



Attleborough Primary School

English Policy

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English Policy

At Attleborough Primary School we believe that a high quality education in English is essential for children’s social, emotional and cultural development. Our English curriculum develops children’s ability and confidence to speak and write fluently, so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others. We put a high importance on reading a range of fiction and non-fiction texts to help children to develop emotionally, spiritually and culturally and to gain additional knowledge about the world around them.

Aims

Our aims are in line with the National Curriculum aims and objectives for English: to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping children with a strong command of the spoken and written word and to develop a love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

Teaching and Learning

The school follows the Talk for Writing approach to teaching English which is rooted in quality texts and a focus on achieving effects on readers. Our teachers use a range of strategies to engage and inspire children during English lessons and follow a sequence of teaching that enables children to develop the required skills to be able to interrogate texts and write across a range of genres. Children are taught in mixed ability groups throughout the school and are constantly challenged through the work that they are given. Tasks are matched to the individual children’s needs to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to make good progress. In some cases this may involve the support of the teacher or teaching assistant on a whole class task; in others it might be differentiated texts or tasks suited to the individual’s needs. Our timetable allows for 1 ½ hours of English teaching (reading and writing) to be carried out each day. Within English sessions children will be taught grammar, spelling and punctuation to support their writing and inference skills to develop their reading during these lessons. Children are also given the opportunity to practise and consolidate their English skills through reading and writing in topic lessons as we teach a creative cross curricular approach.

English Curriculum Planning

Our English planning falls into 3 phases: long term plans outline the topics that we will be teaching both across the curriculum and within English; medium term plans give details of the main teaching objectives for each term and short term plans which give detail of our daily English teaching and learning. Our short term plans list specific objectives and learning outcomes for each lesson and give details on how the lessons will be taught. Medium and short term planning is produced within year groups and individual class teachers will use these to make assessments of children’s performance which will then be used to allocate extra support and intervention as necessary.

To ensure that our children are achieving their full potential in English, we:

- Follow the Talk for Writing teaching sequence (Imitation, Innovation, Invention and Independent Application) which contains specific and clear objectives for each lesson
- Have high expectations of all children; ensuring that they are all challenged to produce their best work.
- Use knowledge of children’s prior learning to ensure that we are building on skills that they have already learned so they are given increasing challenge as they move up the school to ensure they make good progress.
- Differentiate our lessons so that all children have the chance to flourish
- Plan engaging and inspiring opportunities for children to write

- Plan for speaking and listening opportunities to enable children to practise key skills verbally before they put pen to paper
- Assess work and give detailed feedback, including immediate verbal feedback, to pupils to help them to make further progress with their work at all stages of the Talk for Writing sequence, but in particular during the innovation stage when children are still mastering their ability to write in a certain style.
- Model shared writing and guided writing and how to edit and improve work.
- Use Cooperative Learning strategies to ensure active learning and the opportunity for each child to have a voice.

Speaking and Listening at APS

We understand how important spoken language is to our pupil's development across the curriculum and how important it is to their progress in reading and writing. Our teachers ensure that children are exposed to rich language in their lessons and encourage them to use it both in writing and speech so that they are able to communicate precise ideas to their audiences. Children are taught how to express their ideas clearly and audibly and how to listen and respond appropriately to others. We attach great importance to the use of Standard English within our school and teachers and teaching assistants sensitively support the children through their modelling of language to distinguish between the appropriacy of regional dialects and the importance of Standard English. Speaking and listening are at the head of our Talk for Writing approach and children are regularly required to perform texts orally and then orally rehearse their ideas and play with language noticing the effects on the reader before committing their ideas to paper. Within English teaching time, children are encouraged to use drama to help them to gain meaning from texts and deepen their understanding of the motivations of characters within them. All children are given the opportunity to participate in a school production.

Reading at APS

We understand that reading is essential to children's success in all subjects across the curriculum. Teachers at our school understand the key role that they have in helping to develop positive attitudes towards reading and the importance it has in fuelling children's imagination.

In Reception and Year One we teach phonics through the StoryTime phonics programme which is based around the Letters and Sounds Phases 1 – 5. This programme is a systematic and comprehensive phonic programme which has a love of reading and of books at its core.

