

NORTHCOTE PRIMARY SCHOOL

ENGLISH POLICY

Contents

- Introduction
- Aims
- EYFS
- Reading (including phonics)
- Writing (including GPS and marking of writing)
- Assessment
- Inclusion
- Parental involvement

Introduction

At Northcote Primary School, we strive for excellence in English achievement throughout the school. We aim to develop children's abilities within a cross-curricular programme of Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening. Across all classes, pupils are given opportunities to develop their knowledge, understanding and use of spoken and written English, within a broad and balanced curriculum. There are lots of opportunities for children to consolidate and reinforce taught English skills and to apply them in a range of contexts.

Regular reports are made to the governors on the progress of our English provision. We have a reading Governor, who works closely with the English team to monitor the progress of English in the school.

Aims

- To teach our children how to read and write with fluency, understanding and confidence, developing a range of independent strategies to take responsibility for their own learning
- Be encouraged to develop a love of reading and to read for enjoyment, through our 'learning to read, reading to learn' continuum

- Develop our children's ever-growing vocabulary, through an interest in words and their meanings
- Experience a range of text types and genres, across a range of subjects, to develop understanding
- Learn to write in a variety of styles and be able to apply characteristic features of texts to their own writing
- Develop a technical vocabulary with understanding of grammatical terminology
- Learn how to apply grammatical terminology in their own writing
- Have the opportunity to write for purpose and pleasure

EYFS

- Planning is completed each week from the children's interests and always includes communication and language skills, reading and writing.
 - EYFS use the statutory Early Learning Goals at the end of Reception to measure attainment in English. We use the non-statutory development matters to guide the children in their learning throughout their time in Nursery and Reception.
 - We teach all children at the age band they are working within ensuring that children are both supported and challenged.
 - The continuous provision, both indoors and outdoors, ensures that children have access to high quality provision in order to further support their learning and development in English. Enhancements are added in as appropriate.
 - Nursery children's emergent writing is added to displays and also to their learning journeys. Reception children have a writing book that contains writing that is both child initiated and also adult led. This is moderated at the end of the year in order to assess the child's writing skills.
 - Children in Nursery access books independently and also with adults. We also share a home time story each day.
 - In reception children take home a reading book, at a level that is appropriate to share at home, they read and write in groups and 1:1 with adult support and independently. Once they are blending they take part in three reading practice sessions per week.
- Children follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. The children have the opportunity to talk and communicate in an increasing range of situations and to practise and extend their range of vocabulary and English skills.

- English is planned on a weekly basis and assessed using the criteria from the Early Learning Goals.
- English is taught both as a discrete subject and within the whole Early Years Curriculum to give children opportunities to use their English skills in real life situations.
- In addition to the English teaching, there are also daily systematic synthetic phonics sessions using the Local Authority recommended 'Letters and Sounds' framework.

READING (INCLUDING PHONICS)

Phonics

Please see separate Phonics policy about how phonics is taught in more detail.

At Northcote Primary School we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Nursery and follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised *progression*, which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school.

As a result, our children are able to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. At Northcote Primary School, 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. We have a strong focus on language development for our children because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

Children are assessed every half term to ensure they are making progress and keeping up with the programme. Any children who need more support are given extra phonics session either 1:1 or in groups.

Shared reading (Years 3-6)

All children in the juniors are given the opportunity to access an age-related text, as part of a shared reading session, each week. In these sessions, children are encouraged to: predict; highlight unknown vocabulary; explore the meaning of unknown vocabulary; visualise; devise and answer questions and are encouraged to compare and contrast different texts. Skills are labelled and dated in shared reading books and text types are listed in the front of books, to show coverage.

Reading Plus

All children who have been identified as reading above ARE do not access the weekly age-related shared reading tasks. They instead are assessed using the online assessment tool and use Reading Plus daily for their targeted reading.

Reading for pleasure

At Northcote, we are committed to promoting Reading for Pleasure across the curriculum and providing all children with daily opportunities to develop their love of literature. Each classroom has a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts available for the children select from. Typically, children will read independently during registration times. We now have an outdoor 'Reading bus' which promotes reading for pleasure for children across the school.

In the Foundation Stage, children can select books at any time throughout the day. In addition, they will listen to stories daily as a class or in smaller groups, sometimes in audio format, and be encouraged to respond.

In KS2, children have access to a class novel at the end of the day, where there is time. These novels have been chosen by their teachers to match topics within the wider curriculum.

Wider Reading opportunities (including parental involvement)

In addition to texts used in English lessons and independent reading, we are also committed to providing our pupils with regular opportunities to engage with new or unfamiliar authors/texts.

We have an extensive Reading for Pleasure Calendar which includes events such as regular author visits and workshops, outings to Reading based facilities such as Central Library and Calderstones' Story Barn, reading celebrations linked to national events such as National Story Telling Week, World Book Day, World Book Night, Chatterbooks sessions (for EYFS, Key Stage 1 and 2) and Build-a-Bridge sessions (for EYFS).

Home Reading

All children in Reception and KS1 take home an appropriate text which is 95% decodable and matched to their phonics level. Books go home on a Thursday and are returned on a Monday. Children also take home a reading diary for parents to sign and for staff to write information in regarding their child's reading progress/next steps.

All children in the juniors are given a new book on a Monday, at their reading level. They are expected to complete reading four times a week (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday) and have their diaries signed and returned to school on a Friday. If they finish their book early, they can access Reading Plus or Bug Club at home, as well as completing a review for the book they have finished. Additional adults in the classroom monitor home reading and feed back to teacher weekly. If children are not engaging in reading activities at home, teachers or other adults can provide time for them to read within the school day.

