



English Policy

Rationale

The study of English develops children's abilities to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes by using language to learn and communicate ideas, views and feelings. It enables children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama - as well as non-fiction. 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 writing across a range of different situations.

The aims of English are:

- To enable children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners.
- To encourage children to listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard.
- To enable children to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstance and demands.
- To develop children's abilities to reflect on their own and others' contributions and the language used.
- To enable children to evaluate their own and others' contributions through a range of drama/role play activities.
- To develop confident, independent readers through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text level knowledge.
- To encourage children to become enthusiastic and reflective readers through contact with challenging and lengthy texts.
- To help children enjoy writing and recognise its value.
- To enable children to write with accuracy and meaning in narrative and non-fiction.
- To increase the children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work.

Modelling Reading and Writing

It is really important for the teacher to model reading and writing during the lesson. Shared reading and structured text, sentence and word-level work is incorporated within the teaching of English. Sentence level activities (predominantly punctuation and grammar) need to be embedded daily if children are expected to produce good quality writing. Therefore, spelling and phonics lessons occur throughout the school from 9:10 to 9:30. This is only achievable if it is modelled and given high priority. Copies of the statutory requirements for each year group on the teaching of Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling and Handwriting have been distributed to all staff and are accessible on the staff resource area.

Reading

As part of the statutory requirement for the teaching of reading, teachers at Monksdown Primary School are committed to the reading development of all our pupils.

They understand and recognise the difference between learning to read and reading to learn. Teachers will initiate and provide reading experiences across the curriculum to include the basic requirements of decoding and retrieval skills to the interpretation, organisation and choice of language features of texts. They will ensure that pupils engage in discussion about texts to encourage their understanding about the main ideas, themes and differing viewpoints including their own, others', characters and that of the author. In addition to this and in keeping with National directives, teachers will continue to promote and encourage oral retelling and performance of key stories, poems and rhymes.

Our main method for the teaching reading is through a Shared, Guided, Independent and Home reading. The school is extremely well resourced using a wide range of narratives, non-fiction, poetry and plays.

Approaches to reading

When engaging children in shared reading, teachers need to be clear which aspect of reading they are addressing. They will need to consider carefully the purpose of each session, the relevant learning objectives and the opportunities of the selected texts provided to support this work. Discussion of the text also offers opportunities to underpin other aspects of the curriculum such as personal, social and emotional development.

In order to reinforce decoding in reading, teachers should adhere to Letters and Sounds already taught so that children experience how to apply their knowledge in the context of reading texts. Words, phrases and/or even whole sentences can be used to demonstrate this skill, as well as exploiting opportunities in the environment such as words in labels, captions and displays.

Developing Comprehension

One dedicated Guided Reading lesson should be with an adult in order to challenge the pupils by using ambitious age appropriate texts. Children should be encouraged to read for a deeper meaning (deductive and inferential). They should be taught to consider plot, character, motive and features of language such as vocabulary, figurative language and sequence. Teachers will model and encourage children to answer longer questions by justifying answers. This concept can be achieved daily in all lessons through open-ended questioning techniques. Encouraging children to explain and justify their opinions further develops speaking and listening skills, whilst raising confidence and self-esteem.

Guided Reading

'The goal of guided reading is to enable learners to become independent, able to read, understand and appreciate texts on their own without the teacher's help.'

Guided reading at Monksdown is tailored to the specific needs and ability of a group of individuals. In the session, the teacher guides the children through a text, prompting them to apply the knowledge and skills they have learned elsewhere in the reading curriculum. The aim is to encourage and extend independent reading skills on new and increasingly challenging texts.

Children gain most from guided reading when they have already developed a sound understanding about how texts work and when they have considerable experience of listening to and talking about texts. Guided reading sessions offer a good opportunity for children to practise their developing phonic knowledge skills in texts that are carefully chosen to match their abilities. Where the focus is on phonic skills, the practitioner's role is to support and prompt children to decode, recognise and say words as they read.

Children will have at least one guided reading session a week with an adult. The purpose of the session will be tailored to the children's needs and the requirements of the National Curriculum.

Early on, new readers will be focused on the application of phonic skills and word recognition, but as they grow in confidence and skill, the emphasis will shift to comprehension. The teacher makes an important decision at the planning stage about the focus of the session, and this decision is largely determined by close observation of what the children know, understand and can do.

Delivery of Teaching of Guided Reading

Each child will be regularly assessed during Guided Reading sessions to determine their reading ability and strategies will be used to further their progress. Each week children must have one taught guided reading session. The other reading activities may include follow up comprehension tasks, group read with a TA and opportunities to develop their reading and writing skills through text related activities.

Independent reading

At Monksdown, teachers recognise the value of all forms of reading.

