

‘Without language, one cannot talk to people and understand them; one cannot share their hopes and aspirations, grasp their history, appreciate their poetry or savour their songs.’

Nelson Mandela

Rationale

This policy outlines the teaching, organisation and management of the English taught and learnt at Asfordby Hill Primary School. The school’s policy for English is based on the documents ‘2014 National Curriculum’, ‘Getting it Right EYFS- The Review of the Evidence’ and EYFS Reforms Consultation 2020.

English sits at the heart of our curriculum – it is through language, story and text that children learn to form concepts, connect ideas and express themselves. Through literacy, in all its forms, children learn to both make sense of the world and shape their place within it.

Across both writing and reading, we place a heavy emphasis on developing a child’s vocabulary.

“Vocabulary development is rocket science. Take children’s thinking to infinity and beyond. Travel to real environments rich in word opportunities. Also go ‘out of this world’ to imagined places. So together you reach for the stars with words. Nurturing a language journey that blasts off!” Jane Considine, The Write Stuff.

By the time children leave Asfordby Hill in Year 6, the limited word hoard they arrived with in Reception will have expanded enormously, giving them the language, they need to understand sophisticated texts and express themselves in a wide range of contexts.

“We know from the growing body of research that vocabulary at the age of 5 is one of the strongest predictors of outcomes for children and these benefits continue into adult life.”
EYFS Reforms Consultation 2020

This policy has been written as a result of extensive staff discussion and has the full agreement of the Governing Body. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all the teaching staff.

Intent

In English, we foresee that every child leaves Asfordby Hill Primary School with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. To achieve this, we aim for all our children to acquire the following:

- 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.

Implementation

At Asfordby Hill Primary School, based on the National Curriculum for 5 - 11 year olds, English is developed through four key areas:

- Spoken Language
- Reading – Word Reading & Comprehension
- Writing – Transcription & Composition
- Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar & Punctuation

It is important to note that each is closely interrelated with the next, so it becomes increasingly difficult to consider one without the other(s).

Writing

In all year groups, we teach writing through high-quality texts – ranging from picture books to Shakespeare, immersive real-life experiences, such as school trips, or a combination of both.

Over their time at the school, children will write a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts, including recounts, news reports, explanation texts, poems, plays and stories of all kinds. We use a variety of stimulæ to engage the imagination. These could include drama, role-play, film, story telling, real-life experiences, outdoor learning and discussion to engage the imagination, before moving on to vocabulary exploration, sentence craft and creative writing.

Kommentar [PM1]: a variety of stimulæ to engage the imagination. These could include drama, role-play, film, story telling ...

Throughout the Early Years and Key Stage 1 children are taught the key principles of writing in order to lay a solid foundation for developing their skills later on. An emphasis is placed on developing clear handwriting with 'finger spaces' between in each word. Children are taught to apply their knowledge of phonics to help them spell accurately, and to structure their work, depending on the genre.

Our curriculum teaches the children to add variation and description to their work by developing their vocabulary, including the use of interesting adjectives and adverbs and developing sentence structure using conjunctions and sentence openers. By the end of Key Stage 1 children have been taught the fundamentals of punctuation and grammar- see AHPS Grammar Progression Map. This structural and technical knowledge is fostered alongside developing a love for writing as a lifelong means for communication and expressing oneself. This process continues into Key Stage 2, by which time children have mastered simple sentence structure enabling them to develop their writing style.

As they progress towards Year 6, children are taught to write for a range of purposes – to entertain, inform, explain, persuade and discuss – using explicit sentence models and ambitious vocabulary. They then learn to shape these sentences into coherent paragraphs before planning and creating their own original works of fiction and non-fiction. All children also apply their writing skills across the curriculum: writing up experiments in Science, recounting events in History and describing processes in Geography, for example.

Reading

First and foremost, we want all children at Asfordby Hill to develop a life-long love of reading. As a result, we approach the teaching of reading from all angles, so as to miss no opportunity to spark a child's interest.

Daily, whole class reading lessons focus on the skills of comprehension, first through unpicking vocabulary, then moving on to unlocking the meaning of whole texts and critical appreciation. This is taught through AHPS's Rainbow Reading sessions. Alongside this within a planned English unit there will opportunities for modelled, paired and independent work that includes: book talk opportunities, story mapping, boxing up and comprehension questioning.

Teachers read a huge variety of written material regularly with the children: fiction and non-fiction, stories, reports, diaries and poems. Each year group has access to a 'Class Book Library' containing challenging and interesting novels for teachers to read to their classes,

exposing children to language and classic stories which they may find too challenging to read independently.

We have a home-school reading system (up to Year 6), which requests that children read a book at the appropriate level for them, for at least ten minutes each day. In EYFS and the transition into Year 1, children follow the Bug Club Reading Scheme which is closely linked to their phonics phase, giving them a thorough grounding in the fundamentals. Moving through Key Stage One and Two, children follow 'book bandings' ensuring they are making progress.

We have the local library bus, where children go once a fortnight to take out books to share in their classrooms.

Each month we launch our Reading Raffle. We encourage children to read a range of texts in return for a raffle ticket, then at the end of each month a random ticket is selected and the lucky winner can choose a book of their choice to keep. Alongside this, we have regular author visits, books fairs and World Book Day – one of the highlights of the year!

Phonics

Phonics is a way of teaching children how to read and write by developing their phonemic awareness—the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate different sounds used in the English language. Children learn the correspondence between these sounds and the spelling patterns (graphemes) that represent them. At Asfordby Hill, we place a strong emphasis on the teaching of phonics in the early years of reading and writing in order to give all children a solid foundation for learning. Because not all words in the English language comply to the rules of phonics, we also teach so-called 'tricky words' by repetition and retrieval.