Access to books:

- There are a wide range of books available in each class, to promote reading for pleasure
- Each class hosts a 'reading pod' where children can access a range of books, in a calm, comfy environment
- All children are assessed termly for their reading and then given a book from the correlating book band, to support reading at home
- When children move up a book band, they are given a certificate in their Key Stage assembly (held weekly) to recognise their hard work
- Each class has a 'reading champion' who attend meetings each half term with the Reading coordinator to discuss new reading ideas and complete book reviews

WRITING (INCLUDING GPS)

Phonics and spelling

Throughout the school, the development of spelling is addressed both in class and at home.

Nursery children take home activities to support Letters and Sounds phase 1.

Reception children take 'flash cards' home to support reading and phoneme blending and all reading books are phonetically decodable.

In KS1 differentiated spelling lists are given to the children to learn at home and are tested weekly in class. Spelling lists are set half-termly using the national curriculum spelling list, and are given to the children to refer to in class as well as at home. They are also published on the school's website within the relevant class page.

Spelling tasks are often carried out during guided reading time. As with handwriting, care with spelling must be maintained in all areas of the curriculum.

Emergent writing (EYFS)

All children are encouraged to develop writing skills through mark-making in a variety of media including paint, shaving foam, sand, markers on balloons etc. Role-play supports early writing by giving children reasons for writing e.g. making signs, shopping lists, making greetings cards, letters to characters from stories etc.

Outdoor provision gives children experience of mark-making with water, chalkboards and paints on a larger scale.

These strategies continue throughout KS1 for those children with SEN who continue to require support.

Shared Writing (Nursery and Reception)

In Nursery and Reception, shared writing is a key method for developing writing skills. As with Shared Reading, this allows teachers to model good practice in writing, explaining their thoughts and ideas as they write. Examples include book-making about class trips, creating information book about farm animals and thoughts and ideas.

This practice is continued throughout KS1 and KS2 so that children have experience of watching a skilled practitioner construct orderly, imaginative writing whilst at the same time having the opportunity of contributing their own ideas. Consequently, children feel more confident to write independently.

Guided Writing/Independent Writing (Reception)

In Reception, guided writing takes place on a regular basis in continuous provision and in guided groups. During these sessions, ideas are shared and support is given in writing about the children's lives, interests, thoughts and ideas. Writing resources are readily available as and when children want to engage in independent writing in the Foundation Stage.

In KS1, guided writing sessions take place alongside guided reading. Cross-curricular links are already used as a vehicle to enhance learning during these sessions. For example, children complete chronological reports, diary entries, letters, recounts etc. during the Victorian unit.

In KS2, short independent writing tasks are undertaken in a range of cross-curricular topics, as well as within English lessons. This is seen as an important way of developing children's diverse and creative use of language in a variety of genres, across a range of subject areas.

Key Stage 1 and 2

- Planning for writing is based on the National Curriculum and Liverpool Council Plans
- Coverage is monitored by the English Lead
- An overview of each year group's topics are available on the website
- WALTs (We Are Learning To) in children's books outline the learning for each lesson and are referred back to in the children's AFL
- At the end of a unit, each child completes an 'extended write' in a separate book, to demonstrate their understanding of the skills taught. In Year 1, this is often later in the year.
- There has been a GPS coverage document devised to ensure coverage across Year groups by the English lead. These objectives are covered as a warm up at the start of the English lesson each morning in the juniors.
- Teaching and learning is differentiated to best match the needs of the class (or set) and the individuals within it; within the context of the aspect of English that is being taught.

How written work is marked:

All written work is marked by class teachers using a green pen. CARE (Check and Respond Everyone) comments are made by teachers and responded to by children using red pen. Marking ladders are used by children in their extended write books to assess their own work and then used by teachers in their marking. GPS is self/peer marked.

ASSESSMENT

- In the Early Years, children are assessed as working at the emerging or expected level each half term. Examples of written work are kept in Literacy books. (Reception)
- Currently, children carry out assessment tasks at the end of each half term using the Rising Stars and NFER materials (alternating) in order to give teacher's an understanding of children's reading and their comprehensions skills. (yr1-yr5)
- Year 6 used past SATs papers each half-term to support assessment
- Children are assessed using the knowledge gained from Rising stars and PM benchmarking in reading in order to be given a 'stage' on our assessment grid and to be highlighted as working at age related expectations or below/above.
- Phonics assessment (Letters and Sounds) Reception- Yr2
- Book bands - PM Benchmark (Yr2-Y5)
- Internal moderation between year groups
- External moderation with local schools (termly)

KS1/2

Reading is assessed each term, using Benchmarking for those who have a secure phonic knowledge (Have passed phonics screening check/securely assessed as being past phase five phonics.) In the juniors, Y3-5 alternate between Rising Stars assessments and NFER assessments for reading, to assist teacher assessment. In Year 6, children used past SATs papers, to ensure that children are familiar with the content, layout and expectations of the tests.

INCLUSION

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment. More Able Students (MAS) children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Throughout the school, parents are expected to monitor children's home learning. They are encouraged to maintain an ongoing dialogue with the teacher, through formal and informal meetings, and by making comments in reading cards.

Due to COVID restrictions, we are currently unable to invite parents in to assembly, like we have done in the past. There are also usually many sessions ran throughout the year where parents are invited to come and share our love of English, which we will we restart as soon as we can! Good work will be celebrated both in class and via the school Twitter feed.

CONCLUSION:

This policy is in line with other school polices and therefore should be read in conjunction with the following:

Little Wandle Letters and Sounds phonics policy

Teaching and Learning Policy

Assessment and Record Keeping

Responding to pupils' work / Feedback / Marking policy

Special Educational Needs Policy

ICT Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Handwriting policy

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