



# **Emersons Green Primary School**

**English Policy**

### **Rationale**

The study of English develops children's abilities to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, 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, writers and performers 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.

We follow the National Curriculum 2014 to enable quality teaching and learning across English.

### **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 non-fiction;
- To increase children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work.

### **Teaching and Learning**

At Emersons Green Primary 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 has a high proportion of whole-class and group teaching. During a typical unit, a variety of activities should be planned for and taught.

The precise format of the English lesson will vary from class to class and will depend on the objective for that lesson. It may take the format of an hour-long lesson, or may be divided into shorter inputs. Longer sessions may also be used to allow for extended writing opportunities.

There are children of differing abilities 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 this is 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. Similarly, a variety of materials and resources will be used to meet the learning needs of individual children. Individuals or groups of children may be supported in class by a teaching assistant.

Groups of children may work in intervention programmes. These groups will be identified by the class teacher and senior leaders during Pupil Progress Meetings. Programmes may address specific skills, such as phonics, reading comprehension, handwriting or writing composition. Intervention programmes are carefully planned to support the development of English skills, and to extend and challenge pupils, enabling them to make good progress.

### **English Curriculum Planning**

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We carry out the curriculum planning in English in two phases (long-term and short-term). Our yearly long-term teaching programme identifies the key objectives from the National Curriculum that we teach in each year group and which key texts we will be using. These plans define what we teach and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term, as well as ensuring a progression across the school. The English Team is responsible for reviewing these plans.

Class teachers complete a short-term plan for the teaching of English. This identifies 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 and how they will achieve the learning objective. The class teacher keeps these individual plans and on occasion these will be monitored by the English Team or the Senior Leadership Team.

### **The Foundation Stage**

As the Reception Class is part of the Early Years Foundation Stage, we relate the English aspects of the children's work to the statements set out in EYFS with a view to children achieving the Early Learning Goals in listening and attention, speaking, understanding, reading and writing by the end of the year. Knowing and understanding each child underpins our English planning and comes from the themes set out in the EYFS (A Unique Child, Positive relationships and Enabling Environments). This enables our early years' practitioners to plan for each child at their unique starting point and helps the children to progress through the development statements towards the ELG.

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. Teachers exploit opportunities to teach Reading and Writing skills through children's interests and play.

Children's writing skills are developed on a daily basis. An English lesson in EYFS begins with a whole-class input from the class teacher. Children then complete a carousel of activities throughout the week, including teacher-led writing, letter formation practice and

development of fine-motor skills. These activities are adapted and differentiated to meet the needs of individuals and groups of children. Letter formation is also developed through the daily teaching of Letters and Sounds.

Phonics is taught daily throughout EYFS, using the Letters and Sounds programme. This enables children to develop skills in phoneme-grapheme correspondence as well as blending and segmenting. Guided Reading is taught from Term 2, following the whole-school approach to the teaching of reading (see 'Teaching of Reading').

### **Teaching of Speaking and Listening**

The School aims to:

- support children to understand and produce simple and more elaborate language;
- support children in using speech for a variety of purposes e.g. describing events, expressing opinions, articulating feelings, investigation;
- aid social and emotional development through the use of language;
- promote the use of Standard English, vocabulary and grammar;
- show children how to use language for enjoyment;
- support children to listen carefully and respond to what is said.

The four strands of Speaking and Listening - Speaking, Listening, Group Discussion and Interaction, Drama - permeate the whole curriculum. Interactive teaching strategies involving speaking and listening skills are used to engage all pupils, in order to raise reading and writing standards. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life.

Some children may benefit from assessment and support from a Speech and Language Therapist. Where they recognise a specific need, the SALT will provide targets and activities which will be used by Teaching Assistant to develop children's speaking and listening skills.

### **Teaching of Reading**

The School aims to:

- encourage and foster a life-long love of reading, by making it a successful and enjoyable experience;
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, and for both pleasure and information;
- produce effective readers who can read easily, fluently and with good understanding;
- provide a wide and stimulating variety of texts;
- enable children to build up a sound base of reading strategies, including using phonic awareness;
- support children to develop initial and advanced reading skills;
- help children to become familiar with narrative and non-fiction structures and features;
- support children's acquisition of a wide vocabulary.

Reading is an important part of the English curriculum at our school. Reading resources will provide enriching vocabulary, correct grammatical structure and interesting content. The teaching of reading focuses on developing pupils' competence in both word reading and comprehension, working on both learning to read and reading to learn.

