

Thatto Heath Community Primary School



English Policy

(Revised November 2017)

Introduction and Background

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of English at Thatto Heath Community Primary School.

The English curriculum is continually being adapted to meet the needs of all pupils in each cohort. Creative teaching strategies are embedded within literacy lessons, in classrooms where children can take risks, enjoy and experiment with language, and discover and pursue their interests and talents.

The teaching and planning of literacy is taken from the new National Curriculum, which was statutory from September 2014. All year groups plan half termly to incorporate cross curricular themes and the use of a class novel or series of books on which to base reading, writing and drama opportunities.

The lesson structure which we apply at Thatto Heath CPS supports the learning intentions of the lesson and ensure that:

- Children should know what they are learning and why, along with the extend of progress they are making
- Children have the opportunity to enquire, to question and explore
- Timings of different parts of the lesson should fit the purpose of the intended learning outcome
- While planning across terms and weeks is necessary to build in progression and cover content, such planning will need to be adapted to meet the needs of children's learning in response to assessment and ongoing review
- The importance of building on children's learning in the EYFS

In order to enhance learning there is a focus on using and applying literacy knowledge and skills in other subjects and contexts and this is planned for in our cross curricular topic webs.

Vision Statement

English should develop pupils' abilities to communicate effectively in speech and writing and to listen with understanding. It should also enable them to be enthusiastic, responsive and knowledgeable readers. To participate confidently in public, cultural and working life, pupils need to be able to speak, read and write standard English fluently and accurately.

At Thatto Heath Community Primary School we appreciate that reading and writing are the foundations upon which all future learning is based. To acquire knowledge, it is essential that children can access information from a wide range of sources. To record information and demonstrate understanding, they must be able to present their knowledge in a readily accessible format, matching style and content to purpose.

We place equal value upon reading and writing for pleasure and provide a rich and literate environment for all pupils to experience and enjoy a variety of literary styles. We want to enable our pupils to approach all types of reading materials confidently and critically, to be able to exert *personal preferences* in their own choice of reading materials. It is important that children can employ a secure knowledge of writing styles and genres in their own writing for effective and imaginative expression.

Aims for the teaching of English

At Thatto Heath Community Primary we aim to enable all children to use their reading and writing skills across all areas of daily life, with confidence, competence and creativity.

By the age of 11 we aim for a child to be able to:

- Read with confidence, fluency and enjoyment and understanding
- Use a range of independent strategies to; self-monitor and correct, retrieve information and evaluate what has been read
- Use higher order reading skills including deduction and inference through the use of text referral , assessment of author’s intentions, justifications of their opinions and judgements and in the pursuit of critical awareness
- Write with confidence, imagination and enthusiasm with an awareness of audience and purpose
- To use grammar and punctuation correctly to attain higher levels of English writing
- Understanding and use technical vocabulary when discussing their reading and writing
- Write in a high standard in a range of genres, in the style of different authors and structure their writing in narrative and non-narrative styles
- Understand the sound and spelling system and to use this to read and spell correctly
- Communicate effectively, speak with confidence and structure their talk in ways which are coherent and understandable
- Listen carefully with good concentration so that they are able to respond thoughtfully and appropriately
- Ask and answer questions to demonstrate and clarify their understanding
- Write with fluent, legible, joined handwriting and take pride in the presentation of their work

Curriculum Organisation

The children are taught a daily English lesson in Y1-Y6 where they develop the knowledge, skills and understanding set out in the national curriculum. Each lesson is approximately 60 - 70 minutes in length. Each lesson aims to cover a ‘word of the day’, a grammar starter, whole class teaching, guided group work, differentiated independent work and plenary. Over the course of a unit the children will have had experience of reading, writing, word and sentence level work.

The Foundation Stage follows the Early Years Curriculum which includes CL (Communication and Language) and Literacy, (which includes reading and writing). These are taught daily through continuous provision and focused activities. We have embedded the use of Letters & Sounds from Nursery through to year 2 to ensure the teaching of high quality, systematic phonics taught discretely and daily. Catch up Letters & Sounds groups are taught in target groups in Key Stage 2 as necessary. Four part sessions, in line with quality first phonics teaching are planned and delivered throughout FS/KS1.

To monitor progression through the phases phonics tracking sheet are used by all staff in Nursery, Reception and KS1 to ensure progress is maintained and accelerated where necessary and we use simple, rigorous and purposeful assessment that leads to planning that support individual needs.

