

JOHN RANDALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

English Policy

1 Aims and objectives

1.1 The study of English develops children's abilities to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, so using language to learn and communicate ideas, views and feelings. It enables children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as 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.

1.2 The aims of English are:

- to enable children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners;
- to encourage children to listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard;
- to enable children to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands;
- to develop children's abilities to reflect on their own and others' contributions and the language used;
- to enable children to evaluate their own and others' contributions through a range of drama activities;
- to develop confident, independent readers through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text-level knowledge;
- to encourage children to become enthusiastic and reflective readers through contact with challenging and lengthy texts;
- to encourage children to read for pleasure
- to help children enjoy writing and recognize its value;
- to enable children to write with accuracy and meaning in narrative and non-fiction;
- to increase the children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work.

2 Teaching and learning style

2.1 At John Randall School we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English lessons. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in English. We do this through a daily lesson that is a mix of whole-class, group teaching and mini-plenaries. The children develop success criteria with the teacher and use these as a focus for their work and to aid peer and self-assessment. The success criteria also enable pupils to challenge themselves by clearly understanding their next steps. They have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts and use a range of resources such as dictionaries, thesauruses and word and phonic mats to support their work. Children use ICT in English lessons where it enhances their learning, as in drafting their work and using multimedia to study how words and images are combined to convey meaning. Wherever possible teachers expect children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

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2.2 There are children of differing ability in all classes at John Randall School. We recognise this fact and 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 do it through differentiated group work, while in other lessons we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use classroom assistants to support some children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

3 English curriculum planning

3.1 English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We follow recommended government guidance to ensure the development of skills, objectives and challenge.

3.2 Class teachers complete a weekly plan for the teaching of English. This lists the specific learning objectives for the week and gives details of how the lessons are to be taught. It also includes details of what each group of children will be learning. The class teacher keeps these individual plans and hands them to the Head Teacher each week.

4 The Foundation Stage

4.1 We teach English in foundation stage classes as an integral part of the school's work. Staff use the learning objectives outlined in 'Development Matters'. For reception aged children, the format for the daily lesson is similar to that used in the rest of the school. For nursery aged children, this session is approximately 30 minutes and involves some whole group adult led teaching and time for children to practise and apply skills through independent or adult led activities. English is taught using a cross curricular topic based approach. The foundation stage team meet each week to develop planning around topics which aim to meet the children's interests and needs. Children have daily opportunities to write, and lots of provision is made for independent and guided opportunities for writing during daily child initiated play sessions in meaningful contexts. Throughout the foundation stage the team focus upon PSED and CLL skills. This enables children to have a good understanding of English and to speak clearly and confidently, therefore having good basic starting blocks to build upon. 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 range of vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore, enjoy, learn about, and use words and text in a range of situations.

5 Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas

5.1 The skills that children develop in English are linked to, and applied in, every subject 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 in school.

5.2 Mathematics

English contributes significantly to the teaching of mathematics in our school. Children in the Foundation Stage develop their understanding of number, pattern, shape and space by talking about these areas with adults and other children. Children in Key Stage 1 meet stories and rhymes that rely on counting and sequencing. Children in Key Stage 2 are encouraged to read and interpret problems in order to identify the mathematics involved. They explain and present their work to others during plenary sessions and they communicate mathematically through the developing use of precise mathematical language.

5.3 Information and communication technology (ICT)

The use of ICT enables children to use and apply their developing skills in English in a variety of ways. Younger children use ICT as a source of information and as a way of enabling them to present their completed work effectively. Older children use the Internet when searching for information about a different part of the world, or when using desktop publishing to design a class newspaper. Children use the planning and proofing tools in a word processor when checking their draft work. We encourage all children to use ICT as a resource for learning, whenever they feel it is appropriate.

5.4 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

English contributes to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. We encourage younger children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues. In their science work they talk about things that improve their health and about rules for keeping them safe around the school. Older children are encouraged to research and debate topical problems and events. They discuss lifestyle choices and meet and talk with many visitors who work within the school community. Planned activities within the classroom encourage children to work together and respect each other's views.

5.5 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

The teaching of English develops skills through which our children can give critical responses to the moral questions they meet in their work. Their understanding and appreciation of a range of texts brings them into contact with their own literary heritage and texts from other cultures. The organisation of lessons allows children to work together and gives them the chance to discuss their ideas and results.

6 Teaching English to children with special needs

6.1 At John Randall School we teach English to all children, whatever their ability. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Teachers provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties. Work in English takes into account the targets set for individual children in their provision maps. Teachers provide help with communication and literacy through:

- using texts that children can read and understand;
- using visual and written materials in different formats;
- using ICT, other technological aids and taped materials;
- using alternative communication such as signs and symbols;
- using translators and amanuenses.

7 Assessment and recording

- 7.1** Teachers assess children's work in English in three phases. The short-term assessments that teachers and teaching assistants make as part of every lesson and are noted on their weekly plans and prompt sheets help them to adjust their daily plans. Teachers match these short-term assessments closely to the teaching objectives. They use assessments to measure progress against the key objectives, and to help them plan for the next unit of work. They use tracking grids as the recording format for this and to assess children's unaided writing. These are kept in children's English books and are used to inform children of their progress and next steps. Teachers make long-term assessments towards the end of the school year, and they use these to assess progress against school and national targets. With the help of these long-term assessments, teachers are able to set targets for the next school year and summarize the progress of each child before reporting to and discussing it with the child's parents. The next teacher also uses these long-term assessments as the basis for planning work for the new school year. Children undertake the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, whilst those in other cohorts are assessed through teacher assessment which might include some elements from optional tests. Teachers also make annual assessments of children's progress using the level descriptions of the National Curriculum.
- 7.2** There are four pupil progress meetings each term to monitor assessments and set whole class next steps and targets. These are then reviewed at subsequent meetings.

8 Phonics and Spelling

- 8.1** Phonics and spelling is integral to the teaching of English. These sessions are taught discretely on a daily basis using letters and sounds for phonics in foundation stage and key stage 1 and SPAG (spelling punctuation and grammar) in key stage 2. Where possible these sessions are delivered prior to an English session to enable children to apply the skills and make links with texts in literacy and guided reading to allow children to make links and apply their phonic skills.
- 8.2** Where children do not make expected progress they will revisit areas of learning during catch up intervention sessions.

9 Guided Reading

- 9.1** Guided reading is taught daily through discrete sessions. Each child will have two sessions of guided reading per week. One session will be with the teacher and the other with the teaching assistant. During the week there is a timetabled set of activities to enrich children's learning.
- 9.2** Records are kept by each teacher in a guided reading folder.
- 9.3** Children who are not making expected progress are given extra support through interventions at another time.
- 9.4** To support the development of independent reading at John Randall Primary School the Oxford Reading Tree scheme is used.

10 Resources

- 10.1** All classrooms have access to dictionaries, thesauruses and a range of age-appropriate resources. All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts. Children have access to the Internet through their classroom computer and in the IT suite. The school's reading room contains a range of books to support children's individual research.

11 Monitoring and review

- 11.1** Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality of teaching in English forms part of the school monitoring system and is the responsibility of the Head Teacher, Deputy Head teacher and English subject leader. Books are monitored once each term and lessons termly. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.

Signed: K Evans

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