Shared reading taking place within English lessons will provide enriching experiences through more challenging texts. Teachers will also share stories with the class, displaying an enthusiasm for reading and setting a positive example as a reader. As part of the English curriculum, each child across the school will take part in at least one guided reading session each week outside of the English lesson, which will be led by the class teacher and will allow the children to develop their reading and comprehension skills. During guided reading sessions, those children who are not involved in direct teaching of reading will complete other English-based activities to develop skills across the English curriculum.

Phonics is taught daily in Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage One, following the framework 'Letters and Sounds'. This will involve a 20 minute daily session of planned systematic phonics delivery, including phoneme-grapheme correspondence, blending and segmenting, with a wide opportunity for application of skills through the learning environment and other lessons.

Reading comprehension skills are taught through the use of 'Reading Hats', each of which represents a different reading comprehension concept or skill. These are used across the school to ensure progression and consistency. The seven 'Reading Hats' used are:

- Black Hat - Identifying words, ideas or themes which children need to understand in order to understand the text;
- White Hat - Facts, using direct quotations from the text;
- Red Hat - Simple inference, including characters' thoughts and feelings;
- Blue Hat - More detailed inferences and explanations;
- Green Hat - Being creative through predicting, summarising, identifying themes and making links within and between texts and the 'real world';
- Purple Hat - Organisation, structure and features of text types;
- Yellow Hat - Effects of authors' choices.

Home reading books will be provided and sent home on a daily basis for parents to read with their children. Children are expected to read regularly at home. All reading books have been book banded to ensure progression for reading and each parent is given the opportunity to liaise with teachers through reading record books.

Our school library offers children the opportunity for wider reading. In line with National Curriculum expectations, the range of books available includes: myths and legends; fairy tales and traditional stories; modern fiction; fiction from our literary heritage; stories from other cultures and traditions; poetry; playscripts; non-fiction texts; reference books and text books.

Reading is assessed in line with our school assessment policy. The age-related expectations for reading assess against the follow criteria:

- **Oral:** retell, recite, read aloud;
- **Response:** discuss their views, give opinions, draw inferences;
- **Word reading:** apply their knowledge of spelling patterns, prefixes, suffixes;
- **Grammar:** identify language conventions, discuss meanings of words, evaluate use of language;
- **Organisation and research:** use skimming and scanning, summarise key events, devise own questions.

### Teaching of Writing

The School aims to:

- give writing a purpose and make it an enjoyable experience by presenting a wide variety of writing opportunities;
- develop the children's confidence as young writers;
- help children to see writing as an important means of communication;
- develop writing by positive teaching of skills and by encouragement;
- give each child the opportunity to write in a variety of genres and for a variety of audiences.

To do this, alongside the 2014 National Curriculum, we use other schemes such as 'Power of Reading' and 'Talk for Writing' when planning for and teaching writing

Some of the approaches we use to teach writing at Emersons Green are:

- Shared and modelled writing
- Guided writing
- Drama and role play
- Story mapping
- Writing in role
- Debate and argument

Shared and modelled writing, taking place within English lessons, allow the teacher to demonstrate good writing practice to the children, usually in a whole-class situation. Guided writing takes place within the English lesson and is reactive to children's needs to help them move on in their learning.

A grammar progression document is followed in KS1 and KS2 to support the teaching of grammar and ensure progression through the year groups. Grammar is taught in discreet lessons, as well as through our teaching of writing, to ensure children are embedding the skills they learn daily.

Writing is assessed in line with our school assessment policy. The new age related expectations for Writing assess children against the following criteria:

- Planning
- Drafting and writing
- Review and editing
- Spelling
- Handwriting

- Grammar, vocabulary and punctuation

### **Spelling**

It is vital that we provide our children with the opportunities to learn to spell accurately as this will allow them to write fluently in all areas of the curriculum. However, children should never feel discouraged from writing through a perceived inability to spell. Subject to the discretion of the teacher, spelling should be corrected in line with the school's marking policy. Throughout the school, children and parents are given an overview of the spelling rules for the term, including an explanation of the rule and example words.

Children in Year 1 will continue to receive phonic input and be taught how to apply segmenting skills to support their spelling. As pupils make progress, they will complete a weekly dictation to show they have learned the spelling rule. In Year 2, spelling will be taught through a combination of 'Letters and Sounds' and the 'No-Nonsense Spelling' scheme. Children will be taught spelling patterns in discrete daily lessons and will have a formal weekly dictation to assess the spelling work completed in class.