Children in Year 2 onwards are taught how to use a range of clues to identify unfamiliar words and gain meaning from their texts: picture clues, context clues, and word class clues.

Guided reading sessions allow children to work collaboratively on reading activities and to work with teachers and teaching assistants discussing and interpreting texts and stories. Teachers use this time to help children to practise key inference skills and to assess children's understanding of books. Across the school, guided reading is taught through the model of small group work, where the children either work independently or with an adult. Or by whole class reading sessions, where the class share the same text, but often with differentiated activities and questions. Teachers use this opportunity to deepen children's understanding of a text and help develop their inference. The key focus when reading is what the effect of the words used has on the reader. The books and extracts that are chosen

for these sessions are high quality texts that both challenge and inspire the children and are chosen to help them to develop a love of reading. Studying whole books during these sessions allows children to build up their reading stamina.

In our school we also follow the Power of Reading Scheme, which will raise the engagement of reading and writing, through the use of high quality children’s literature and a creative teaching approach.

Children have access to the school library each lunch time and are timetabled to have one hour in the library per week with the class teacher. We also regularly visit the local library to continue with a wide breadth of literary opportunities.

Parental Support and Engagement. As well as our teachers, parents have a key role in helping to promote a love of reading and books amongst children. Taking time to listen to their children read, sharing books together, talking about books and recording reading sessions within the school reading record are the most important homework tasks that parents can support their child with. As a school, we actively seek out opportunities to engage parents in reading activities with their children. These take the form of story sharing activities, reading cafes and visits to guided reading sessions in class.

Writing at APS

Children are taught to write for a variety of purposes in a range of forms for a range of audiences. Our English teaching follows the Talk for Writing teaching sequence which begins with children undertaking a ‘Cold Task’ which allows children to show their teacher what they already know about a genre of writing and enables the teacher to adapt their planning to teach the skills that the children need to perfect. The children then learn a model text off by heart which over the course of a 3 to 4 week unit ultimately leads to the children writing in that style. Each year group covers a range of fiction and non-fiction genres throughout the year, as well as poetry. During the course of a unit, the children complete 3 to 4 pieces of writing along with several short burst pieces to practice key composition skills. Children also have the opportunity to write extended texts about a range of subjects.

During a teaching sequence, each teacher models shared writing where they demonstrate how to write in a particular style and children share their ideas. Supported composition (using an example of a children’s piece of work) is used to help the children to perfect their editing skills to improve their work and help to achieve their next steps in learning. Children complete independent writing tasks and, depending on ability, some receive writing frames, word banks or scaffolds to help them to succeed. To consolidate understanding of a text type, children complete a ‘Hot Task’.

To ensure progress in writing, teachers regularly provide feedback to children about their writing so that they are clear on the things that they are doing well and the specific areas that they need to work on to make further progress. Children are given the opportunity to respond to their teacher’s comments, and are taught specifically how to edit and improve their work.

Spelling at APS

Teachers at APS understand the important role that spelling plays in children being able to access the full English Curriculum, whilst making good progress with their reading and writing. Research shows that children are better able to focus on their thoughts and ideas when writing if they are able to spell. Weak spellers can often limit their language choices

and instead restrict themselves to using simple words for fear of misspelling them which can then contribute to slower progress in their writing.

In Reception and Year One, children are taught spellings using StoryTime Phonics. This ensures the Letters and Sounds Phases 1-5 are taught and consolidated. In Year 2, children are taught the appropriate grammar and spelling through the Letters and Sounds Phase 6. Every child in Year Two to Year Six, are taught spellings that are relevant to the current topic in each class and given words from the National Curriculum assigned for each year group. Children are taught spellings for 15-20 minutes at least 3 days a week. This teaching is focused around spelling patterns and rules which are specified in the National Curriculum 2014. Children bring home spelling homework based on common rules and patterns along with commonly misspelt words to learn (which have been identified from their written work). Parents use 'look, say, cover, write, check' method to support their children in mastering their words and they will be tested on these with spelling buddies on a weekly basis. Children who require further support with their spellings will be given additional words and sounds to practise at home to ensure that they make good progress. Higher achieving spellers are given word investigation homework to help them to continue to make progress with their spelling and knowledge of word morphology. In addition to our school spelling programme, the teaching of spelling and the exploration of spelling patterns are taught as part of the Talk 4 Writing teaching sequence.

