

Learning is fun at

Park Hill Infants' School



ALL different, ALL equal, ALL achieving

ENGLISH POLICY

November 2021

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Version Control

Version	Date	Notes
1	November 2017	Original Policy
1.1	October 2019 February 2020	Policy updated by C Clarkson
	July 2020	Approved at FGB
1.2	October 2021	Policy updated by C Clarkson - Updates to Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework changes
	November 2021	Approved at Progress and Attainment Committee 15.11.21

(To be read in conjunction with our policies on other subjects, Early Years Foundation Stage and English as an Additional Language; this policy also contains, specifically, our policy statement about the teaching of early reading – see Section 5.)

Aims and objectives:

The English curriculum develops children’s ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including the communication of their ideas, opinions and feelings. Children are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as of non-fiction and media texts. 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 and across the breadth of the Curriculum.

Our objectives in the teaching of English are:

- For all groups of pupils to be able to read, write and communicate coherently, enabling them to succeed as a member of modern day society;
- To equip all pupils with an effective command of spoken and written English which will support them to access learning across the rest of the curriculum and future education;
- For all pupils to develop a love of reading and literature which will continue to develop and enhance their independence and cultural capital;
- to equip all pupils with a deep phonic knowledge and comprehension skills to enable them to be confident and independent readers, developing their understanding of meaning conveyed at word, sentence and whole text level;
- for children to become reflective readers, through contact with a wide range of different types of material, including challenging and substantial texts;
- to encourage children to listen with concentration, in order to identify main points, and appropriate detail, of what they have heard;
- to show children how to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands;
- to foster the enjoyment of writing for a wide range of meaningful purposes, and to develop a recognition of its value and purpose;
- to develop understanding of English grammar and the effective use of Standard English;
- to confidently spell all common exception words as set out in the National curriculum and independently extend their vocabulary through the use of dictionaries and thesauruses;
- to develop skills in planning, drafting, evaluating and editing their writing;
- to develop effective handwriting skills, including forming joined writing;
- to engender in children a love of literature and an appreciation of our literary heritage;

Teaching and learning:

We use a variety of teaching and learning approaches in our English lessons, and develop these in accordance with the objectives outlined in the Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework (2021) and the National Curriculum (2014) for English. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in relation to English language and literature. Pupils have a substantial session each day which focus specifically on the development of literacy skills, for example; engaging in a purposeful whole-class writing activity, a whole-class focused word or sentence analysis activity, or a whole class drama focus and presentation. Whilst there is a high proportion of whole-class and group teaching, the independent activities also provide opportunities for talk and collaboration, whilst embedding and enhancing pupils' learning. They have the opportunity to experience a wide range of high quality, engaging texts, and to support their work with a variety of resources, such as word banks, phonic GPC resources, dictionaries and thesauruses. Children often use computing in English sessions where it enhances their learning, such as when using multimedia resources to study how words and images are combined to convey meaning. Wherever possible, we encourage children to use and apply their English learning in other areas of the curriculum, and will use incidental opportunities to teach and reinforce literacy skills in other subject areas, particularly involving speaking, listening and written work for recording.

In all classes, children have a wide range of abilities, and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons, we use differentiated group work, while in others, we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use teaching assistants to support children of all abilities, and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals. Children are encouraged to choose their daily activities based on our whole school 'Hot, Spicy and Sizzling' challenge system and are taught to independently extend their own understanding and develop an intrinsic love for learning.

English curriculum planning:

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use a broad range of resources, books and websites, as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the Programme of Study for English as stated in the National Curriculum.

We carry out curriculum planning in English, in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The National Curriculum 2014, details the statutory long-term teaching objectives. These are then distributed across the year groups by the English Leader to ensure clear progression and development of knowledge and skills. Focus 'teaching texts' are carefully chosen alongside these objectives to fit effectively with the current topic and context for learning for each year group each half term.