Shared Reading (Whole class)

In Foundation Stage, KS1 and KS2 this is achieved using class sets and multi-modal texts. A range of interactive Big Book texts are available for each year group, such as ‘i –Read’ and Boardworks literacy

resources for the interactive whiteboards. Additional online big books are available from the schools Intranet.

Once a term, unit is planned through the use of a novel, or series of books linked to a focus author. Class sets or digital copies of these are often used for shared reading.

Another unit each term is planned using 'Language and Literacy'. The Read Write Inc. Scheme also uses a focus fiction and non-fiction text as a basis for reading/writing/grammar and oracy teaching.

Word Recognition and structure (Whole class and group work)

Decoding (Reading) and Encoding (Spelling)

In the Foundation Stage and KS1 this is focused on phonic acquisition and the daily teaching of high frequency and common frequency words. The teaching of phonics is daily, fast paced and follows the 'Letters and Sounds' document.

For those children who are working below the level of the shared input or those in KS2 who require further consolidation, we use the following programmes for either group or individual sessions with the learning support assistant: Nessey, Lifeboat and Sydney.

Sentence Level Work (Whole class/group work)

In Key Stage 1 some parts of this work is taught using class texts, interactive whiteboard resources and games. Grammatical awareness, sentence construction and punctuation are taught at this time. In Key Stage 2, grammatical awareness, sentence construction and punctuation are usually taught through the use of the focus text and writing in addition to a separate, daily grammar starters in Y1 – Y6. Materials and activities from Grammar for Writing, Grammar Springboards and Topical Resources can be used at this time.

Text Level Work

Throughout school teachers encourage a thorough and deep understanding of texts read. This is achieved through focused questioning at all levels. Early readers are encouraged to talk about stories through illustrations and texts which are shared. As the children become more independent readers they are encouraged to talk about texts they have read themselves, beginning to show a deeper understanding. With confident readers, teachers ask more searching questions, requiring understanding using skills of inference and deduction.

Once children are able to read with some independence they complete a comprehension task each week. Texts include both fiction and non fiction.

Guided / Supported Reading

Guided Reading is carried out by the class teacher in the Foundation Stage using scheme books specifically written to support 'Letters & Sounds' (ORT Songbirds, Jelly Bean and Floppy Phonics) and with some Y1 pupils or with books which have been especially written for guided reading work. These books are coded into Book Bands and cover the range of fiction, poetry and non-fiction. During the guided reading sessions word recognition work and comprehension skills are reinforced.

Reception and Year 1

Supported Reading sessions are planned by the class teacher but are delivered by learning support assistants, building on the work carried out in the session with the teacher.

Y2 – Y6 - Vipers (Vocabulary, Infer, Predict, Explain, retrieve, (KS1) Sequence (KS2) Summarise.

Whole class guided reading sessions to improve comprehension skills using a range of high quality texts, images, pictures and books.

Children are grouped by ability to read in these weekly sessions and we track these groups using the APP criteria. Half termly, class teachers complete a digital book band tracker to ensure all children are making appropriate progress to reach ARE.

Independent reading work

During continuous provision there are opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage /Key Stage 1 to engage with interactive texts such as Oxford Reading Tree, work through computer programmes such as Nessy, as well as phonic activities, sentence and text based work differentiated by ability.

There are planned opportunities for ERIC (Everybody Reading in Class) session for KS1 and KS2. This encourages independent reading and working time where children can carry out book reviews and complete their reading journals which contain structured tasks for the children to complete. There are a set of tasks set at each level to ensure progression and continuity. ERIC is also an opportunity for children and staff to share and discuss books they are reading.

Individual Reading

Children in Reception are heard to read weekly, twice weekly or daily depending on need.

In KS1 children are also heard read once a week by a member of staff with additional reading sessions from their learning support assistant as required.

In KS2 children are heard read once a fortnight by their class teacher with additional reading sessions with their LSA.

Throughout school, those children who are working in the below average group, are not supported with reading at home or those identified as having additional learning needs are heard more frequently. Each child has individual reading targets which are linked to their guided reading work.

There is a wide choice of books for each reading level including a set of books in each year group designed specifically for Gifted & Talented readers, to further extend comprehension skills. Children are not expected to read every book in every coloured level. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to use their Assessment for Learning information and their professional judgement to move a child onto books at the next level. The class teacher and the LSA record progress during the reading sessions on formative reading record sheets. The Home/School reading record book is where the teachers and parents record their comments and maintain a dialogue about a child's progress. There is an expectation that children will read at home regularly and children receive a reading token each time they read on 3 separate occasions at home. The tokens are counted in classes, and each class can decide when to redeem the tokens for a range of rewards including extra playtime and golden time.

