English Policy

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Edinburgh Primary School English Policy

Introduction

At Edinburgh Primary School we recognise the crucial importance of studying the English language. Improved performance at reading, writing and spoken language will enable our pupils to express their thoughts and ideas more fluently, accurately and, ultimately, to their greater satisfaction. This will also help them to deal more successfully with other curriculum subjects, while enriching their lives beyond school. The teaching and learning of English is therefore, given a high priority in our school and where possible the creative curriculum and ICT are used as tools.

Aims

Our overarching aim for English is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

We aim for our pupils to:

- 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
- become competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

The teaching of English

The structure of English teaching is based upon the English National Curriculum guidelines and covers all of the recommended objectives to ensure that a broad and balanced English curriculum is taught to all pupils at Edinburgh Primary. To ensure that there is adequate time for developing their reading, writing and grammar, punctuation and spelling skills, each class has a dedicated English lesson each day, with a duration of approximately 60 minutes. Additionally, in KS2, there are three whole class reading lessons each week. Phonics is taught throughout KS1. In Year 1, Writing is taught through the Read Write Inc Programme and the children do 1 piece of independent writing every week**.** The English skills that the children develop are utilised and supported in every area of the curriculum and are directly linked with other subjects. For example, formal letter writing within English may be developed within a history topic and instructional writing could be linked to work completed in Science.

Strategies and planning

Each year group has a range of teaching materials available from which the teacher plans lessons. However, we plan our teaching of English around our curriculum topic headings, core **texts** and the planning ensures coverage of the National Curriculum. Work is differentiated to meet the needs of the pupils and to ensure progression within each year group. The children have a dedicated Writing book that they take with them through the school as is used to record individual writing progress.

Provision and differentiation

- By recognising that some children may need specific help with their English skills
- By giving extra support to children who need extra opportunities for reinforcement.
- By ensuring that pupils with particular ability and flair for English are extended through the use of additional, more demanding, open ended tasks and planned challenges within each lesson.

Approaches to Reading

Teachers model reading strategies during shared reading sessions and whole class reading lessons and children have the opportunity to develop reading strategies and to discuss texts in detail during the sessions. In KS1, children also have the opportunity to read 1-1 or in a small group with an adult at least once a week. As the children move through the school, opportunities to read independently for a sustained period of time are offered to them.

A range of reading schemes are used to support early readers as well as book banded 'real books' used for guided reading. Many exciting and rewarding activities are arranged in school to promote the pleasure and knowledge that can be gained from books. Throughout the school year, opportunities are created to bring books alive through planned activities and reading sessions in mixed classes. Where possible, visits by published authors, skilled story tellers and performances by professional theatre groups are organised in addition to the use of drama to illustrate the texts studied.

In Key Stage 2, children choose books to take home and read based on their ZPD from the Accelerated Reader Program. We have a wide selection of banded books available to all classes to cater for all reading needs. Those children still learning to read fluently, have access to a range of books, which are at an appropriate interest age, but are at an accessible reading age. These help lower attaining and SEN children to continue to grow in confidence as readers with a text that appears appropriate for their age group. We encourage all readers to share a book at home with their grown-ups. We believe that this not only helps to develop inferential skills, but also supports a lifelong love of reading. We recognize the value of adults (both in school and at home) reading aloud to children, in order to improve their grasp of story language; enthuse them with a love of books and to inspire them to become great authors themselves. Reading progress is assessed half termly through the star reader test in the Accelerated Reader Program.

<u>Approaches to Writing</u>

We aim to develop the children's ability to produce well structured, detailed writing in which the meaning is made clear and which engages the interest of the reader. Attention is paid throughout the school to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling. Our approach to teaching writing covers the 'transcription' and

'composition' requirements of The National Curriculum (2014). To support our teaching of writing, teachers are flexible in their selection of strategies to suit the needs of the children and text type being taught.

Teachers model writing strategies and the use of phonics and spelling strategies in shared writing sessions. Guided writing sessions are used to target specific needs of both groups and individuals, whilst children have opportunities to write at length in extended independent writing sessions at regular points during a term. The children are given frequent opportunities, in school, to write in different contexts using quality texts as a model and for a variety of purposes and audiences. The text types, which are required to be covered by the National Curriculum (2014), are outlined in our long-term plans for each year group to ensure that there is a breadth of coverage.

We recognise the important role that computing has to play in our school in the development of English skills. There are many opportunities for children to improve their writing inspired by drama techniques and film clips. Interactive technology is used regularly to enhance the teaching of English. We use the Nelson Handwriting Scheme in school to help children develop fluent, cursive, clear and legible joined up writing (see Handwriting Policy for further details). Each child has a handwriting practice book with which they practise correct letter formation and joins every day.

Approaches to Grammar and Spelling

The teaching of Grammar and Spelling is in line with the requirements of The National Curriculum (2014). Grammar is taught and embedded within English lessons where appropriate.