Our medium-term plans give details of the main teaching objectives for each half term. Teaching sequences are developed by the English leader (in the form of half termly 'text webs') in liaison with each Year Group teaching team, and encompass a range of schemes and strategies, incorporating and adapting the '*CLPE: Power of Reading*', and '*Pie Corbett: Talk for Writing*' concepts. These plans define the content and genre of what we teach over a half term unit, and ensure an appropriate balance, range and distribution of work across each term. The subject leader is responsible for overseeing and reviewing these plans and ensuring a good balance between opportunities for speaking and listening, drama, writing, reading, phonics, grammar, spelling and handwriting.

Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan for the teaching of English. This lists the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes for each lesson, giving details, ideas and strategies outlining how the lessons are to be taught. It also includes details of what each group of children will be learning and their differentiated challenges. The class teacher keeps these individual plans and uses them as a working document which is reviewed, adapted and evaluated on a daily basis. The class teacher and subject leader discuss and feedback to each other on the overall effectiveness of planning on a regular, informal basis.

We plan the activities so that they build on the children's prior learning, while ensuring progression in the schemes of work, so that there is an increasing challenge for the children as they move up through the school.

The Early Years Foundation Stage:

We teach literacy skills in our Reception year as an integral part of the EYFS curriculum. Progressive skill development is outlined in Communication, Language and Literacy (CLL), one of the six '*Areas of Learning*' in the EYFS curriculum. In particular, in the EYFS, the CLL curriculum cannot be covered in isolation from the other five areas of learning. Opportunities to practise literacy skills, for example, reading labels, responding to written instructions, mark-making and early writing as part of play-based learning will be provided throughout the learning environment in the

Reception classroom and outdoor area. Children have a discrete, daily phonics lesson as a crucial element in developing their early reading and writing skills.

We plan the teaching and development of English to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals, which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged 0 to 5. We give all children the opportunity to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and extend their vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore words and texts, to enjoy them, to learn about them, and to use them in various situations.

Reading Policy:

The teaching of reading and children's acquisition of reading skills is the bedrock of our English curriculum. Becoming an effective and proficient reader is the gateway to learning for our children, and success in most other subjects of the curriculum is dependent upon learning to read well and independently.

Children begin to develop pre-reading skills involving, for example, the ability to visually focus, to concentrate for increasingly sustained periods, to distinguish between visual shapes and to notice similarities, and to begin to understand that pictures, symbols and print can convey meaning, from the very youngest age.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, we aim to give children continuous experience of the medium of print and text through all their learning experiences and across all Areas of Learning in the EYFS curriculum. The environment is rich with appropriate text: labels, captions, simple instructions, names, alphabet prompts and children's own mark-making. Adults continuously model reading in the learning environment, embedding in children's understanding the idea that print conveys meaning and is invaluable to us in our lives. Children are taught from the youngest age to value and care for books, to understand their structure, to handle them appropriately and to enjoy sharing them with each other.

We believe that an understanding and knowledge of phonics, the relationship between graphemes (letters or groups of letters) and phonemes (the 44 constituent sounds of spoken English) is essential as children learn to read. Children's ability to phonetically 'decode' letters and words into oral sounds is continuously assessed throughout the EYFS and Key Stage 1, in order that the next steps in children's knowledge of phonics can be effectively planned and taught. All children have a daily phonic session to support their development of reading, following the '*Letters and Sounds*' programme of progressive, structured phonics. There is a statutory Phonics Screening Check, during the Summer term of Year One for all children. Children who have not successfully met the benchmark score in Year One are required to retake a second Phonics Screening Check in the Summer term of Year Two.

However, children cannot learn to be skilled readers through phonics alone. We teach children to use a wide range of clues in tackling unfamiliar words and phrases in their reading: whole word recognition, picture clues, contextual clues based on the meaning of the text and grammatical correctness.

Our main reading scheme in our school is '*Collins Big Cat for Letters and Sounds*'. Alongside following and reading books from this scheme progressively which match each pupils' current phonic ability, we believe in providing opportunities for children to read 'real texts' of an appropriate level of difficulty. For this reason, all of our reading books, (fiction and non-fiction) are colour-banded to indicate their level of difficulty, in the EYFS and Key Stage 1. The majority of our colour-banded reading books are banded according to Phonic phase and will state the phonic phases which they cover.

