

Castleside Primary School



English Policy

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ENGLISH POLICY AND GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others, and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised (DfE 2014).

SCHOOL PURPOSE, POLICY AND THE NEW NATIONAL CURRICULUM (2014)

Castleside Primary School's English Policy has been developed on the basis of the new National Curriculum for England.

The National Curriculum provides a framework for English but the school is aware of the need for flexibility and creativity in teaching and learning styles in response to the needs of individual children.

AIMS

In line with our whole school curriculum aims, our English curriculum intends to:

- Develop oral literacy and enhance vocabulary to ensure that our children can express themselves clearly to a variety of audiences;
- Offer a breadth of challenging and thought provoking texts, discussions and learning opportunities. Children will actively solve problems independently as well as part of a team;
- Encourage a lifelong love of books and reading. Books open doors to the world! They enable our children to see life beyond Castleside and encourage them to become thoughtful and respectful global citizens.

Additionally, our school aims for English include those stated in the National Curriculum (2014)

- To read easily, fluently and with good understanding;
- To develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information;
- To acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language;
- To appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage;
- To write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and

- style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences;
- To use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas;
- To be competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.
(DfE 2014)

In our school, we strive:

- To provide the vital transition from home to the outside world;
- To provide a cross-curricular thematic approach;
- To provide a stimulating environment where children are motivated to think about their experiences and to express themselves as fully as possible in speech and writing;
- To provide an environment where all modes of language are used for genuine purposes;
- To provide experiences in English that promote the personal, social and moral development of every child.

OBJECTIVES

Individually and collaboratively children should be seen to:

- Use language to receive and communicate meaning in purposeful contexts.
- Employ a variety of forms with a clear awareness of audience;
- Work on tasks which have been directed and tasks which children initiate themselves;
- Work with teacher and support staff and other adults who are themselves involved in the processes – as talkers, listeners, readers and writers;
- Read literature, both fiction and non fiction, for enjoyment, responding to it critically and using that reading for learning i.e. to support their own writing and speaking;
- To develop vocabulary and spelling skills through systematic and challenging teaching;
- To write imaginative, interesting and thoughtful texts appropriate to the task, reader and purpose – organising and sequencing information, ideas and events effectively;

The English curriculum is broad and encompasses the following:

- Language use;
- Language study;
- Literature;
- Drama.

It includes the teaching of skills such as handwriting as well as the development of imagination and competence in speaking and listening, reading and writing.

PUPIL'S ENGLISH EXPERIENCES

The needs of the learner are as follows:

- Expectation of success;
- The confidence to take risks and make mistakes;
- A willingness to share and to engage;
- The confidence to ask for help;
- An acceptance of the need to re-adjust.

This should be reflected in the teacher providing the following:

- Respect for and interest in the learner's language, culture, thought and intentions;
- The ability to recognise growth points, strengths and potential;
- The confidence to maintain breadth, richness and variety, and to match these to the learner's interest and direction (i.e. to stimulate and challenge);
- A sensitive awareness of when to intervene and when to leave alone.

LITERACY TEACHING AND LEARNING

Phonics

Phonics will be taught every day, either as a discrete lesson or as part of the English lesson. Planning for teaching and learning phonics at Castleside Primary School acknowledges the content of the independent review of the teaching of early reading – *The Rose Report March 2006* – which emphasises the importance of systematic and high quality teaching of phonic knowledge and skills to equip children with the skills they need to read and spell words with fluency and confidence. The 'Letters and Sounds' scheme is taught from Reception with Jolly Phonics being used as a visual and kinaesthetic stimulus to enable memory recall of some letter sounds. The decoding of words to read them and the segmenting of words to spell them is taught using the 'Letters and Sounds' scheme. Children are given weekly practice in class and through homework using the letter combinations being taught from the appropriate phase.

Literacy

Literacy is taught within a framework of **daily** lessons (although this may be through cross curricular provision). When planning for teaching and learning, coverage is ensured by making reference to objectives from the National Curriculum on the medium term planning. This is used in conjunction with objectives within the twelve strands of the New Primary Framework. Weekly planning details the most appropriate objectives for teaching and learning. Teachers will begin planning by acknowledging prior learning to determine whether children have the necessary knowledge and skills they need to access the proposed learning.

Planning will centre around a key text in Years 1-6, enabling children to explore texts in depth and build up meaningful relationships with characters and plot.

The literacy lesson each day contains a balance of whole class teaching and group or individual work.