- Children will be encouraged to read daily for pleasure and enjoyment
- Have the opportunity to return to familiar texts that they have read during shared reading or guided reading sessions
- Can pursue favourite authors or types of books
- Can learn to select texts that match their interests and ability
- Be encouraged to: look, think and predict before reading
- Be encouraged to: read on and back, predict, clarify, decode unknown words, make mental pictures and use all cueing systems during reading
- Reflect on, share and respond to text either by talking about it or engaging in a written activity.

Reading for Pleasure

The importance of developing a love of literature is integral to the curriculum. All teachers at Monksdown have awareness and knowledge of the impact of enjoyment on pupils' reading attitudes and attainment. All classes have their own attractive Reading Area which is well stocked with books. Activities are planned throughout the school year to promote reading for pleasure, for example, World Book Day, EYFS Play and Stay, school library open every afternoon after school, Scholastic book sales etc.

Home Reading

Children will be provided with an appropriate home reading book and a reading diary so that children's reading can be monitored in school and at home. Children must have their reading diary signed at least three times per week by their parents/carers and weekly by the teacher or TA. It is the class teacher's responsibility to monitor that children are reading regularly at home and to liaise with parents/carers when this is not happening.

In Early Years

Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children have access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest. Children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop communication skills, confidence and good speaking and listening skills in a range of situations. Pupils are at the very early stages of reading development and as such they will hear many nursery rhymes, stories and poems and will be immersed in good modelled reading behaviour by the Early Years Practitioners.

Key Stage 1

In KS1 pupils are emergent and developing readers and will mainly focus on decoding using phonic strategies as required by the 2014 curriculum, but will also be taught what the words they are decoding mean and how they contribute to the meaning of the whole text. Those pupils who experience difficulties will continue development through Intervention and SEND support where appropriate.

Key Stage 2

In KS2 most pupils become more fluent and independent readers, decoding will become a more automatic process. Those pupils still experiencing difficulties will continue development through the 'Letters and Sounds' systematic, synthetic phonics programme and through other intervention programmes where appropriate. Pupils will use their ongoing learning of spelling patterns and grammatical knowledge to read unfamiliar words with increasing accuracy. They will read different texts for different purposes and begin to develop higher order reading skills in order to engage fully and respond effectively to texts. They will learn about inferential thinking, different viewpoints, in a text including their own opinions. The pupils will give consideration to the writer's craft.

Spelling

At Monksdown Primary School we recognise the importance of spelling. We aim for our pupils to become fluent and effective writers; accurate spelling is a means to that end. The key to supporting our pupils to become confident spellers lies in teaching the strategies, rules and conventions systematically and explicitly, and by helping pupils recognise which strategies they can use to improve their own spelling. The systematic teaching of phonics including a balanced spelling programme is vital.

In line with spelling directives from the 2014 curriculum, a balanced programme of learning would include five main components:

- understanding the principles underpinning word construction (phonemic, morphemic and etymological);
- recognising how (and how far) these principles apply to each word, in order to learn to spell words;
- practising and assessing spelling;
- applying spelling strategies and proof reading;
- building pupils' self-images as spellers.

Teaching and Learning

Children will begin learning phonics in Nursery using the Letters and Sounds scheme. Alongside this, children will learn a number of high frequency words throughout the EYFS. Children are given the high frequency words to learn at home over the course of the year. This continues in Year 1 and 2 using the KS1 Phonics document.

The teaching of phonics plays a vital role in children's ability to spell so great emphasis is placed on the teaching of phonics. Phonics sessions take place daily for 20 minutes and are tailored to the children's needs and abilities.

Teaching of phonics will continue in KS2 then children move onto learning spelling patterns and rules.

Spellings may also be taken from the key technical vocabulary for Mathematics, Science and other curriculum subjects. Learning these key words (and their meaning) supports learning across the curriculum.

It is important that spelling errors within the children's writing are identified and corrected. Appropriate spelling mistakes are identified as part of teacher's marking and practised when children review their work. (See Marking Policy). Any spellings that are frequently misspelt must be the focus of attention so that the correct spelling is learned. It is important that we do not discourage children from trying to use more adventurous vocabulary by over correcting spellings. All children are provided with spelling journals which help to support the children with their own writing.

Home Learning

Children need regular spelling practise at home as well as at school. Spelling practice is included in Home Learning activities.

In Early Years and Key Stage 1, children are given phonemes, Tricky and High Frequency words and word games to practise and play games with at home. In the rest of the school children are also given spellings to take home and practise. These words may be topic vocabulary, words with spelling patterns, or words that are frequently misspelt in children's writing. Spelling strategies and rules are taught prior to spelling lists being sent home to learn.