Book Fairs / Library Visits

To encourage reading for pleasure we hold a themed Book Fair during each school year, to coincide with our school 'Book Week'. The commission raised is used to restock the school library. Each Year group has the opportunity to visit the local library and additional storytelling sessions occur with the local librarian coming into school for FS and KS1.

Buddy Reading

Buddy Reading has been introduced to promote reading for pleasure across Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Key Stage 2 pupils are paired with a Foundation Stage/KS1 pupil. Buddy reading sessions take place as part of the twin class work and during Focus Weeks. Additionally our trained KS2 Buddy Reading Council carry out sessions with selected Year 2/Year 4 'buddies' during dinner times targeting those pupils who are working below the expected level of attainment, those not reading at home or those needing to develop social skills. Specially chosen texts and games are used during the Buddy Reading sessions and these resources are stored in the Buddy Reading section of our library.

Book Week / World Book Day

The school holds an annual Book Week with whole school themes, for example The Lion, the Witch & the Wardrobe, Alice in Wonderland or Roald Dahl. During these weeks visiting authors, poets and special guests visit the school and the children take part in a range of reading and writing activities. Lunchtime supervisors and other visitors come into school to share a book with infant classes. At the end of the week both staff and children come into school 'in role' and take part in character 'hot-seating' assemblies. We also celebrate 'World Book Day' in March by having additional assemblies and a day dedicated to reading for pleasure.

Curriculum Enhancement

To enhance the curriculum we build in opportunities for the children to work on a rolling programme with visiting creatives such as poets and authors. During these sessions the class teacher will take part in team teaching sessions. These sessions are linked to school improvement planning and are focused on the specific needs of each cohort.

Storytelling

Storytelling is a wonderful way of increasing children's vocabulary, sentence structure and confidence and opportunities for storytelling are identified throughout the curriculum. Repeated telling of favourite stories is used to enable to children to develop a bank of known stories from which they learn to recite. By building a store of characters, plots and story language in this way, our children will find it easier to create their own stories, in role-play, storytelling sessions and when they writing their own stories. Storytelling sessions take place daily throughout school. To enhance storytelling time we have an outdoor storytelling chair with seating for a whole class.

Library

A purpose built Library was completed in February 2012. It is divided into a fiction and non-fiction section. The non-fiction stock is ordered by the Dewey decimal number system. Micro-librarian is used to scan the books which the children take out and return. The library is run by a dedicated

LSA/librarian, volunteers and Y6 children both during lunchtimes and after school on Tuesday and Thursday in order that parents can share choosing books with their child for both pleasure and to support research for homework projects or to use the internet facility which is available within the library. These books, story sacks, story CDs and phonic/word games can also be loaned out of the library. Children's book reviews/dioramas are displayed on the library area. Cross-curricular research projects are built into the curriculum to develop children's independent research skills across KS2. In addition, all classes are timetabled to visit the library each half term. Non-fiction text/topic books can be clearly identified.

Writing

Writing is an important medium for communication. It can provide creative pleasure and be an aid to effective learning. For children to be capable of expressing their feelings, thoughts, experiences in written form, they must be able to organise their ideas efficiently, express them appropriately and present them clearly and attractively.

Opportunities to stimulate children's desire and enthusiasm to write are developed from the earliest stages. Children's attempts at writing for themselves are encouraged and valued, with classes at Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and Lower KS2 using writing areas such as Post Offices and Travel Agents as part of their role play provision.



Nursery Role Play

Fiction

The school uses a combination of the 'Big Writing' resources from Ros Wilson, Alan Peat and Pie Corbett's Story writing resources. We have developed a whole school developmental approach to story planning. The Story Map is introduced in FS/KS1 and is extended into the story mountain at KS2. We have developed a coherent approach for the teaching of vocabulary, sentence openers, connectives and punctuation. VCOP. (see appendices)

Story mats are used to promote independence and self correction. Drama/hot seating is used to enhance the writing process and to aid the children to understanding characterisation. In 2015, we introduced a 'Composition Charter' (Appendices). This guides the writing phases from planning, drafting, re-drafting to editing and final composition.

Non-Fiction

Non-fiction planning frames have been designed for both key stages allowing the children to plan their ideas using the structure and ideas provided.

Non-fiction writing is carried out every half term to run alongside topics covered. Success criteria for each genre has been created to ensure consistency throughout the school.

