



Wavertree CE School English Policy

Mission Statement

Belong, Believe, Achieve. 'A place where everyone belongs to the family of Wavertree with faith in God at the centre. Where we believe in ourselves and others. Where we achieve our full potential. Where hope and love inspires all we do.' Philippians 4:13 'I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.'

Rationale

The National Curriculum (2014) clearly states that teaching the English language is an essential, if not the most essential role of a primary school.

'Teachers should develop pupil's spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for pupils, understanding the language provides access to the whole curriculum. Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects.' (p10 National Curriculum)

Aims

At Wavertree Church of England School the study of English develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes (and from a range of starting points) 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 and listening and reading and writing across a range of different situations.

The aims of teaching English are

- 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

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 should therefore ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills. Pupils should develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write. They must be assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others, and teachers should ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions. Pupils should also be taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate.

All pupils should be enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Pupils should be able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role. They should 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.

Statutory requirements which underpin all aspects of spoken language across the 6 years of primary education form part of the national curriculum. These are reflected and contextualised within the reading and writing domains which follow.

Talkframes have been developed to improve the quality of speech and to frame and orchestrate ideas. These are progressive and scaffold vocabulary as well as offering variations in spoken sentence structures.

Reading

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

- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading)

From 2018, we have followed the Read Write Inc. Programme which is a very specific and prescribed scheme to teach children to read so that no child falls behind whatever their academic ability or background. We are teaching this intensively across EYFS and KS1, but we are also using the programme in KS2 to enable children who have already fallen behind or entered the school with a relatively low starting point and an emerging use of English, to catch up again. Children are grouped across the age range according to their ability and are taught in small groups. Teachers and teaching assistants deliver the programme and all members of staff have received training in order to be able to deliver the programme effectively.

It is essential that teaching focuses on developing pupils' competence in both dimensions: decoding and comprehension; different kinds of teaching are needed for each.

Read Write Inc. 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.

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. All pupils must be encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world they live in, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum. Reading widely and 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 essential that, by the end of their primary education, all pupils are able to read fluently, with confidence and for pleasure in any subject in their forthcoming secondary education.

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)

It is essential that teaching develops pupils' competence in these 2 dimensions. In addition, pupils should be taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. These aspects of writing have been incorporated into the 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 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.

Spelling, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and glossary

Opportunities for teachers to enhance pupils' vocabulary arise naturally from their reading and writing. As vocabulary increases, teachers should 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 should also teach pupils how to work out and clarify the meanings of unknown words and words with more than 1 meaning. References to developing pupils' vocabulary are also included in the appendices.

Pupils should be taught to control their speaking and writing consciously and to use Standard English. They should be taught to use the elements of spelling, grammar, punctuation and 'language about language' listed. This is not intended to constrain or restrict teachers' creativity, but simply to provide the structure on which they can construct exciting lessons.

Throughout the programmes of study, teachers should teach pupils the vocabulary they need to discuss their reading, writing and spoken language. It is

important that pupils learn the correct grammatical terms in English and that these terms are integrated within teaching.

Teaching and learning style

We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our English lessons. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding. We do this through a daily lesson in which children may experience a whole-class reading or writing activity, a whole-class focused spelling, punctuation or grammar activity, a guided group or independent activity, and a whole-class session to review progress and learning. We aim for a balance of whole class, group and independent learning; the independent activity providing an opportunity to talk and collaborate, and so embed and enhance their learning. They have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts, and to support their work with a variety of resources, such as dictionaries, thesauruses and phonics resources. Wherever possible we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum. The use of rich narrative texts (Literacy curriculum tree) enables learners to discover a range of genre and assist in the sequencing of learning to create real progress. Teachers deploy multi-sensory learning strategies to hook learners and celebrate the wonder of literature.

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. Specific programmes are run in order to support targeted children. Where necessary, pre-teaching of key elements or vocabulary may occur to better prepare pupils for the lessons ahead.

English curriculum planning

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum.

We carry out the curriculum planning in English in three phases (long term, medium-term and short-term). The National Curriculum details what we teach in the long-term.

Our medium-term plans 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 and annotate as appropriate, 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 shows differentiation for each group of children.

There is a strong emphasis on teaching English skills in a cross curricular way. Where this is the case details will be included in creative curriculum plans. This helps to give purpose to children's learning and practice in applying their skills.

The subject leader undertakes periodic scrutiny of English plans.

The Foundation Stage

Our reception children receive English teaching in line with the EYFS. We give all children the opportunity to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and each other, to listen carefully and to practise and extend their communication skills. They have opportunity to explore words and texts, to enjoy them, to learn about them, and to use them in various situations. We begin our structured phonics teaching in YR through a daily phonics, in line with the recommendations of 'Letters and Sounds'.

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. They learn to understand mathematical vocabulary and learn to solve 'word-problems'. Children in KS1 have a weekly 'Challenge Maths' lesson that encourages children to work collaboratively to solve a variety of Mathematical challenges. 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 by encouraging children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues. Older children may also research and debate topical problems and events. 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 Computing

Children use computing in English 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.

English and inclusion

At our school 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 S.E.N. policy.

Children with S.E.N. may be working on PIVATs which may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to English.

Children who are particularly able are given opportunities to extend their learning; teachers differentiate to include 'extension' activities, groups are withdrawn for specific teaching in some year groups but challenge is prevalent in the daily teaching. Children identified as working at greater depth have been selected for author workshops to inspire and develop further.

We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning English. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom (a theatre trip, for example) we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Assessment for learning

Teachers assess children's work in English in three phases. The short-term assessments that teachers make as part of every lesson help them to adjust their daily plans. They match these short-term assessments closely to the teaching objectives. Written or verbal feedback is given to help guide children's progress. Older children are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own work.

Teachers use medium-term assessments and individual targets to measure progress against the Key Objectives which help them plan for the next unit of

work. Evidence to support assessment is kept for 3 children in each class - covering all abilities. Assessments are analysed at class and whole school level. The findings are used to inform planning, grouping of children and intervention strategies.

Teachers monitor 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, they are able to set targets for the next school year, and to summarise the progress of each child before reporting it to child's parents or carers. The next teacher then uses these long-term assessments as the planning basis for the new school year. These exist in class profiles.

These long-term assessments are based on end-of-year tests and teacher assessments. Children undertake the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and use optional NFER tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5. Teachers also make annual assessments of children's progress based on the level descriptors of the National Curriculum. Teacher assessment, supported by clear evidence, forms the basis of our assessment.

Teachers meet regularly to review individual examples of work against the national exemplification material. Work is displayed around the school featuring specific genres, to show progression of skills and understanding across the school.

Staff are keen to improve their subject knowledge and the subject leader takes an active role in disseminating best practice and making recommendations for staff development.

Resources

There is a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have a variety of age-appropriate apparatus. All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts. Children have access to the Internet through their classroom computers. Access to the Internet is also available in the Computing suite. There is a selection of additional materials stored centrally. Role play and artefacts are used to create awe and atmosphere and shared writing techniques using digital technology support and enhance the learning. The library contains a range of books to support children's individual research. Resources are reviewed and updated regularly. The Dewey-Decimal system is established.

Monitoring and review

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the subject leader, supported by the head teacher. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in

their teaching, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for English in the school. The leader may have specially-allocated management time in which to review samples of the children's work and to undertake lesson observations of English teaching across the school. The named governor responsible for literacy meets regularly with the subject leader in order to review progress.

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