Assessment

Assessment of pupil progress is on-going and forms part of the class teacher's formative assessment. In addition to this, pupils are tracked on our Phonics tracking sheets. At the end of Year 1 all children take the Phonics Screening Check as part of the government statutory requirements to track phonological development. Formal summative assessments, SATS, are carried out at the end of each Key Stage. Spelling tests are carried out half termly in years 1-6 and the spelling rules that pupils have difficulty with will inform future planning. NFER testing in Reading, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation occurs at the end of every term. A question level analysis is carried out at the end of Summer 2.

Moderation

Children's work is moderated both internally and externally in order to ensure assessments are rigorous and consistent.

Writing

Writing at Monksdown is taught and celebrated in a range of ways. It is taught daily across the school and through a range of subjects. We aim, wherever possible, to create cross-curricular writing opportunities, as we believe that in order for children to see themselves as successful writers they need to be involved in writing for a purpose. Our writing sessions are planned and delivered using the Talk 4 Writing approach devised by Pie Corbett. NFER Reading, Spelling and Grammar tests occur termly in years 1-5. A question level analysis is completed at the end of summer 2 to inform areas for school development.

We follow the National Curriculum (2014) which ensures that a range of genres are covered, including narrative (e.g. extended stories, stories by the same author, myths and legends, adventure stories and traditional stories), non-fiction (e.g. persuasive texts, nonchronological reports, information texts, recounts, reports and letters) and poetry (e.g. rhyme, nonsense rhymes, shape poems, acrostic and descriptive poetry). Genres are taught and learnt considering the purpose, form and audience. From years 1-6 all pupils will learn the same genres over a two year cycle. This approach is to embed learning year on year. Staff use a range of documents to ensure appropriate progression in skills are made.

Throughout each unit, the links between reading and writing are made explicit – we read as writers and we write as readers. The progress throughout each unit of work shows the transition between reading as writers (focusing on structure, characterisation, and language features etc...) to writing as readers (word play, describing, composition, planning, editing, revising etc...).

Integral to the process of writing is speaking and listening. 'Talk 4 Writing' is essential to enable children to articulate their thoughts, retell stories, orally create new stories and orally rehearse what they are going to write and re-read what they have written. This underpins the writing process.

Good writers:

- enjoy writing and find the process creative, enriching and fulfilling;
- read widely, recognise good writing, and understand what makes it good;
- are aware of the key features of different genres and text types;
- learn about the skills of writing from their reading and draw (consciously or unconsciously) upon its models in their own work
- have 'something to say' (a purpose) and know how to say it for the specific audience;
- know how to develop their ideas;
- know how to plan and prepare for writing;
- make informed choices about what they are writing, as they write (for example, about vocabulary, grammar, text structure, etc.);
- understand how to reflect upon, refine and improve their own work; can respond to the constructive criticism of others.

Writing is taught in a range of ways:

Modelling Writing

The teacher talks aloud the thought processes as a writer. They model strategies in front of the children, communicating the strategies being used. Teachers may model writing skills such as punctuation, rehearsal, proof reading, drafting, editing, word selection, sentence construction and paraphrasing.

Shared Writing

This is a collaborative approach in which the pupils contribute their ideas and thoughts for the teacher to write. The teacher models and teaches specific writing skills and there is the opportunity for discussion to choose the most effective or suitable ideas.

Guided Writing

Pupils are grouped by writing ability. The teacher or other adult works with the group on an appropriate task according to that group's needs and targets. This will focus on a particular aspect of the writing process rather than writing a complete piece.

Independent Writing

Children are given opportunities to apply their understanding of the text type in their own writing. They are encouraged to plan, draft, write, edit and assess their work, applying the skills they have learnt throughout the unit of work on that particular genre.

The Teaching and Learning of Writing

In the early years emergent writing is encouraged through the use of different writing materials, including felt tipped pens, crayons, chalk, sand, magnetic letters, big brushes, water, paint and computers, as well as writing in all areas of learning, such as postcards, menus, invitations, labels etc... Alongside this, children take part in Funky Finger activities to encourage and develop gross and fine motor skills necessary to write in a legible script. Daily phonics lessons build their phonic and spelling knowledge to enable them to sound out words and spell high frequency words correctly.

As children progress throughout the school, they are given many opportunities to write independently and to apply the skills they have learnt and practised in shared and guided writing. Wherever possible, writing is made meaningful by planning for specific purposes or in response to a particular experience.

Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation is planned and taught as an integral part of each unit of work. The objectives are carefully matched to the unit of work to enable them to be taught and learnt within a meaningful context.

Each year group is provided with a 'Progression in Skills' document, possible Writing Toolkits and core vocabulary & language for each Key Phase. which gives detailed information about the genres and statutory requirements that each year group should be following. The documents show progression with genres across the year groups. Teachers will use the resources to plan daily English lessons that are differentiated and tailored to a classes needs.