To be able to spell correctly is an essential life skill. When spelling become automatic, pupils are able to concentrate on the content of their writing and the making of meaning. Whilst we note that spelling is not the most important aspect of writing, confidence in spelling can have a profound effect on the writer's self-image. We aim to use explicit, interactive teaching which draws children's attention to the origins, structure and meaning of words and their parts, the shape and sound of words, the letter patterns within them and the various ways they can learn these patterns.

In the Early Years and KS1, daily phonics is the key to the children's learning of spelling.

This is taught using the Read Write Inc Phonics programme. Children are taught to blend sounds to read and segment to spell. At the same time, they learn words which are not phonically regular (common exception words).

From Year two and into KS2, the children move towards using their phonic knowledge to help them to understand spelling rules and patterns. We teach children to use their growing understanding of the morphology and etymology of words to support their spelling. Helping the children to understand how to use and apply known spelling patterns (and to develop strategies to tackle tricky words) is the key to helping them to become successful spellers. Spelling skills are taught each week using Rising Stars Scheme and are also embedded in English lessons so that strategies and rules can be taught in the context of writing. When writing, children should be concentrating on higher order thinking skills and should simply 'have a go' at spelling and underline words that they are unsure of with a dotted line. When marking children's work, we do not correct all spelling errors, instead we focus on high frequency words, topic words and those studied in spelling sessions. The teaching and development of spelling will be encouraged as part of the home-school partnership and weekly spellings will be sent home to practice.

Spelling strategies

• All classes have a set of spelling activities to support regular opportunities for children to practice learning spellings that they need next.

• The 'Look, Say, Cover, Write and Check' approach to learning the spelling of words will be taught and encouraged however, this approach alone will not be suitable for every pupil.

• Children will be taught to look for common letter strings, patterns in words and spelling rules.

• Spelling games encourage children to look closely at words.

• Where possible, children are encouraged to identify their own spelling errors and edit accordingly and check spellings.

• Sounding out words phonemically and breaking them down into syllables is another strategy for pupils to be aware of.

• Drawing on analogies to known words, roots, derivations, word families, morphology and familiar spelling patterns creates a fascination into the English language.

• Identifying words which pose a particular challenge are identified and pupils learn them by using mnemonics, multi-sensory re-enforcement and memorising critical features

• The effective use of a dictionary is taught to find words beyond the initial letter and the use of a thesaurus is taught and encouraged to expand their vocabulary awareness and choice.

Cross-curriculum links

Cross-curricular links are made in specific subject areas:

- These occur in all subject areas

Role of the headteacher

In consultation with the English Subject leader, the Head teacher:

- determines the ways English should support, enrich and extend the curriculum;
- decides the provision and allocation of resources;
- decides ways in which developments can be assessed, and records maintained;
- ensures that English is used in a way to achieve the aims and objectives of the school;
- ensures that there is an English policy and identifies an English subject leader.

Role of the English Subject Teacher

The English subject leader should:

- ensure the development of a scheme of work for the English curriculum. This will be built around the school's curriculum topics and cover aspects of the English National

Curriculum statements;

- promote the integration of English within appropriate teaching and learning activities;
- manage the provision and deployment of resources and give guidance on classroom organization
- inspire colleagues to deliver high quality teaching and learning opportunities;
- analyse data to identify strengths and weaknesses in outcomes; planning for improvement accordingly;
- write, monitor and evaluate an action plan for English for the School Improvement Plan;
- lead INSET within the school, and investigate suitable courses elsewhere;
- act as a contact point between the school and support agencies;
- provide technical expertise and support for staff;
- lead the evaluation and review of the school's English policy;
- manage the budget for this curriculum area;
- monitor and review the English provision within the school.

Monitoring and evaluation

The teaching of English will be monitored through the School Improvement Plan by the English subject leader in the first instance and then by the Senior Leadership Team and the Head teacher. SATS results are analysed and areas for development prioritised. Governors are kept informed via a subject report as scheduled in the Monitoring and Evaluation programme. The Governor(s) assigned to monitoring English will be kept abreast of developments, progress and changes within the subject.

Health and safety

Health and Safety issues in English include the safe teaching of appropriate procedures when dealing with e.g. visualisers, tape recorders etc. The children are taught to be aware of their own and others' safety. Children also learn about what constitutes appropriate reading material.

They are expected to display appropriate behaviour at all times.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

We provide differentiated opportunities matched to individual EAL child's needs. The key language features of language, which are necessary for effective participation, are identified. These might be key words, grammar patterns, uses of language or genre of text. Learning activities are carefully structured and focused to take account of range of purposes and audiences. All lessons have clear learning objectives and we endeavour, within available resources, to deploy appropriate staff and resources to ensure that all children are able to participate fully.

Inclusion

Edinburgh Primary is an inclusive school. We aim to make all pupils feel included in all our activities. We try to make all our teaching fully inclusive. We recognise the entitlement of all pupils to a balanced, broadly-based curriculum. We have systems in place for early identification of barriers to their learning and participation so that they can engage in school activities with all other pupils. We acknowledge the need for high expectations and suitable targets for all children.