



English Policy

Rationale

At Cobham Primary School we believe that literature, language and communication are key life skills. Through the English curriculum we aim to help children develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively with the world at large, through spoken and written language. We provide children with a rich variety of both written, visual texts and film of varying genres to help children to enjoy and appreciate literature and its rich variety.

We adhere to:

National Curriculum England: English Programme of Study Key Stage 1 and 2

July 2014

Aims

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the written and spoken word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- 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.

The English Curriculum states:

Teachers should develop pupils' reading and writing in all subjects to support their acquisition of knowledge. Pupils should be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose (both fiction and non-fiction) and be encouraged to read for pleasure. Schools should do everything to promote wider reading. They should provide library facilities and set ambitious expectations for reading at home. Pupils should develop the stamina and skills to write at length, with accurate spelling and punctuation. They should be taught the correct use of grammar. They should build on what they have been taught to expand the range of their writing and the variety of the grammar they use. The writing they do should include narratives, explanations, descriptions, comparisons, summaries and evaluations: such writing supports them in rehearsing, understanding and consolidating what they have heard or read.

School Aims and Objectives:

As a school we aim:

- To provide a rich and stimulating language environment, where spoken language, reading and writing are integrated and incorporate the ethos behind the school's TRUST values;
- To provide an environment where pupils are encouraged to construct and convey meaning, both in speech and writing, of factual, imaginary and personal experiences;
- To provide opportunities for pupils to become confident, competent and expressive users of the language with a developing knowledge of how it works;
- To provide opportunities for pupils to be reflective users of language, able to analyse and evaluate its main features;
- To foster an enthusiasm for and love of reading for life;
- To encourage pupils to have fluent and legible handwriting;
- To provide opportunities for pupils to communicate ideas through the use of ICT;
- To provide opportunities for role play and drama.

We expect that pupils will:

- Be able to participate in a conversation, listening to others, responding appropriately and take turns to speak;
- Develop the confidence and ability to speak appropriately and perform in front of varying sizes of audience;
- Be able to sustain concentration in a range of listening situations;
- Know, understand and be able to write in a range of genres in fiction and poetry, and understand and be familiar with some of the ways in which narratives are structured through basic literary ideas of setting, character and plot;
- Know, understand and be able to write in a range of non-fiction genres and structure text in a style suited to its purpose;
- Use grammar and punctuation accurately;
- Have an interest in words and their meanings and a growing vocabulary;
- Plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing;
- Understand the phonic system and spelling conventions and use them to read and spell accurately;

- Be able to orchestrate a full range of reading cues (phonic, graphic, syntactic, contextual) to monitor their reading and correct their own mistakes;
- Have a suitable technical vocabulary through which to understand and discuss their reading and writing;
- Express opinions, articulate feelings and formulate responses to a range of texts;
- Be interested in books, read for enjoyment and evaluate and justify their preferences;
- Be able to work confidently and increasingly independently in all areas.

Areas of the English Curriculum

There are four areas that make up the English curriculum and are taught at Cobham Primary:

- 1) Spoken Language
- 2) Reading
- 3) Writing
- 4) Spelling and Grammar

Spoken Language

The English Curriculum states:

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.

At Cobham pupils are given opportunities to speak individually, in pairs, small groups and to a large group perhaps during assemblies or to the whole class in front of their peers. This is encouraged throughout the school from Reception to Year 6. Children share their news, feed back information from reading and research and give opinions in lessons across the curriculum.

Through the same range of activities, children are encouraged to listen to others, respect turn taking within conversations and ask appropriate questions. This is an important aspect of the new curriculum in English and all subjects taught.

Role play and drama activities are used in English lessons to encourage imagination and plot development. Pupils will be encouraged to use a range of dramatic forms to express feelings and ideas both verbally and non-verbally. Pupils will be encouraged to appreciate drama, both as participants and observers.

Pupils will be involved in larger presentations and performances throughout the year.

We appreciate that for children both with and without a designated special educational need (SEN) spoken language may be an area of difficulty and therefore we encourage alternative recording and presenting methods to enable all children to actively participate

and have a voice. This may include small group interventions outside of English lessons which focus on, support and encourage children to speak coherently and actively listen such as Lego Play Therapy.

Reading

Reading

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

- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading).

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

Skilled word reading 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. This is why phonics should be emphasised in the early teaching of reading to beginners (i.e. unskilled readers) when they start school.

