

English Policy

Aims and objectives

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.

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 help children enjoy writing and recognise its value;
- To enable children to write with accuracy and meaning in narrative and nonfiction;
- To increase the children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work.

Teaching and Learning Style.

At Emersons Green Primary School we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English lessons, as recommended by The Primary Framework for Literacy. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in English. We do this through a daily lesson that has a high proportion of whole-class and group teaching. During a typical unit a variety of activities should be planned for and taught, these are set out in Appendix One.

There are children of differing ability in all classes at Emersons Green Primary 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.

English Curriculum Planning

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the Primary frameworks for Literacy as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the Programme of study for English.

We carry out the curriculum planning in English in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The National Literacy Strategy Framework for Teaching details what we teach in the long-term. Our yearly teaching Programme identifies the key objectives in Literacy that we teach to each year.

Our medium-term plans, which we also base on the Framework, give details of the main teaching objectives for each term. These plans define what we teach and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term. The Literacy Team is responsible for keeping and reviewing these plans.

Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan for the teaching of English. This lists the specific learning objectives for each lesson 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 the class teacher and subject leader often discuss them on an informal basis (see Appendix 2 for planning checklist).

The Foundation Stage

We teach English in reception classes as an integral part of the school's work. The format for the daily lesson is similar to that used in the rest of the school. As part of this daily phonic lesson are taught. As the Reception Class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the English aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. 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 practice 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. Phonics is taught daily throughout Key Stage 1 (see phonic planning and assessment guide).

Contribution of English to teaching in other Curriculum Areas

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.

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.

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 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.

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. Planned activities within the classroom encourage children to work together and respect each other's views.

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.

Teaching English to children with Special Needs

At Emersons Green Primary 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 Individual Education Plans (I.E.P's) and Statements.

Teachers provide help with communication and Literacy through:

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

- Use of communication aids e.g. Tellus.
- Use of Hi Tec and Low Tec aids.
- Use of signs such as Mackaton.
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For further information see the provision map for SEN and the communication aids policy.

Assessment and Recording

Teachers assess children's work in English in three phases. The short-term assessments that teachers make as part of every lesson help teachers to adjust their daily plans. Teachers match these short-term assessments closely to the teaching objectives. They use medium-term assessments to measure progress against the key objectives, and to help them plan for the next unit of work. Children are assessed in writing and reading four times per year using the Success for Reading and Writing level descriptions. The Foundation Stage assesses against E.Y.P.S. and record information in learning profiles and diaries.

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 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. These long-term assessments are made using end-of-year tests and teacher assessments. Children undertake the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, plus the optional national tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5.

The subject leader keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio. This demonstrates what the expected level of achievement is in English in each year of the school.

Resources

There is a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts and there is a well resourced library. Children have access to the Internet through their classroom computer and use of laptops. Access to the Internet is also available in the library area. Audio-visual aids are also available from the central storage area. The library contains a range of books to support children's individual research. Big books and resources are available in each classroom (see big books and resources audit, available in staff room.)

Monitoring and Review.

Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the Literacy Subject Leader and the Literacy Team. 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. The Subject Leader gives the Headteacher an annual summary report in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, and indicates areas for further improvement. The Leader has specially-allocated regular management time in order to enable him/her to review samples of the children's work and undertake lesson observations of English teaching across the school. The named governor responsible for Literacy meets regularly with the Subject Leader in order to review progress.

Signed:

Date: Sept 2009