Children become avid readers through developing a love of books and through reading being made fun by teachers and other adults, providing excitement and inspiring the imagination. The way in which we base English sessions around a text models to the children how to ask questions and comprehend what they read. Parents and carers have a key role to play in helping to promote a love of books and reading at home, and we regard sharing books and support for reading to be one of the most important aspects of 'home school learning' which parents can provide.

All our classrooms have dedicated reading areas or 'Book Corners', which we aim to make comfortable and inviting, and in which teachers ensure there is a range of stimulating and attractive books and other reading material. We display and promote books throughout our school and classrooms, including our well stocked learning library. Each class visits our library during flexible weekly sessions in order to access a range of texts including newspapers, comics, magazines, audio books, play scripts and poetry. All children have frequent and regular access to books in their

classrooms, both for free choice of reading material and to do book-based research in order to support their learning across the curriculum.

Reading pervades the curriculum and children have continuous opportunities to develop their reading skills, whatever the area of learning. Alongside this, classes have daily sessions of Guided Reading (*'Book Club'*) which begin from the Spring term in EYFS. This incorporates a reading rotation during which they engage in: independent reading, one to one reading with an adult based upon their individual reading target, or are taught in a group by the teacher or a teaching assistant where the children collaboratively read and 'dissect' books with the teacher, giving opinions, and answering and asking questions about what they have read. During these *'Book Club'* sessions, the shared texts are purposefully chosen at a higher reading challenge level, in order for the teacher to direct and teaching specific next step reading skills. Children are questioned and prompted using higher level thinking skills which probe the use of inference and deduction to understand meaning. These daily sessions are also teachers time to assess children's reading and to plan which skills they need to develop next using the objectives from the National Curriculum and assessment framework. All children have the opportunity to read aloud regularly, to an adult, and we encourage parents and carers to support this activity at home at least twice a week.

English and Inclusion:

All children, whatever their ability and individual needs, have a basic entitlement to be taught essential literacy skills, and to have the opportunity to develop those skills to the best of their ability. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our teaching of literacy skills, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. For further details, see separate policies on: Special Educational Needs; Disability Discrimination; Gifted and Talented Children; English as an Additional Language (EAL).

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the pupil may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, and differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against the national standard. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

For some children who require SEND support, additional provision will be based on a pupil's Individual Education Plan (IEP), where appropriate, for children with special educational needs. Depending on the pupil's needs, the Provision map may include specific targets relating to English. This is evidenced through provision maps and in some cases an EHCP.P

Adults provide support for English through:

- individualised guided writing and reading;
- differentiated texts that children can more easily read and understand;
- visual prompts and written materials in different formats;
- physical resources such as pencil grips and over lays;
- I Pads, computers, recordable devices and other technological aids;
- alternative communication such as signs and symbols;
- word banks and phonic banks;
- translation and amanuensis.

Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas:

The literacy skills that children develop are linked to, and applied in every area of our curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work at school.

Mathematics and Science:

The teaching of English contributes significantly to children's mathematical understanding, in a variety of ways. Children in the EYFS develop their understanding of number, pattern, shape and space by talking about these matters with adults and other children. Children in Key Stage 1 meet stories and rhymes that involve counting, pattern spotting

and sequencing. They explain and present their work to others during review and plenary sessions, and they communicate mathematically through the developing use of precise mathematical language.

History, Geography and Religious Education (RE):

While these humanities subjects involve significant subject specific knowledge, skills and conceptual understanding, the medium for researching, learning about and communicating is, of course, the English language. Pupils will constantly call upon and develop their literacy skills in finding information, ordering and making sense of what they have learned and communicating it in writing and orally.