The structure of the lesson will usually include:

1. Whole class work: Big Books, fiction, non-fiction, poetry, rhymes, drama...
2. Group Work;
3. Whole class plenary.

At times it may be appropriate to spend longer on a particular strand to ensure quality teaching and learning e.g. a drama lesson may take up the whole of the hour for one session in the week. Within the drama lesson, many quality learning experiences would be happening e.g. quality development of vocabulary, expressing views and ideas, developing imagination and creative thought. At Castleside Primary School we regard speaking and listening activities such as drama as a highly important prerequisite for quality writing development. We consider oracy to be of the utmost importance both for the development of the child and as an essential tool for learning.

It is not sufficient, however, simply to allow time for talk, it is necessary to consider how particular opportunities might be created at the planning stage of work in all subject areas.

Writing

We aim to:

- Produce children who enjoy writing and can express their thoughts in this medium;
- Encourage children to take responsibility for the improvement of their own written work;
- Encourage co-operative writing and response partners as well as independent writing;
- Make writing tasks real or purposeful – taking the audience into careful account;
- Give children the opportunity to write for a variety of purposes;
- Produce legible, well presented written work;
- Mark and comment upon written work in a consistent way throughout the school;
- Help each child develop individual spelling strategies;
- Encourage children to use ICT to produce finished pieces of work;
- Value children's written work and encourage respect for each others' work.

Reception children will take part in sections of literacy learning throughout the day. Much of their work is cross-curricular to ensure appropriate, meaningful experiences are delivered to the children. In Reception the basic skills are taught well and thoroughly, however, creativity through language is also held in high esteem and language activities are presented to children in the most exciting and fun way possible using quality and interesting resources to

develop creative and imaginative thought through language.

Spelling

The teaching of spelling has been developed with reference to the 'Letters and Sounds' scheme. Segmentation of words to spell them is taught from Reception as soon as children begin to blend sounds to read words. The spelling of tricky words is also taught from Reception through 'Letters and Sounds'. In Key Stage 1 spellings include some key words and some words that follow a spelling pattern. This pattern is taken from an appropriately leveled section of the Letters and Sounds document that is also being taught throughout the week within phonics lessons. In Key Stage 2, spelling rules are taught to equip children with the ability to spell many words rather than just a few that have been rote learned.

KS1 and KS2 children will be taught daily using the 'No Nonsense Spelling' scheme from November 2017.

Handwriting

On entry to Reception, children are taught to form letters at the same time as they are introduced to the sound and name of each letter of the alphabet. Letters are introduced to the children in the order that is suggested in the Letters and Sounds document. Children are taught the correct formation through a variety of activities including forming letters in the sand (indoors and outdoors), outdoors using chalks and writing on whiteboards.

Further details are provided in the Handwriting Policy document.

Homework

Homework is given to children to support and extend the work taught in school. Each child has the opportunity to choose a reading book to take home every day. This book can be any level, regardless of simplicity or complexity – whatever holds a child's interest. Once a week on a Friday each child may also take a library book home. This will be a book the child is interested in: fiction, non-fiction, poetry, play and again regardless of simplicity or complexity of text. The book may need to be read to the child.

PRESENTATION OF WRITTEN WORK

Written work will generally be recorded in literacy books. In order to develop presentation skills we envisage that children at different stages of development will have different needs and requirements i.e. books without lines, books with wide lines, books with narrow lines. Children in Reception and KS1 will have the date and learning objective stuck into their books. In Year 1, children will progress to writing the day of the week, focusing on correct spelling and use of capital letter. In Year 2, children will write the whole date correctly.

In KS2, children are expected to follow the DUMTUM method of setting out their work. Neat handwriting must be used at all times in a style defined by the Handwriting Policy. Teachers must set consistently high expectations for presentation in books.

CROSS-CURRICULAR ISSUES

Children will be given the opportunity to apply their learned skills and knowledge across the curriculum. Opportunities to use and learn about language do not only arise in areas designated for reading, writing, talking and listening. Every learning experience is a language experience and it is largely through talking with others that children come to understand and internalise new ideas.

Each curricular area has its own specialised language. Investigations of a scientific or mathematical kind give opportunities for discussion, planning, making suggestions, asking questions and reporting on results. Cross-curricular skills need to be reflected in planning and integrated within topic work.

Vocabulary lessons may be required to support children in accessing subject specific language.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

The setting for learning in Castleside Primary School should provide opportunities to develop the language competence that virtually all children possess when they arrive at school.

