



Fir Tree Junior School English Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the SEND Policy and Equal Opportunities policy

We believe that through speaking and listening, reading, writing and drama children develop their powers of imagination and invention; enabling them to express themselves clearly, creatively and imaginatively.

The study of English develops children's ability to, speak, listen, read and write for a wide range of purposes. The use of written and verbal language in the classroom enables children to communicate ideas, views and feelings creatively and imaginatively. As they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry, play scripts, non-fiction and media texts, children gain an understanding of how language works. Children are given opportunities through our cross-curricular approach to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different subjects and situations.

1. Our aims are:

- To enable children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their audience
- To encourage children to listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard, and respond appropriately
- 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 explore and evaluate their own and others' thoughts, feelings and beliefs, through a range of drama activities
- To develop confident, independent readers by encouraging the enjoyment of reading a wide range of texts
- To encourage children to become enthusiastic and reflective readers through immersion in challenging, texts and discussions
- To develop confident, independent writers by encouraging writing for a purpose
- To enable children to write with accuracy and meaning in narrative and nonfiction
- To increase the children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work.

2. Teaching and Learning – what this looks like at our school

We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English lessons. English is taught daily through a variety of engaging, purposeful approaches including; whole class, group work, investigations and individual tasks. Children have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts and use a range of resources to engage and support their learning. Children use digital literacy in English lessons where it enhances their learning, such as drafting their work and using multimedia to study how words and images are combined to convey meaning. The skills that children develop in English are linked and applied to every subject of our curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to investigate, communicate and express their learning and ideas in all subjects and all areas of school life.

There are children of differing confidence, experience and knowledge in all classes at Fir Tree. We recognise this and provide appropriate learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. During lessons, a range of strategies are used to ensure appropriately challenging learning takes place. Teaching assistants effectively support the learning of groups and individuals and enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

3. English Curriculum Planning

We use the National Curriculum as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programmes of study for English.

We carry out the curriculum planning in English in two phases: an overview across the year and detailed weekly plans. The National Curriculum details what should be taught across Key Stage 2 and sets out the key objectives into two stages: Years 3 and 4; Years 5 and 6.

Each Year's overview defines what genres they teach to ensure that there is an appropriate balance and distribution of text types across each term and year group. English is linked to the other subjects through the different projects of work giving the curriculum a cross curricular approach. The English subject leader is responsible for reviewing these plans.

Year groups complete a weekly plan for the teaching of English. This lists the specific learning objectives for each lesson and provides details of the content, structure and any differentiation within the lesson.

4. Handwriting and Spelling

Children are encouraged to write in the cursive style as soon as this matches their developmental needs. Teachers model this handwriting style in their work and this script is used for the display of work using IT. Depending on the needs of the children, handwriting practice takes place weekly across the school as part of our spelling teaching as we believe that this supports the 'hand-memory' of the spelling words.

Spelling is taught systematically through dedicated lessons during the week. However, spellings are also taught and discussed as they arise in specific lessons or when identified as a class need.

In Term 1 and 6 children are assessed using the National Curriculum spelling lists which are age appropriate. The results are recorded and used to track children's progress. The statutory list of words that the children should learn has been separated into year group lists. The children are given part of the list, termly, to learn at home and practice at school.

5. Reading Conversations

It is very important that children can talk about what they read and are enthused in their reading by adults within school. By allowing children to have meaningful conversations, we ensure that they are empowered to choose books that suit their level of reading. In order to assist children choose appropriate books, adults are committed to expanding their own knowledge of children's literature through staff meetings and discussion in order to give children the best advice possible when choosing a book. Readers make readers and therefore having staff who are enthusiastic about reading helps to get children excited about reading and allows conversations about reading to flow naturally.

6. Assessment and Recording

Assessment is an ongoing process. The daily assessments that teachers make as part of every lesson allows them to adjust their teaching and planning for subsequent lessons.

Formal assessments take place termly, using the agreed standards of expectations for each year group. This allows the teachers to track pupil's progress and summarise the progress of each child by the end of the year.

During the year, reading is assessed using a combination of formative and summative assessments, the latter being through a standardised reading test. The results are recorded and used to track the

children's progress across the year. Writing is assessed across a range of work covering the different text types.

Reading and writing is also assessed using progression grids for each year group within the school. Each grid has the appropriate aims and requirements for that year group that is taught within the school year. Children are assessed against these progression grids in each area of the English curriculum.

Teachers meet regularly, in year groups and whole school, to review pupils' work against the objectives and expectations for the year group. This ensures a consistency of standardised work across the school.

Spellings are assessed using the national curriculum spelling lists. The results are recorded and used to track progress. The statutory list of words are available on the school website.

7. Class Reads

Time for a shared class read has been included in the school timetable and teachers aim to end the day with a 15-minute session where the teacher reads aloud for the children's enjoyment. This time allows teachers to read with the class several books over the course of the year. These books may link to wider projects or may simply be chosen by the class themselves.

8. Buddy Reading

Children will each be paired up with a reading buddy from another class. On the first Friday of each month, reading buddies will come together in order to read and discuss books.

Children in Year 3 will have a reading buddy in Year 4.

Children in Year 5 will have a reading buddy in Year 6.

9. Resources

There are a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries and a range of age-appropriate literacy resources. All classrooms have a wide selection of fiction and non-fiction texts. Children have access to the Internet through their classroom computer and other technological equipment such as the school iPads. The library contains a range of books to support children's individual research as well as fiction and poetry. Year group guided reading texts are housed in the resources room and relevant questions to support the teaching of reading are kept on the shared drive on the server. Further resources are centrally stored in the staff room.

10. Visits

It is of significant importance that the children are able to visit and connect with the local library. Each year, the children will visit the library and be encouraged to get a membership and take out books on a regular basis. A visit to the library will show all children within the school the importance of such a local resource, and how the library can be used to full potential. A librarian will usually visit the school at least once over the course of the year to share a book or encourage children to take part in a library project. This is an important link to have with the local library.

11. Monitoring and Review

Monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the Headteacher and English subject leader through a range of the following: learning walks, pupil interviews, planning reviews, book scrutinies. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, keeping informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject across the school. The subject leader

gives the Headteacher an annual action plan which evaluates the strengths and actions for development in the subject, and indicates areas for future improvement. The leader has regular management time allocated in order to review and develop English teaching across the school. Governors are invited for an annual monitoring visit to observe the teaching and learning of English across the school, to conduct learning conversations with pupils and to interview the English subject leader. Governors produce a subsequent report which is shared with staff to identify successes and next steps.

12. Roles and Responsibilities

English Subject Leader

The subject leader is responsible for providing professional leadership and management of English. Standards are monitored to ensure high quality teaching, effective use of resources and improved standards of learning and achievement. This includes observation of lessons and scrutiny of the pupils' work, which is collected, analysed, evaluated and actions agreed for further development where relevant.

Class Teachers

It is the responsibility of each class teacher to ensure that their class is taught all areas of the English curriculum as set out in the national curriculum programme of study.

All staff

It is the responsibility of all staff to make themselves aware of legislation relating to English including copyright and data protection issues.

Governors

Governors monitor and evaluate the development of English to promote high quality teaching and learning in the school. This is in line with their responsibility to ensure the curriculum is meeting the requirements as set out in the national curriculum programmes of study.

Professional development

- Liaising with other English Subject Leaders within the partnership to share methods of good practice.
- Providing professional leadership and management for English. This includes feedback from courses attended.
- Organising whole school events to promote and enrich the English curriculum eg visits to the library; organising world book day events etc
- Managing and maintaining the resources for English by ensuring that they meet the needs of the curriculum; are available for use and are in working order.