Art and Design Technology:

Art is often used as a visual prompt in English sessions as a starting point to engage and develop their ideas creatively. Children may use art to express their opinions and understanding of different texts. When children learn about the lives of famous artists they will use their reading and research skills and writing skills to create written reports and captions. The children use their analysing and debating skills to evaluate products and use their language skills to explain their ideas and processes sequentially.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship:

The teaching of English contributes to the teaching of PSHE and citizenship by encouraging children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues. Older children also research, debate and write about topical social problems and events. They discuss lifestyle choices, and meet and talk with visitors who work within the school community.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development:

The teaching of literacy skills enables our children to offer critical responses to the moral questions they meet in their life, both within and outside school. Their understanding and appreciation of a range of texts bring them into contact with their own literary heritage and with texts from a diverse range of cultures. The organisation of our lessons and break times allows children to work and play together, giving them the chance to use their speaking and listening skills in developing social collaboration and understanding.

Computing:

The selective use of computer software, with clear learning objectives, will promote, enhance and support the teaching of English at word, sentence and text levels. It also offers ways of developing learning which are not always possible with conventional methods, for example, through individualised interactive learning. Software is used to support independent reading such as identifying graphemes using a key board, and writing (predictive word processors, word banks and spell checkers). A range of software is used to develop specific grammatical and spelling skills. Pupils frequently use word processing facilities to record and edit their writing, and have access to I pads and computers in the classroom, as well as regular access to the Computing suite.

Assessment

Teachers assess children's work in English in a range of ways. Daily assessments are made by teachers as part of every lesson to help them to adjust their daily plans and these are noted after every session. They match these short-term assessments closely to the half termly learning objectives. Written or verbal feedback is given to help guide children's progress. Children are encouraged to review their work and make self-assessments about how they can improve their own work, including through the 'bubble and block' system. Teachers also use colour coding systems in writing books when assessing pupil's outcomes in order to monitor progress and ensure that pupil's stay 'on track' to meet their potential. The children each have an individual writing and reading target to which they work towards. This is reviewed by the teacher and evidence is found to meet the objective.

Teachers make formal termly assessments and use these to assess progress against year group and national targets developed by the English Leader through *Development Matters*, the *National Curriculum*, and the *KS1 Teacher Assessment Framework*. With the help of these long-term assessments, they are able to set targets for the next term and/or school year, and to summarise the progress of each child before discussing it with the child's parents or carers. The next teacher and year group team then uses these long-term assessments as the planning basis for the new school year. These long-term assessments are based on teacher assessments, supported by national assessment guidelines. Pupils participate in the Year One Phonics screening tests, and the national SATS at the end of Year Two.

The English leader and assessment leader keep samples of children's work in a moderation portfolio. These demonstrate what the expected level of attainment is in English in each year of the school. Teachers meet regularly to moderate assessments across a range of writing and other activities to ensure that our teacher assessments are accurate

and in line with national standards. This happens across Year Groups every half term, and across the whole school and key stages termly. The English Leader also works as a Local Authority moderator to ensure accurate judgements across the borough.

Staff are continuously developing their English subject knowledge and the English leader takes an active role in disseminating best practice, modelling new strategies and concepts and providing staff training.

Resources:

We have a very wide range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries and a variety of age-appropriate learning materials including a broad selection of fiction and non-fiction texts. Each classroom has reading and speaking and listening areas, with access to audio texts. Children have access to the internet in the classroom, the class and whole school library and the Computing suite.

Monitoring and review

The co-ordination and planning of the English curriculum are the responsibility of the English Subject leader, who also:

- supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping abreast of current developments in English and by providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject;
- gives the Headteacher an annual Subject Development Plan in which she evaluates the strengths and areas for development of literacy in the school, and indicates areas for further improvement;
- uses regular management time to review evidence of the children's learning, and to observe and review literacy lessons across the school.
- Monitors effectiveness and challenge of English teaching and learning across the key stages in order to ensure consistency and to enhance subject knowledge, creativity and enthusiasm for the subject for all teaching staff.
- Monitors rates of progress for pupils of all groups and abilities and analyses written work and planning to monitor areas of strength and development in the teaching of English across the whole school.

A named member of the school's governing body is briefed to oversee the teaching of English. The English governor meets regularly with the subject leader to review progress.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years, or sooner if necessary.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Print Name: _____