Classrooms which facilitate learning through language as well as learning about language itself should be carefully thought through, planned, prepared and managed so that they provide real opportunities for children to be talkers, listeners, readers and writers.

Activities have to be worthwhile and provide something meaningful to talk, read and write about or listen to.

The classroom organisation will permit children to:

- Have clear routines for independent working;
- Work together without disturbance from others;
- Work together in mixed or single sex groups;
- Work together in mixed or same ability groups;
- Work together as a whole class (clear permanent space will need to be provided for this activity);
- Have a balance of whole class and group teaching.

All classrooms should include the following:

A book area which provides:

- An atmosphere that is conducive, welcoming and exciting;
- Books that are displayed and face forward at child's level;
- A carpeted area – so that children sit comfortably on the floor;
- If possible it should be situated in a corner (not in a place where children have to pass through to get to other areas);
- A secluded enough space to ensure that it is a private place, inviting reflection and reading in a sustained way.

Classrooms should have a mixture of fiction, poetry and non-fiction books available to the children.

Children are encouraged to take home tricky words to learn as a strategy to aid sight vocabulary recognition.

PLAY, ROLE PLAY AND DRAMA

Young children should be allowed opportunities for self-directed role play such as the 'home corner' which can easily be turned into an alternative role playing area connected with a class topic, e.g. a café when exploring a classroom theme of food. In Reception there will always be a domestic role play area plus other role play areas linked to a theme such as a shop or post office.

Older children – drama allows a formal exploration of ideas and feelings and can be about anything such as, an event in a playground or a street, a situation in a story/poem/historical event. At times, children's own voices and language will be used for expressing ideas and feelings. At other times they may need to adopt the language and voices of others.

We will also provide opportunities for children to see and take part in live theatre.

At Castleside Primary School we believe that children have the right to an education that develops their personality and talents to the full and that play, role play and drama play an important part in this development.

Learning Objectives for Role Play and Drama

- To extend and develop language;
- To make discoveries;
- To reach understanding;
- To develop relationships and communication strategies.

Teacher's Role

- To provide a central but not dominating role;
- To provide activities which reflect a framework and a sense of purpose;
- To provide an appropriate and safe context;

- To be sensitive to 'wise' intervention;
- To provide a balance between careful planning by the teacher and the freedom of the children to explore the territory on their own.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

We aim to

- Deliver the requirements of the National Curriculum for Speaking and Listening and more by planning talk into the learning tasks across the curriculum;
- Create an environment within the school where the children feel confidence to talk;
- Create situations where children will have an interested and varied audience for their talk (e.g. acting as guides to adults);
- Value children's talk and encourage children to listen to and value each others' talk;
- Listen to children and build from their ideas and contributions;
- Provide a range of talk opportunities by structuring the learning situation in ways which make talk essential.

READING

Reading Record

Children have the opportunity to practise their reading skills during guided reading sessions. The teacher groups children according to ability and listens to them read focusing on particular skills and strategies to read and understand the text.

At Castleside we consider it essential to continue to share books with individual children. In order to do this we have maintained individual reading. We use this time to re-enforce the strategies the children use during shared and guided reading sessions. We also ensure that we discuss the text with the individual child. Use of the reading diary provides us with a direct and invaluable link with home. We feel that it is important to work in partnership with parents to encourage this. This partnership and the continuity of reading between home and school is intended to establish reading as a habit; a vital part of the children's lives rather than an activity confined to a lesson.

Home Loan Books

Books can be taken home from the classroom collection. Children are encouraged to alternate their choices i.e. fiction, non-fiction, reading scheme, rhyme or poetry books may be chosen. Castleside Primary School highly promotes reading for pleasure and children are encouraged to choose any book of interest regardless of its complexity.

PRACTICE SHOULD PROMOTE

- The successful language learning which children have already accomplished in the context of their own homes and communities and
- Provide children with ‘the best possible learning opportunities matched to their individual needs;
- Provide an “apprenticeship” approach to acquiring written and oral language, in which the adult represents the ‘success’ the child seeks, yet offers endless help;
- Maintain a constant respect for the child’s language;
- Enable children to reflect upon and organise their thinking about activities which are provided for them;
- Provide opportunities for children to interact with each other/teachers in oral language and through this to gain confidence in their own ability as speakers;
- Help children to feel at home in the world of books and literature as attentive listeners and reflective readers who find pleasure in books;
- Allow children to behave like real writers and to develop confidence in themselves as writers;
- Maintain a close connection between reading and writing.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment of a child’s development will continually provide both ‘feedback’ and ‘target setting’. It will reflect the overall Assessment Policy.