Handwriting- See Handwriting Policy

This is a key area of focus embedded within the curriculum, which has specific statutory teaching requirements for each year group. Handwriting is a means of expressing language. It is a physical way of expressing thoughts and ideas and a means of communicating with others.

Neat writing is promoted throughout the school. Teachers and Teaching Assistants set high standards for handwriting and presentation at all times. The journey to neat cursive handwriting begins in KS1

where children are taught to form letters using the entry and exit flicks. This is then practised and developed through every year group.

Grammar and Punctuation

There is a strong focus on SPaG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar) within the curriculum. Teachers will therefore devote time and attention regularly. SPaG is taught throughout lessons and the skills are then embedded throughout the curriculum. SPaG objectives for KS1 and KS2 are included in the CGP books and spelling toolkits. At the end of KS1 and KS2, the children will take their SATs which will include a SPaG test. Children in Years 3-5 will take NFER SPaG tests terms.

English across the whole Curriculum

Teachers are encouraged to draw on cross-curricular links to ensure that learning is meaningful and fun. The strategies of English permeate across the whole curriculum. Children should be given the opportunity to write about real experiences wherever possible.

Teaching English to children with special needs

English is planned to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Teachers provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of all children. Work in English takes into account the targets set for individual children in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

Teachers provide help with communication and literacy by:

- Ensuring texts are matched to the needs and ability of the children.
- Daily support from Teaching Assistants and Teachers who will deliver sessions to support these targets.
- Reviews of progress, made by school SENDCO, class teacher and teaching assistant, to make sure that targets are being met.
- Using visual and written materials in different formats.
- Engaging children with computers, other technological aids and audio materials;

Children who have English as an additional language will be supported in a variety of ways to ensure that they can access the English curriculum and develop a full range of language skills. This support will include:

- Assessment and monitoring of pupil progress by the class teacher, the EAL teacher and the SENDCO
- Develop opportunities for the children to hear stories in their own language.
- Additional support from our EAL teacher

In addition, children recognised as 'Gifted and Talented' are given extension opportunities that challenge and support their flair for writing.

Teaching Assistant Support

It is vital that Teaching Assistants have support and clear guidance in relation to supporting groups with word and sentence level work. Support should be given with phonic work for younger children and this should be carried out daily.

It is important for each teacher to share the group reading and writing targets with the Teaching Assistants and provide activities that support learning in these areas. Teaching Assistants should have access to copies of IEP's so that targets are worked upon regularly in consultation with the class teacher. It is the responsibility of each class teacher to provide resources/activities that match the ability of such children. Teaching Assistants have been trained to deliver various intervention strategies.

Monitoring and Review

The policy will be reviewed and evaluated by the coordinators to ensure policies are up dated with the latest initiatives. Evaluation will include: effectiveness, ease of implementation, identifying any amendments needed and additions required to the policy as a result of legislation changes.

Teachers should ensure that they are confident with the subject matter and inform the English Coordinators of their training and support needs. The English Coordinators should ensure that they are well-informed of current ideas and developments in Literacy by attending appropriate courses and keeping up to date with new initiatives. They should disseminate gathered information to colleagues.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

All teaching and non-teaching staff at Monksdown Primary School are responsible for ensuring that every pupil, regardless of gender, race, culture, background and ability have the opportunity to experience education at an appropriate and challenging level. To ensure that pupils experience high standards of success, English needs to be taught with regards to pupil's abilities to ensure progress. We aim to identify and minimise barriers to learning and take account of gender, ability, disability, social, cultural, and linguistic background when planning lessons. Provision is made to enable all pupils to participate effectively in curriculum and assessment activities. A wide range of gender specific and cultural images that challenge stereotypes will be used.

This policy ensures that certain aspects of English are not seen as more appropriate for boys or girls. Individual teachers consider carefully the groupings they have. These might depend on the experiences the children have had in their home environments.

Accessibility and Teaching English to pupils with Special Educational Needs

We teach English to all pupils, whatever their ability, in accordance with the information set out in our school curriculum overviews, providing a broad and balanced curriculum to all. Teachers provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children of all capabilities, setting and reviewing appropriate targets.

Subject Leadership

The Subject Leader will:

- Ensure that the subject is regularly discussed, reviewed and monitored within the school.
- Keep resources up-to-date and relevant, particularly in preparation for each unit of work.
- Promote good subject practice throughout the school.
- Set a good example of subject practice.
- Support long term planning for the whole school.
- Inspire learning
- Provide support and guidance to colleagues on teaching the units of work
- Purchase and organise resources

- Maintain equipment and make them easily accessible for teachers
- Attend courses for CPD and report back to staff

Policy Review

This policy was last reviewed: Spring 2018

Date of next review: Spring 2020

Linked Policies to supplement this English Policy:

Handwriting Policy

Marking Policy and Key

Spelling Policy

EYFS Policy