

St Giles Junior School

English Policy

'The value of English in the Curriculum? What can I say? Without English, nothing. And without good English, nothing very well.'

Anne Fine, Author

We at St Giles Junior School recognise that English is a vital way of communicating in school, in public life and internationally. In studying English in school, children develop skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing. This enables them to express themselves creatively and imaginatively and to communicate with others effectively. The study of English helps children understand how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Using this knowledge, children can choose and adapt what they say and write in different situations. They learn to read literature in English, which is rich and influential, reflecting the experience of people from many countries and times. Children learn to become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama as well as non-fiction and media texts. The teaching of English will develop children's abilities to be enthusiastic, responsive and knowledgeable readers and to communicate effectively in speech and writing and listen with understanding.

Aims

In order to meet the aims of the National curriculum for English, We will endeavour:

- To provide opportunities for extended writing, reading of longer texts, drama and speaking and listening, in addition to the full implementation of the New Primary Literacy Strategy.
- To promote a confident and enthusiastic attitude towards English as a subject in its own right, across the curriculum and in all other areas of life.
- Encourage confidence and a sense of achievement, by extending the children to realise their potential in language areas and encourage them to experience the personal satisfaction and confidence gained from striving towards the highest possible standards in all aspects of English.
- To be observers, facilitators and supporters of children's linguistic and literacy progress by ensuring that the best standard of attainment is appropriately matched to each individual child's ability and special educational needs.
- To provide a wide range of opportunities through a variety of situations, audiences and activities designed to develop a child's confidence and competency as a speaker and as a listener.

- Encourage the development of critical thought through discussion and response to language in a variety of media.
- To encourage children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners.
- To encourage the children to listen actively and respond appropriately.
- To develop a love of literature through the presentation of a wide range of rich ,stimulating texts. To foster each child's reading ability to enable them to become an enthusiastic, confident and independent reader.
- Encourage the development of critical appreciation of a full range of different reading material in relation to genre, purpose and audience.
- Encourage the desire to express feelings, use imagination and communicate ideas through writing.
- To encourage children to see themselves as writers to understand and demonstrate the stages of the writing process: planning, drafting, revising, editing, sharing and publishing in their work and for children to see writing as a means of developing and communicating their ideas.
- To encourage collaboration and support for children by involving and informing parents in the development of the reading and writing processes.
- To promote children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development through English.
- To enable teachers to identify opportunities to develop thinking skills.

Teaching and learning style

At St. Giles Junior School we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English lessons, as recommended by the National Literacy Strategy and through our own extensive INSET. 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 these lessons children experience a whole-class shared reading or writing activity, a whole-class focused word or sentence activity, a guided group or independent activity and a whole-class session to review progress and learning. They have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts and use a range of resources such as dictionaries, thesauruses , high/medium frequency word cards and spelling and writing booklets 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.

There are children of differing ability in all classes at St. Giles Junior 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. We make valuable use of the intervention programmes for English. (Year 3 Support Programme and FLS)

English curriculum planning

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the New Literacy Strategy 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 stages (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The Primary 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 English subject leader 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 the unit in its 3/4 phases, the relevant key aspects and the current reading and writing targets with the addition of the learning outcomes and assessment opportunities. The weekly planning will also give details of how the lesson will be taught and the detail of the intervention strategies. . 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. The plans are annotated and a copy is given to the Subject manager.

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.

English contributes significantly to the teaching of **mathematics** in our school. Children are encouraged to read and interpret problems in order to identify the mathematics involved. They explain and present their work to others and they communicate mathematically through the developing use of precise mathematical language.

In **science** they will be discussing, hypothesising, formulating accounts and using subject specific vocabulary accurately. In **history**, writing diaries, accounts of events, empathising with the people of the era. In **art/DT**, children will be sharing thoughts and ideas about artists/styles of art and planning their work.

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. Year 3/4 use ICT as a source of information and as a way of enabling them to present their completed work effectively. Year 5/6 use the Internet when searching for information to compliment their work. 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.

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 might research and debate topical problems and events, discuss lifestyle choices and meet and talk with visitors who come to our 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.

Children with special needs

At St. Giles Junior 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 (IEPs). Teachers provide help with communication and literacy through:

- using appropriate 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.
- Using intervention programmes

Assessment and recording

Teachers assess children's work in English in three stages. The short-term assessments that teachers make as part of every lesson help teachers to adapt their daily plans. Teachers match these short-term assessments closely to their 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. 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 6, plus the optional national tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5. Teachers also make medium term and annual assessments of children's progress using the Sussex Grid and Ros Wilsons Criterion Scale.

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. Teachers review/moderate individual examples of work against the samples and the national exemplification material produced by the QCA and the DfEE.

Resources

There is a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. The subject manager has many resources to support teachers in their planning and preparation. All classrooms have dictionaries and thesauruses. All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts. Children have access to high/medium frequency words and a variety of literacy prompts that are placed around the classroom. The children also have their spelling and writing booklets. Children have access to the Internet through their classroom and suite computers. The library contains a range of books to support children's individual research. These are constantly reviewed and updated.

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 English subject leader.

This is done by termly work trawls and lesson observations.

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 head teacher an annual action plan in which she details 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 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 with the subject leader in order to review progress.

Equal Opportunities

The school will endeavour to acknowledge and value the variety of different experiences, interests, social and cultural backgrounds of pupils and use such differences constructively to raise confidence and self-esteem. All staff will ensure access to learning at an individual level, through differentiated teaching and learning strategies. Planning will set high expectations and provide appropriate learning opportunities for children from all social backgrounds, ethnic groups and for those who are disabled. The school will seek to provide texts from a range of cultures and which are free from discrimination and stereo typing, and to provide resources to support specific learning difficulties.