The Teaching of Phonics

Phonics lessons at Asfordby Hill are taught daily from Reception through to the end of Year 2. The sessions are short, engaging and memorable with an emphasis placed on revising a previously learned letter-sound correspondence, learning a new one, practicing this, and applying it to sentence level work.

The teaching of phonics begins in Reception using the 'Jolly Phonics' scheme. Sounds are introduced at a rate of one a day throughout the Autumn and Spring term. Children consolidate these sounds in the Summer term whilst learning to blend the sounds together to read and write words. Towards the end of EYFS, children are introduced to the Bug Club

Kommentar [PM2]: What should happen in Year 3?

Phonics Scheme. In Years 1 and 2, the children follow the Bug Club Phonics Scheme, learning alternative spellings of the previously learned sounds and refining their knowledge to become more fluid readers and more accurate spellers.

In Year 3, those children who have been tracked through teacher assessments and phonics screenings requiring further phonics teaching will have specific phonics interventions to meet their needs.

The Phonics Screening Check

During the Summer term in Year 1, children nationwide are tested on their phonic knowledge. This test helps us to identify children who have gaps in their phonic knowledge and may need further support in Year 2. The test is low-key and we endeavour to make it stress-free for the children. Essentially, the children are asked to read 40 words from a list, using their phonics to 'sound out' the word and then blend it if they need to. Parents are informed as to whether their child has achieved the national expectation within the child's end-of-year report.

Handwriting, Spelling and Grammar

We use cursive writing for all three of these areas.

Handwriting is taught weekly from Reception to Year 6, beginning with mark making and patterns in Early Years all the way up to legible, joined handwriting in Year 6.

Spelling is taught from Year 1 – 6 every week, following the Nonsense Spelling Scheme, which builds on the National Curriculum's statutory word lists. Spellings are sent home as part of homework and children are tested each week.

In Years 5 and 6, grammar becomes an explicit focus and is taught weekly. In the years prior to 5, grammar is interwoven in English lessons.

At Asfordby Hill, our pupils are provided with a variety of opportunities to develop and extend their English skills in a variety of classroom contexts and situations:

- Small group work
- Targeted interventions
- Whole class quality first teaching

Below, we will further outline how we implement our curriculum intentions and how we help to create literate citizens of the future.

Accurate and effective use of assessment

Lessons will be planned based on accurate assessment from the previous lessons. Teachers will model and scaffold excellent thinking, using quality texts to consolidate conceptual understanding and to advance children's attainment within and across objectives. All assessment is used to inform teaching and learning. We identify children's understanding and then swiftly focus interventions to overcome misconceptions. At Asfordby Hill, we assess children in four main ways:

- Assessment for learning: continuous (effective questioning, clear learning objectives, the use of success criteria and effective marking/ feedback and response to teaching)
- Termly assessment pupil progress (PIRA, Year Group Writing TAFs, Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar Tests)
- End of Key Stage transitional assessments: annually
 - Towards the end of the school year, we assess and review pupils' overall progress and attainment by drawing upon National Curriculum objectives.

Teaching using a Metacognitive Approach

Effective teaching intertwines cognition, metacognition and self-regulated learning. In English, we ensure that all three of these aspects are developed by our learners within our English curriculum. Not only will our children be extremely competent readers, but they will be flexible with their writing across different genres. At the heart of this is working memory. In order to be able to apply knowledge, our children need to acquire and then remember facts. Our progressive curriculum enables our children to revise and revisit learning regularly in order to enable them to transfer knowledge to their long-term memory. Our children will be able to critically analyse the approach they have taken and reflect upon ways they can improve.

Pre-teaching/ Provision for SEN and High Attaining Pupils

Pre-teaching is utilised when children are currently working below the lesson objective's requirements -this will provide them with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed. However, when this is not possible, carefully tailored English interventions are planned to enable the child to fill in the gaps in their knowledge so they can thrive in the future. If children have been assessed to be exceeding the lesson objectives, work and support is tailored appropriately to stretch and challenge. We are equipping children with the skills to become flexible, efficient and accurate learners who can apply their learning in a variety of contexts. In order to reach Greater Depth, they will have to demonstrate consistency the greater depths strands of the TAFs in writing across genres and demonstrate fluency and all comprehension skills within reading.

Impact

The majority of children at Asfordby Hill leave us as highly skilled literate children . Our end of Key Stage outcomes emphasises and showcase the effectiveness of the teaching and learning displayed in our classrooms.

Kommentar [PM3]: literate children

The most recent end of KS2 assessments (2018/19) show the impact of our teaching and learning: **96%** of pupils achieved the Expected Standard in writing with **26%** of those achieving the Greater Depth Standard. Whilst, **83%** of pupils achieved the Expected Standard in reading with **35%** of those achieving the Greater Depth Standard.

Kommentar [PM4]: 26%

Kommentar [PM5]: 83%

Kommentar [PM6]: 35%

The impact of our implemented curriculum has provided the following for our children:

- A culture of hard work and dedication to the acquisition of English skills.
- A lifelong love of reading and writing.
- English teaching that provides challenge yet enables all children to succeed.
- A developed growth mindset and an understanding of who they are as learners.
- The freedom to write and read with confidence and competence
- The flexibility to draw upon a wide repertoire of knowledge and skills
- The ability to articulate their ideas with confidence
- An inquisitive mind