Handwriting at APS

It is important that during their time at APS children are able to develop a fluent writing style which will facilitate their writing and will prepare them for the increasing speed, strength and stamina required as they move through the school. As with spelling, it is important that children's ideas and creativity are not held back by the physical act of forming letters and words and that their presentation can show a pride in their work. Regular handwriting practice is carried out in all year groups following our own school's handwriting scheme. Additional intervention groups for handwriting and gross and fine motor skills run across the school to support children who have particular difficulties with their handwriting and co-ordination.

English across the Curriculum

Lessons across the curriculum are planned to give children the opportunity to consolidate and apply the full range of their literacy skills through speaking and listening, reading and writing to communicate their ideas and theories. In maths, children are encouraged to use their reading and comprehension skills to understand word problems and identify the calculations they need to use to find solutions. They use their speaking and listening skills to explain and understand alternative ways of solving problems using precise mathematical language. In Science, children use precise technical language and forms of non-fiction writing to explain scientific phenomena and to record the outcomes of practical experiments. In history, geography and religious education children use their knowledge of the English language to find out new information about the world around them and are given the opportunity to express their views about a range of moral issues, both past and present, through spoken debates and writing. Our Topic plans are also aligned with our long-term English planning so that children are able to apply their learning to their topic writing. Speaking and Listening skills are used every lesson through our Cooperative Learning strategies and Growth Mindset approaches to learning.

English and Inclusion

Where appropriate, work is differentiated for children with special educational needs, English as an additional Language and for those that are gifted and talented so that they can

achieve their full potential. All our teachers provide appropriate learning opportunities to match tasks to the ability of the children.

Teachers and teaching assistants provide support so that every child will achieve in English by:

- individualised guided writing and reading;
- differentiated texts where appropriate so that children can more easily read and understand in the case of our EAL and SEN students, or more challenging texts that will stretch gifted children’s skills;
- visual and written materials in different formats;
- ICT and other technological aids (Clicker 6);
- alternative communication such as signs and symbols;

Assessment

Assessments are carried out in line with APS’s Feedback and Marking Policy. Teachers carry out short term, medium term and long term assessments of children’s work in English. Short term assessments will evaluate children’s performance in lessons and daily plans are adapted in light of these outcomes. Medium term assessment looks into children’s performance across a unit and will be built into future planning of units. Long term assessment focuses on children’s performance at the end of a term, and the results of this assessment will trigger extra tuition outside of core English teaching time for certain groups of children to help support their progress. Longer term assessment of reading involves a combination of teacher assessment and optional tests to assess performance, and for writing all assessment is teacher assessed and internally moderated.

Moderation

Year group moderation of writing happens on a termly basis and a team of experienced staff are responsible for moderating writing levels across the school to assess writing progress at the end of the academic year. Scheduled staff meetings throughout the year focus on moderation ensuring that the school’s approach is both consistent and meets the national standards as set out by the government. Cluster moderation happens at least once an academic year.

Resources

There are a range of resources within the school to support the teaching of English that are used across year groups, including:

Talk for Writing resources and books.

A well-stocked School library which includes a range of fiction and non-fiction books and recommended challenge books to encourage reading for pleasure.

Guided Reading Books and Resources in year groups to help support the development of comprehension skills, love of reading and a broad understanding of a range of authors.

Oxford Reading Tree books and Read, Write Inc resources to support children’s decoding and phonic knowledge.

Clicker 6 to support children with dyslexia.

Monitoring and Review

The English subject leader is responsible for ensuring that year groups are following the long term English plans and including a range of cross curricular writing in there lessons. They must ensure progression in English throughout each year group and from one Key Stage to

another. The English leader is also responsible for updating staff on developments for the English curriculum, suggesting training to support staff's subject knowledge and sharing best practice. Regular continual professional development sessions are led by the subject leader focusing on grammar for writing, moderation, Talk for Writing, Power of Reading and developing a love of reading and spelling. The subject leader is allocated regular management time which is used to review evidence of children's learning, to review the teaching of English across the school and to develop training programmes.

Health and Safety

All Attleborough Primary School staff operate within the school's Health and Safety Policy. After consultation and agreement with staff this policy was adopted by the school's governing body and then implemented by the school