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 in which they live, 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.

We believe reading is fundamental to all areas of the curriculum as it is the primary means of accessing learning.

Consequently, children at Cobham Primary are taught to read by:

- Pupils in the Foundation Stage are introduced to **phonics** through the Letter & Sounds Programme, incorporating methods such as Jolly Phonics to include visual, audio and kinaesthetic learners and engage young children.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 continue to learn, use, apply and embed their knowledge of phonics using the Letters and Sounds programme, linking to spelling rules and age-related expectations within the New Curriculum.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to use and apply phonics to support spelling patterns and reading.
- Pupils are encouraged to read for meaning and through **context**.
- Pupils are introduced to a full range of texts through **shared reading** in whole class groups.
- Pupils each follow an **individual reading** programme monitored by class teachers and teaching assistants.

- Pupils are encouraged to make free choices of books based on their own interests from the library to supplement their instructional **independent reading**.
- In **Guided Reading**, pupils of similar ability are encouraged to interpret and discuss appropriately challenging texts in more depth. This may also happen within the main daily English lesson.
- Reading skills are further developed across the curriculum.
- Pupils are expected to do daily home reading, encouraged via whole school incentives and rewards.

We appreciate that for children both with and without a designated special educational need (SEN) reading may be an area of difficulty and that an approach which relies solely on phonics does not work for all. Consequently, we work with the individual to find an appropriate solution to enable all children to become fluent readers and access literature. For some children we may use a whole word 'look and say' approach, for others a simplified phonic based code exemplified by Toe by Toe may allow a child to find success. In addition, we try to engage children in particular those that may be more reluctant readers to access exciting texts through alternative platforms such as Bug Club and Lexia.

Writing

The English Curriculum states:

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 two 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.

We believe that daily writing both in and outside of English lessons supports children's ability to write cohesively and at length across all areas of the curriculum.

Consequently, children at Cobham Primary are taught to write by:

- Teachers modelling writing of all genres through **shared writing** activities.
- Writing skills are further developed in group **guided writing** sessions.
- Pupils practise writing through **independent writing tasks**.

- Pupils are given opportunities to **plan, draft, revise and edit** their own writing.
- Pupils use their writing skills to communicate across the curriculum using their writing toolkit.
- The school's Marking Policy clearly outlines expectations of vocabulary and spelling choices and is used daily by teachers to improve children's writing and enhance their understanding of the editing and improvement process.
- Target cards are personalised for all children from year 1 to year 6 to focus their attention on their next learning step and expectations of the year group.
- From Reception cursive handwriting is introduced and explicitly taught to children with the expectation that all children will become fluent in cursive handwriting. This is modelled by teachers within lessons and through marking.

We appreciate that for children both with and without a designated special educational need (SEN) writing may be an area of difficulty, whether this is because of compositional weaknesses or physical barriers. Consequently, we work with the individual to find an appropriate supporting solution to enable all children to become fluent writers. This may involve support centred around development of fine motor skills, alternative recording methods, the use of writing frames and word banks, postural support and adapted writing tools.

Spelling and Grammar

The English Curriculum states:

The two statutory appendices – on spelling and on grammar and punctuation – give an overview of the specific features that should be included in teaching the programmes of study. References to developing pupils' vocabulary are also included within 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. A non-statutory glossary is provided for teachers.

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.

Spelling skills are introduced through direct teaching, investigations, studies of spelling patterns and conventions, homework and weekly spelling contracts.

Consequently, children at Cobham Primary are taught to spell and write grammatically correctly by:

Spelling:

- developing dictionary skills to support their spelling;
- attempt words for themselves using a range of strategies;

- write an increasingly wide range of age appropriate words from memory as specified in the English Curriculum;
- use a variety of resources to help with spelling e.g. dictionaries, word banks, classroom environment, computer spell-check etc.
- The spelling of necessary technical vocabulary is introduced throughout the curriculum.
- Marking supports self correction and learning of correct spelling.

Grammar:

- Weekly discrete grammar lessons and practise; lesson starters; homework; marking; Guided Reading foci; text based discussions and analysis.
- Staff modelling of correct grammar within speech and writing and sensitively correcting children's oral and written mistakes.
- Use of class displays as a teaching tool.

