approaches where necessary. For example, using texts that children can more easily read and understand or visual and written materials in different formats; ICT; other technological aids and taped materials; alternative communication such as signs and symbols, translators and amanuenses.
- Provision of focus groups and delivery of ELP, ELS, ALS and Better Reading programmes when appropriate.
- Liaison with the adviser for gifted and talented pupils.
- Continuous consultation with and involvement of parents.

Assessment and Recording

Pupils' development in Literacy is constantly monitored and assessed in order to inform future planning, teaching and reporting. A variety of methods are used in order to provide a broad and balanced picture of pupils' skills. A range of record keeping methods are used to suit the purposes of the assessment.

All staff keep class assessment records and annotate planning to take advantage of incidental and informal assessment opportunities.

All formal assessments are passed to the receiving teacher at the end of the academic year.

Staff use assessment to inform future learning targets. Staff recognise that Assessment for Learning (AfL) lies at the heart of promoting learning and in raising standards of attainment. We further recognise that effective AfL depends crucially on actually using the information gained. Teachers use knowledge of pupils drawn from ongoing pupil tracking records and from the 'prior learning' section at the beginning of each unit of

work within the Renewed *Primary Framework for Literacy* to guide their planning and teaching. Staff use the assessment statements and key elements of learning within the *Renewed Primary Framework* to check learning against objectives at the end of each unit of work. If necessary, future planning is adapted in response to assessment outcomes.

Analysis of information gained from statutory and optional tests is done at both a quantitative and qualitative level. Information gained is used to set focused curricular targets (what to teach) and also to determine which strategies or methods are particularly effective in respect of specific areas of English.

Assessment of Speaking and Listening

Pupils' progress in speaking and listening is assessed using a variety of methods in differing situations and levels are reported on a termly basis through:

- Shared text work.
- Word/sentence level work.
- Independent and collaborative work.
- Group and whole class discussion and interaction.
- Debate and presentation.
- Drama activities.
- Independent play activities.

Evidence is gathered to support the assessment and teachers keep their own records which form the basis for the annual report to parents and Key Stage 1 SATs.

Assessment of Reading

- Pupils' progress in reading is assessed through guided and individual reading to identify strengths and weaknesses and inform future planning. This includes the reading of both fiction and non-fiction texts (See Skills Ladder).
- Each teacher keeps a tracking sheet for their class, which indicates levels predicted for the end of the year, levels achieved at the end of each term and amount of progress made. These are used to identify children who are not making the expected level of progress, so that intervention measures may be put into place.
- Statutory assessment of reading occurs through the 'e' profile and the reading SATs at the end of Key Stage 1. The results of these assessments are monitored closely in order to inform targets for subsequent year groups.
- Y3 and Y4 undertake the optional SATs at the end of each academic year.

Assessment of Writing

- Pupils' writing is assessed regularly against the appropriate learning objectives as detailed in the Renewed National Literacy Framework.
- Pupils' progress in writing is assessed through guided writing.
- Leveled pieces of independent work are carried out on a termly basis and kept to mark pupils' progress in writing and this informs individual targets.
- Pupils' writing is regularly assessed against an agreed set of criteria based on the National Curriculum level descriptors. (See Staffordshire Skills Ladder, Layered Targets)
- Each teacher keeps a tracking sheet for their class, which indicates levels predicted for the end of the year, levels achieved at the end of each term and amount of progress made. These are used to identify children who are not making the expected level of progress, so that intervention measures may be put into place.
- Statutory assessment of writing occurs through the writing and spelling elements of the SATs at the end of Key Stage 1.
- Y3 and Y4 undertake the optional SATs at the end of the academic year.

Assessment of Phonics

- An individual phonics assessment booklet is started in the Foundation Stage and continued throughout the school.

Assessments are passed on to the receiving teacher (See Policy for Assessment).

Target Setting and Individual Needs

Data from book trawls, the FSPs, KS1 SATs and optional Y3 and Y4 SATs are used to set targets for the whole school and inform the use of layered curricular targets. Individual targets for reading and writing are communicated to parents at Parent's Evenings. Individual, group or class targets may also be used within the lesson, which are linked to the learning objectives. Data from tracking sheets, the FSPs, KS1 SATs, optional Y3 and Y4 SATs and individual assessments are used to identify underperforming individuals and groups. Children are then given additional support from a Teaching Assistant through specific focus groups and the delivery of the ELP, ELS, ALS and Better Reading programmes when appropriate.

Home/school links

Parents/guardians are informed of the school's approach to reading and handwriting and they are given guidance on correct letter formation and how to help their child with reading as their children start school. Each child has a home/school reading record book, which enables communication between parent and teacher. All children have home reading books which are changed regularly. EYS children have a phonics book linked to work covered in school to be reinforced at home and children in Key Stages 1 and 2 have weekly spellings sent home. (See Policy for Homework). Individual targets are given out at Parent's Evenings.

Resources

There is a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries and a variety of age-appropriate small apparatus. Each classroom has a speaking and listening area, with a tape recorder and a number of audio texts. All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts. Children have access to the Internet through their classroom computer. Access to the Internet is also available in the library area. Audio-visual aids are available from the central storage area. The library contains a range of books to support children's individual research.

The Role of the Co-ordinator

The co-ordinator will:

- Conduct regular discussions with staff about their professional development needs in the delivery of the National Curriculum and the Renewed National Literacy Framework.
- Target issues that occur, on a whole school basis, through staff meetings and designated INSET days.
- Provide support, using a range of possible methods, if staff members have particular needs or concerns.

- Give guidance to support staff as to their role during the Daily Literacy Session.
- Monitor planning.
- Develop appropriate assessment arrangements, including records.
- Monitor end of Key Stage and end of year assessments.
- Co-ordinate the purchase of resources and be responsible for their organisation.
- Organise and run the school library and liaise with Staffordshire School Library Service.

Monitoring and review

The Head teacher and Literacy Leader manage a programme of monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and learning in the school through:

- The implementing of a monitoring cycle.
- The monitoring of medium and short term planning.
- Lesson observations.
- Staff consultation.
- Book trawls.
- Analysis of SAT results.
- Scrutiny and moderation of teacher assessments.
- Analysis of tracking sheets.
- Monitoring of standards in writing and subsequent setting of targets. (See Skills Ladder)

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years.