Aspects of English: Speaking and Listening, Reading, Writing, Spelling and Handwriting will be assessed throughout each term in conjunction with the whole school assessment timetable.

Every child’s work is looked at by all staff during moderation and scrutiny sessions. Staff are able to assess progression of skills across the school, spelling skills, handwriting etc.

Whole school targets and priorities for improvement are formulated from these assessments which the English Leader feeds into the annual school self-review process and audits. Areas for improvement are highlighted and appropriate action is taken to address developments.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

It is important to recognise that language is never neutral. The individual’s knowledge of language will be rooted in their social, cultural and linguistic experience. The study of language must recognise differences and remain non-judgemental. It must be descriptive rather than prescriptive.

The English Curriculum will reflect the Equal Opportunities Policy and our commitment to being a Rights Respecting school.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Within the National Primary Strategy children of all ages and abilities are catered for. Those with special literacy needs will be provided for with appropriate work at their own level of ability which will facilitate an extended learning process. Having determined the child's needs, appropriate learning steps will be presented and achievement of these will ensure steady progress is made. Liaison will take place with the SEND Coordinator if particular provision is required in an Individual Education Programme under the Code of Practice (SEND). Particular reference should be made to the School SEND Policy. The early detection of reading difficulties is important. Certainly, by the end of Reception, concerns about certain children should have been raised by staff with the SENDCo. For more in depth tests and suggested recovery strategies see Special Needs File.

MOST ABLE AND TALENTED

The Most Able and Talented Coordinator will monitor provision for our most able children, ensuring that they have access to challenging and thought-provoking tasks which will enhance their knowledge and understanding in literacy. At the start of each academic year teachers project which level each child in their class will reach in reading, writing and maths. Assessments confirm the progress they have made each term towards their predicted levels. The SEND and MAT Coordinators along with English and Numeracy Coordinators carefully monitor this process. If children are clearly not achieving or exceeding expected levels then work will be planned accordingly to meet their needs.

THE ROLE OF THE ENGLISH COORDINATOR

Literacy is involved in many aspects of the learning which takes place in school. The coordinator needs to ensure close liaison with other coordinators to ensure that children are provided with appropriate opportunities and resources to enable them to engage in literacy activities in a cross curricular way.

The role of the English Coordinator is to:

- Organise in-service training for staff in English;
- Ensure that appropriate resources are available;
- Provide advice to assist staff in the delivery of the curriculum;
- Provide support for NQTs in English;
- Develop strong links with the feeder Nursery Schools;
- Ensure continuity and progression from Reception to Year 6;
- Know and understand how children become literate;
- Evaluate on a regular basis the policy and medium term planning and ensure they form the basis of practice of literacy within the school;
- Keep updated in literacy developments through appropriate in-service training;
- Keep a Coordinator's file and portfolio informative and regularly updated;
- Audit provision for English across the school in terms of teaching and learning, resources, standards on a regular basis;

- Prioritise improvements for the teaching and learning of English across the school and contribute to the school improvement plan;
- Put a bid forward to the Head Teacher for English based resources on evaluations from audits;
- Liaise with Head Teacher to manage funding on a yearly basis for English and qualify how newly purchased resources has had an impact on teaching and learning;
- With the Head Teacher and Assessment Coordinator track the progress of identified groups of children and be involved in a thorough evaluation of English looking at trends over time, value added from baseline predictions to end of Key Stage SATs results;
- Be involved with intervention programmes to support and boost the learning of children who are not reaching expected standard for the termly/half termly assessments.

PARENTS/CARERS AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Castleside Primary School aims to foster a close partnership with parents/carers in their child's language development.

- This is promoted through the following:
- Children take home a book to share with parents/carers on a regular basis; Children are encouraged to change their reading book every day;
- The school promotes the importance of English through a range of events: e.g. Reading Trails, visits from poets, authors, story tellers etc.
- Parents/carers are consulted on a regular basis with regard to their child's progress in English.

EVALUATION

Evaluation of this policy will be ongoing and will be carried out through – team meetings, team planning meetings, observations of lessons from planning to teaching and learning, discussion.

Resources will be audited on a regular basis and proposals for new resources will be discussed with the Head teacher and the English Coordinator.

New members of staff will have access to this policy and planning support for English. It is the responsibility of the English Coordinator to ensure staff have necessary help and support.