



Southbourne Junior School

English Policy

Vision for English

English is at the heart of all learning; it enables us to communicate with others effectively for a variety of purposes. We believe that the ability to speak and listen well is essential for children to be able to articulate their feelings, opinions and ideas. Alongside this, valuing the thoughts and views of others and treating them with respect is a vital part of their lifelong learning.

It is our vision that all children will learn to become confident, enthusiastic writers who will develop a genuine love for writing. Children will use writing to express themselves, communicate with others and will write independently for a range of purposes. Children will reflect on their own as well as each others' writing and have an understanding that writing has a real purpose.

In reading we aim to engender a lifelong love of literature. We intend that our pupils will be both independent and reflective readers who can read fluently and for meaning from a variety of sources. We aim that children can use a variety of reading skills to enable them to access all other areas of learning.

Aims and Objectives

The study of English at Southbourne Junior School is intended to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of spoken and written language, and by developing a love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

Our aims are:

- To use discussion in order to learn; to be able to elaborate and explain clearly understanding and ideas
- To be competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate
- To read fluently with good understanding of the text
- To develop the habit of reading widely and often, both for pleasure and information
- To acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- To appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- To write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting language and style for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- To understand a range of spelling conventions and strategies to ensure that children become confident spellers

Planning

Specific English skills as outlined by the National Curriculum will be planned across the curriculum to allow for a wide range of opportunities to apply and demonstrate learning. The English lead is responsible for producing medium term plans for each year group, these plans outline specific knowledge and skills that need to be taught. Class teachers complete a learning journey plan for the teaching of English using the school's planning format. This will list specific learning objectives and a description of learning activities across the unit of work.

Speaking and Listening

Talk is used to underpin all learning and scaffold children's success. This is developed through a variety of collaborative activities and experiences such as hot-seating, interview in role, talk partners and group discussion and/or debate. Through discussion and debate pupils listen carefully, making contributions and asking questions that are responsive to each others' ideas and views. Children participate in performance through class assemblies, drama, sharing achievements with the class or whole school and presentations to their peers or other members of the school community. Children are constantly made aware of the features of standard English vocabulary and grammar.

Phonics

Phonics is making connections between the sounds (phonemes) of our spoken words and the letters (graphemes) that are used to write them down. Phonics is designed to help teach children to read and spell by teaching them the skills of blending (in reading) and segmenting (in spelling) using the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read unfamiliar words (decoding) and spell accurately.

At Southbourne Juniors we use the Little Wandle Rapid Catch Up programme as our government validated systematic synthetic phonics programme for the teaching of reading and writing, which mirrors Southbourne Infants who follow the Little Wandle Letters & Sounds Revised 2021 programme. Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised draws on the latest research into how children learn best; how to ensure learning stays in children's long term memory and how best to enable children to apply their learning to become highly competent, confident, enthused readers; reading for meaning and reading for pleasure.

The Little Wandle Catch Up programme is for those children who have not met age related expectations on entering Southbourne Juniors, taught at a faster pace to allow children to 'catch up'. After an initial assessment, targeted phonic support with clear progression is taught following the cycle of revisit and review, teach, practice and apply. Children's progress is monitored frequently and end of unit assessments are used to inform future teaching.

The children are taught to sound out and blend in order to read words, using fully decodable books, this provides children with the confidence to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. We teach spelling by ensuring the children understand the relationships between letters and the sounds they represent.

Phonetically irregular words (tricky words) are taught by identifying which part of the word is tricky. We also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum. By the end of the programme, children should be reading and spelling with increased accuracy, allowing them to fully access the curriculum being taught in class.

Reading

Reading is a daily part of our lives through all curriculum areas. Specific reading for development is through our school library system of the Accelerated Reading scheme. All pupils are tested on entry using the STAR reading quiz which provides a reading age, standardised score and a starting point of appropriate texts related to their sight vocabulary and knowledge of the words read. The Accelerated Reading scheme is based around quizzes that children will take once a book has been completed. These are designed to check the child's understanding of a book and help them pick another title that will be appropriate for their level. Teachers are able to view the types of books that children are reading and can make recommendations accordingly. We strongly encourage parents and carers to read daily with their child, even if it is just for a short period. We have a 'Reading Miles' system which records each time a child reads to an adult and 'theme' certificates are awarded accordingly. This changes annually to keep the momentum and interest of the children e.g. authors, mountains, space. A 'Word Millionaire' display board allows children to view how many words they have read with an incentive to expand their vocabulary and read more books, especially in upper key stage.

Reading is an integral part of our writing journeys. During the immersion section of the learning journey we use our family of reading characters to develop children's reading skills, enabling them to discuss a wide range of reading material at a deeper level. Guided reading is also closely linked to the writing learning journeys so that children can further experience the integral relationship between the two. Teachers focus on particular reading skills using our reading characters: Spotter, Clue Finder, Effect Analyser and Explorer and use a variety of differentiated quality texts.