In KS2, the children are taught spelling patterns in a similar format, using the 'No-Nonsense Spelling' scheme. Children in KS2 are also tested with a formal weekly dictation to show they can apply spelling rules in context.

### **Handwriting**

We teach the cursive script to all children with the aim for all children to achieve legible, fluent and joined handwriting while developing an individual style which children can produce quickly and comfortably.

In the Foundation Stage, we believe developing fine and gross motor control is vital. We encourage self-initiated 'mark making' with the youngest children, before developing fluid pencil movements with left to right orientation and supporting them with a secure pencil grip. We support the development of handwriting through teaching the beginning of cursive script in order to ensure a smooth transition into KS1.

In KS1, we support the children to develop handwriting skills by teaching patterns, letters, letter strings and words, often combining handwriting and spelling work. We aim to teach joined handwriting which starts on the line (cursive script) from Year 1 onwards as children become secure in the correct formation of individual letters. All children will write in pencil.

In KS2, we continue to teach the children to join their writing. An emphasis will be placed on developing a joined, fluent, consistent style which the children can produce quickly. All children will continue to write in pencil until Year 5, when they will be given handwriting pens at the discretion of the teacher. All children in Year 6 will write in pen.

### **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. Opportunities for cross-curricular reading and writing are planned throughout each topic.

### **Teaching English to children with Special Educational Needs or Disability**

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 plan learning activities in English that take account of children's individual needs to ensure good progress.

Teachers and support staff provide help with communication and English through:

- using texts that children can read and understand, including simplified versions of class books;
- using visual and written materials in different formats including Braille;
- using adapted materials and resources;
- using ICT, other technological aids and audio materials;
- using alternative communication such as signs and symbols, Makaton
- using translators and amanuensis
- using Low Tech and High Tech communication aids e.g. communication book, Tellus.

### **Equal Opportunities**

All children have equal access to the English curriculum. We value that fact that many of our children have different language background, and provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background. EAL learners will have access to high quality language teaching, through pre-tutoring, quality first teaching which ensures that language is explained, and questioning targeted to ensure EAL learners acquire language rapidly. Where applicable, small intervention groups will be used to enhance EAL learners' acquisition of language. Learners should have access to key vocabulary in their home language in the classroom. We aim to provide a rich language environment and to use resource that reflect different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

We ensure that bilingual children receive appropriate support and that teachers are aware of the implications of English as an additional language. We differentiate our activities to take account for this for all learners.

We provide training for teachers and teaching assistants to keep them updated. We want all learners to develop the necessary skills to use the English language with confidence, appropriately and accurately to the best of their ability.

### **Assessment and Recording**

Teachers assess English both formally and informally. There is an expectation that all teachers use Assessment for Learning strategies throughout all learning, and that these assessments have a direct impact on teaching and learning. More formally, children are assessed regularly using Classroom Monitor, which is matched to the Age Related Expectations for each year group. Pupils not working at Age Related Expectation will be assessed using either: ARE guidance for an earlier year group; Emersons Green Primary pre-

ARE assessments; P Levels. These few pupils are agreed by the Senior Leadership Team as an 'exceptions' list. The Foundation Stage assesses against 'Development Matters' statements, using observations for ongoing formative assessment and planning whilst recording assessments in "2build a profile" which is emailed out to parents three times a year. In Years 1-6, progress and attainment is reported to parents three times per year.

Teachers make final 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 final assessments, teachers are able to set targets for the next school year and summarise the progress of each child.

All children in Year 1 complete a phonic screening assessment in order to assess their knowledge of phoneme-grapheme correspondence and skills in blending and segmenting. Any children that do not reach the expected standard in the assessment re-take the screening test in Year 2. Children are prepared throughout the year for this screening through daily phonics teaching.

Children undertake the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 to assess Reading and Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar. They are prepared for these tests through targeted teaching. Writing is assessed at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 using teacher judgement against the national Interim Framework.

### **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 the use of laptops and LearnPad tablets. Audio-visual aids are available from the central storage area. Big books are available in school.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the English Subject Leader and the English Team. Monitoring and evaluation of English is also carried out by the Senior Leadership Team, NEXUS Teaching Alliance and the Local Authority. There are also opportunities for peer monitoring and evaluation. The Governing Body monitors English as part of their monitoring of the School Development Priorities.

The work of the Subject Leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, being informed about current developments in the subject through Continuing Professional Development, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.