Developing Literacy in the Home

The school recognises that the role of the family is central in supporting the child's language development as a speaker, reader and writer. Families, children and teachers will be regularly informed of progress and access to records will be provided. Our home-school liaison and our homework policy will be linked to developing literacy at home. Teachers will provide guidance on what family's can do to extend their child's competence in using spoken and written language.

T.M

September 2007

Guidelines

Speaking and Listening

The development of spoken language is concerned with the importance of effective communication through the use of clear, articulate speech and attentive listening.

To develop effective speaking and listening:

- The children will be involved in Talk for Learning activities to enhance their ability to take turns, share and discuss effectively.
- Children will be given opportunities to talk about their own experiences either to the whole class, a group, partner or the class teacher.
- Children will learn that listening is an active, not passive activity and will be taught how to listen to one another and to take turns.
- Children will be asked to make explanations in a variety of situations
- Children will learn to take part in verbal presentations, this may be as individuals or as part of a group.
- Children will be encouraged to join in discussions and to give their opinions
- Children will be encouraged to how to critically appraise their own and other children's talks in a positive way through text level work and in guided reading,
- Children will be encouraged to share their opinions and discuss the meanings in the plot and the inferences of any sub-texts.
- Children will be encouraged to collaborate and negotiate to achieve an overall aim in problem solving situations.
- To develop children's awareness of standard spoken English
- To provide children with the opportunities to communicate to different audiences and reflect on how speakers adapt their vocabulary, tone, pace and style
- To teach children how to organise and structure what they want to say and to use vocabulary and syntax that enables the communication of more complex meanings.
- To give children opportunities to talk for a range of purposes.

Reading

Reading is much more than the decoding of black marks on a page. It is a process that requires understanding and response to all types of writing.

To develop our children as effective readers:

- We will promote reading, or listening to others read as an enjoyable experience
- there will be a range of different styles of texts which pupils should hear and read, including Media and ICT texts and texts from a variety of cultures and traditions
- Children are encouraged to develop preferences in their choice of books and to investigate the layers of meaning and to make a critical response to what they read
- There are different strategies offered for helping pupils to read - these may include: phonics, word recognition, picture clues, prediction and context
- High /medium frequency words from the NLS will be taught and revised.
- Reading for information will be reinforced across the curriculum
- Texts will be presented in a variety of ways, including OHT,IWB, computer and big book format
- Methods and strategies such as Shared and Guided Reading are used to encourage pupils to read accurately for meaning and pleasure
- Children will be supported in their reading progress by being given guidance on their selection of appropriate reading materials by their Class teacher, Teaching assistant or parent.
- We will teach our children to develop fluency and expression in reading aloud
- Allow time to browse, choose, read, enjoy and discuss texts
- Children will be taught how to use the Dewey system for reference libraries
- Children will extend their referencing skills by working with non-fiction books, dictionaries and encyclopedias

Writing

To develop our children as confident, enthusiastic and effective writers:

- We will promote writing, in a variety of formats as an enjoyable experience
- Children will be taught to write in a variety of fictional and non-fictional formats
- Children will be taught to structure the content of their writing to suit purpose and audience
- Children will have a variety of aids to writing available to them e.g. word-books, dictionaries, word banks, wall displays, thesauruses, etc.
- Children will be taught to improve and develop content, style and accuracy of writing
- Children will be given opportunities to discuss and respond critically to their own and other pupils' writing, analyse strengths and weaknesses and make improvements at a formative stage
- Children will be encouraged to write with commitment and enthusiasm and develop independent, distinctive and original styles.
- Use of correct grammatical terminology will be taught throughout the school
- Children will be taught to use increasingly complex punctuation as their writing skills progress. The use of VCOP will enhance this
- Children will be taught to place emphasis on the purpose and organisation of their writing.
- Children will be taught the importance of presentation.

Spelling

To develop effective spelling :

- Children will follow the Andrew Brodie Spelling programme.
- Children will be taught a range of strategies to promote accurate spelling
- Children will be taught to check the accuracy of their spelling and to identify reasons for misspellings.
- Regular use of dictionaries and thesauruses will be encouraged
- Pupils will study the relevance of word families and roots and origins of words
- During the writing process, pupils will be encouraged to attempt to spell words themselves, with guidance from another pupil, or from an adult. A vocabulary/word book as a personal resource may be used.
- High /medium frequency words from the NLS will be taught and practiced throughout the year groups.
- The use of correct terminology will be emphasised.

Handwriting

To develop effective handwriting and presentation:

- Children will be encouraged to develop legible handwriting in both joined and printed styles
- Andrew Brodies handwriting programme will be used to teach letter formation and joins
- As children develop emphasis will be placed on speed, presentation and individual style
- All children will be encouraged to develop a sense of pride in the presentation of their work
- Children will be encouraged to use different forms of handwriting for different purposes

Children will be taught the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate their meaning effectively

Drama

To develop effective involvement in drama:

- We will encourage children to use role-play within the literacy hour to extend children's understanding and enjoyment of literacy texts
- Use drama as a means to explore meanings of text - characters, actions, themes, emotions and ideas
- Encourage children to participate in spoken performances, dramatic interpretation and improvisations
- Children will take part in drama or role-play situations where accent, characterisation and emotions are all part of the communication process
- Children will critically appraise their own and other children's performances in a positive way.
- Promote spiritual development through helping pupils represent, explore and reflect on their own and others' inner life in drama
- Use drama to promote moral development, through exploring questions of right and wrong, and conflict between values
- Promote social development through helping pupils collaborate with others to create or present improvised or scripted drama.

T.M

September 2007