As well as the teaching of reading, we hope to foster a love and enjoyment of books. When possible, authors and illustrators visit the school in order to celebrate books and encourage children to open their minds and inspire a love of the written word. Each classroom has a designated reading corner which reflects the importance of developing a lifelong love of reading through comfortable seating and a range of quality texts to suit a variety of readers. Throughout school, story time is implemented into the daily timetable to promote the love of reading. This is where teachers read regularly to the children modelling the use of intonation and expression to bring characters to life and to expose the children to a wide range of literature such as stories, poetry and information texts. This helps to extend children's vocabulary and comprehension, as well as support their writing.

Writing

In order to produce a quality piece of writing it is important that children are guided through a number of stages. Discussion is integral to the model and should be carried out at every stage.

Teaching Sequence for writing:

- Baseline assessment: Give children the opportunity to write in a particular genre or focus on a particular skill with no input. This will enable the teacher to assess clearly the writing ability of the child.
- Set the scene: Give a clear purpose to the writing and discuss the possible audience.
- Reading: Immerse children in high quality multimedia texts. Discuss explicit literacy features of a particular text. Study the vocabulary, grammar and enable children to consolidate their understanding and knowledge of the text. Set a range of comprehension style questions using the school reading characters.
- Stimulating ideas for writing: Provide opportunities for speaking and listening experiences including drama and group activities.

- **Modelling:** Demonstrate how a text might be planned, organised and written. Practice parts of the whole writing at word, sentence and text level. Teacher to demonstrate shared writing and children to magpie key words and phrases. Focus on specific writing skills that are to be included in the written piece. These are recorded and displayed on classroom working walls. Model examples of previous children's writing.
- **Scaffold:** Give children structures to support independent writing. Focus on key aspects of a particular genre or skills(at their level) so that class are aware of what to include in their writing. Rehearse sentence construction orally as this enables pupils to speak their writing before writing it.
- **Independent writing.**
- **Review and edit:** Children to assess either individually or peer assess their writing. Have they included the key written skills and features of a chosen genre. Children to edit and proofread their writing using a purple pen so that improvements can be clearly seen. This provides an opportunity for writer's voice when children are able to explain particular features and why they have included them. Compare the finished piece at the end of a unit with the initial baseline assessment. What key areas have the children developed? Has the writer engaged the reader?
- **Opportunity to publish:** children to have choice as to how they wish their work to be displayed.

Inclusion

We recognise that not all pupils will be able to access English learning in the same way, and that more able pupils may need further challenge. As a result, teachers adapt planning accordingly, and may look at alternative ways of recording learning. They may use adult or peer support, provide greater scaffolding, word banks as well as a range of IT programmes. Children who require additional support with reading are identified by class teachers. In addition to quality first teaching in class, they also receive targeted support through reading interventions.

Feedback and Marking

Marking should be undertaken in line with the school feedback and marking policy. It is expected that feedback in English will be focused on children's basic skills, learning objective or individual targets to enable the child to progress further with their learning. Detailed verbal or written feedback should be appropriate to the child's level of understanding and should provide useful advice on how to improve their learning. After receiving feedback in their books, children should have the opportunity to respond and edit their writing as part of their personalised learning.

Assessment

Children will undertake a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in their English work. The KPI objectives in both reading and writing meet the National Curriculum expectations for each year group. KPIs are assessed from the point of learning. This enables the teacher to assess as to whether a particular skill has been embedded in the child's learning. Each child's attainment is recorded against the KPI and evidence is kept in a class assessment folder. This folder is passed on at the end of the year for good transition and indication of a child's learning journey. KPIs enable the teacher to assess accurately as to whether a child has met end of year expectations.

Resources

A wide range of resources to support English learning are available in school, including dictionaries, thesaurus, guided reading and individual reading texts. Children have access to the internet through class laptops and tablets. Children have regular opportunities to visit the school and class library. Specific resources to support the learning of EAL and SEN children are also available centrally in school, as well as specific SEN scheme books being integrated into the library for inclusive provision.

Role of the teacher

Teachers are responsible for the learning and progress in English for all the children in their class, as well as planning and resourcing appropriately differentiated learning opportunities. Each classroom will have a working wall that highlights the reading and writing learning journey and is a key part of the process.

Role of the subject leader

The subject leader is expected to ensure that statutory requirements are being fulfilled within the school, that staff have the requisite knowledge and skills and to ensure a high standard of English. Monitoring of the standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the subject leader. Book and planning scrutinies and lesson observations are a key part of this process. Moderation of both reading and writing takes place on a termly basis, enabling all teachers to experience and understand the requirements of each year group expectations.

Reviewed: Spring 2023