Planning

At Cobham Primary, text-based planning is a crucial part of English across all subjects. Planning from written, visual texts and films allows children to access and learn about the four areas that make up the English curriculum:

- 1) Spoken Language
- 2) Reading
- 3) Writing
- 4) Spelling and Grammar

Through careful, differentiated and challenging planning, Children have the opportunity to access English through language rich Literature. The Power of Reading has been a starting point for teachers to ensure lessons are full of opportunities to: predict, plan, explore, analyse and write through age appropriate Multi-Cultural texts.

Assessment, recording and reporting

Marking is in line with the school's policy.

Assessments are made in line with school assessment policy.

Children are assessed during their reception year using the Foundation Stage Profile and are formally assessed at the end of each Key Stage.

Reading assessment data is collected termly and formal samples of writing are also assessed and internally moderated with the same regularity.

All children have progress in writing books which track progress in writing throughout the key stages and are the basis of target setting.

Teachers use assessment to ensure planning is based on prior attainment and that pupils know what they are to do to achieve the next step.

Children are also shown how to use 'Assessment for Learning' opportunities to reflect on their own learning and set their own targets for the future.

Parents are invited to parent meetings three times a year and are sent a full report in Term 4 and termly report cards.

Analysis of assessment data is used to set curricular school targets, class based supporting provision for small groups and individuals.

The class teacher will keep individual records. These include any information that enables the teacher to deliver an effective, relevant curriculum which builds on prior attainment and meets the needs of pupils.

Expectations

It is expected that pupils will achieve at least age related expectations within their year group. For children with and without SEN working below age related expectations supporting provision will be identified and detailed on class provision maps, which are reviewed termly.

Inclusion

All children receive quality English teaching on a daily basis and activities are differentiated accordingly. Where identified pupils are considered to require targeted support, to enable them to work to age appropriate objectives, a variety of interventions are available and detailed on class provision maps. These include Teaching Assistant support and supporting interventions based around a child's identified area of weakness eg. comprehension, handwriting, grammar, spelling etc.

More-able pupils are planned for directly and learning challenges are provided daily to extend and broaden their curriculum.

This is supported by our Equal Opportunities Policy.

Equal Opportunities

- It will be ensured that equal opportunities in English are addressed as follows: Pupils with special needs have equal access to the English curriculum through the use of differentiated learning strategies and tasks. These are based on individual needs.
- Specific teaching strategies are used to maximize access to the curriculum for pupils learning EAL.
- Respect for cultural and linguistic diversity is promoted through the use of resources on multi-cultural themes.
- An awareness of other dialects and standard English encouraged through a range of texts.
- Gender equality is promoted by ensuring that both boys and girls have access to all aspects of the English curriculum.
- Opportunities to address issues of gender, race etc. are provided through discussion, texts and resources.

Parental / Community Involvement

We value parent involvement in children's development of literacy and promote a home school partnership in the following ways;

- Sharing information – newsletters, parents' leaflets, reading diaries
- Homework – in line with our homework policy and home/school agreement
- We ask parents to encourage and monitor home reading and discuss books and preferences with their children.
- Parents and CRB checked community volunteers are welcomed into the school to support children in Reading.

Professional Development

Training needs are identified as a result of whole school monitoring and evaluation, performance management and needs of children. These will be reflected in the School Development Plan which includes the English Action Plan.

The English co-ordinator will arrange for relevant advice and information, such as feedback from courses and newsletters, to be disseminated. Where necessary the English coordinator organises or leads school based training.

Additional adults who are involved with intervention programmes will receive appropriate training whether externally or school based training.

Resources

Each class has easy access to basic resources for English such as dictionaries, thesauri and reading books at Key Stage 1.

The school library contains a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry books.

Sets of guided reading books are stored centrally and are overseen by the English Co-ordinator.

Enrichment events may be organised including visiting storytellers, book fairs, authors, poets, visiting drama specialists and theatre groups.

Monitoring and evaluation

Throughout the year English is monitored by the English co-ordinator, HT and Teaching and Learning Leader and external KCC personnel. An assigned English Governor also monitors this area and provides relevant feedback to teaching staff and other Governors.

Having identified priorities, the English co-ordinator constructs an action plan which forms part of the School Development Plan. This will form the basis for monitoring and will identify how this is to be implemented.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Cobham Primary's Book List
- A Beginners Guide to Grammar
- Class Target Cards

- Reception, KS1 and KS2 Writing Toolkits
- Age Related Spelling Expectation Lists
- Age related reading objectives

Policy last updated: June 2017