A non-fiction display in the Key Stage 2 hall celebrates children non-fiction writing. In addition augmented reality is used to demonstrate children's writing through the Aurasma App. Literacy Shed and Literacy Shed plus is a resource that has been introduced for staff to plan non-fiction writing using video and music stimuli. Teaching ideas for writing are also supported by Alan Peat.

Literacy and Language

This is a text based complete literacy programme for Years 2 – 6 which provides explicit guidance for developing:

- Grammar
- Vocabulary Development
- Critical Thinking
- Spoken Language

It covers all objectives related to these skills in the new National Curriculum. This will be taught in Autumn 1, Spring 1, and Summer 1 on a daily basis. Sessions will be approximately 70 minutes long.

School Newspaper

Children identified as higher achievers are selected to take part in an after school club to develop journalistic skills and produce a school newspaper.

Developing Early Writing

In Foundation Stage emergent writing through continuous provision is encouraged and valued. Adults in Foundation Stage model writing and scribe what the children say where necessary. Talk for writing is key to developing early writing: word banks are used to support independence and cradles are used to aid those children who need support to write a sentence. Individual whiteboards and dry wipe pens can be used during supported composition.

Writing Journals

Children in KS2 keep their own writing journals. In these individual journals the children can record interesting vocabulary from their reading, story ideas and top tips and use them in the planning element of their writing both in school and at home (to record 'Talk for writing' ideas).

Guided / Supported Writing

Guided writing is an additional supported step towards independent writing. Guided writing is planned with three major purposes in mind:

- To support children in planning and drafting their own work
- To revise and edit work in progress
- To provide differentiated support to particular groups
- To teach a particular skill e.g. how to use speech marks

The class teacher delivers the guided sessions and the learning support assistant builds on these during the supported sessions following our school composition charter.

Writing targets

All children's individual targets are set by the class teacher, using key objectives from the English framework and shared with parents through the school website. The objectives are set after the half termly writing assessment has taken place. Children work towards their objectives during guided sessions and reference is made to the targets when teachers mark their pupils work.

Spelling

Daily practice of key words are practised throughout school. Spelling strategies need to be taught explicitly and applied to high-frequency words, cross curricular words and individual pupil's words. A good spelling programme gradually builds pupils' spelling vocabulary by introducing patterns or conventions and continually practising those already introduced. Letters and Sounds are taught daily throughout EYFS and KS1 moving through each phase. Weekly spelling lists focus on consolidating the spelling of high frequency words. Most children are working within Phase 6 in Year 2, before moving onto the Read Write Inc scheme of work.

In Key Stage 2 there is a daily 20 minute focussed spelling session to teach and practice spelling patterns and strategies. Children follow the Read Write Inc spelling scheme and work in appropriately differentiated groups. Each Monday children will receive up to 10 words linked to the spelling focus for that week, on which they are then tested on Friday. Each term, children will be tested on high frequency words appropriate for their year group or ability; the results of this will be analysed and used to plan additional input for the following term.

Punctuation and Grammar

Children are taught to use punctuation accurately throughout school, beginning with simple sentence punctuation in EYFS, moving to more advanced punctuation as they move through school. As the children become more confident, fluent writers they are encouraged to use their 'writer's voice' and use accurate grammar. Both punctuation and grammar are taught implicitly through shared/guided texts and explicitly in literacy lessons.

Editing

Children are introduced to elements of the editing code from the early writing stage. From Y1 the children are introduced to the symbol which indicates a spelling error, other symbols are added gradually, to develop writing, and the skills of editing itself, are taught explicitly during the

composition phases, including the use of coloured editing to make this phase explicit. The editing code at KS2 builds on the work done in KS1 as children become more confident at editing their own work.

Handwriting

During Autumn 2011 a consistent approach to handwriting was established throughout the school. One agreed 'script' is used for all writing from nursery; this cursive script is not joined in EYFS. By Y1/Y2 children are beginning to be taught how to connect the cursive letters as appropriate to produce a neat and legible cursive style. Regular practice at letter formation, joins and fluency take place in all classes each week. Good teacher modelling promotes accurate, neat handwriting and our school font is available to be used on the interactive white board and to produce worksheets. Children progress to using pens from Year 4.

Role Play

From Foundation Stage to Year 1 each class has a designated role play area which are used to encourage speaking and listening, writing and practical mathematics. Adults model play in these areas and they are planned and constructed in partnership with the children. The role play areas change at least once a term. Additional outdoor role play freezes are used in Reception and Year 1 in order to extend this effective way of learning through play.

Drama

Drama is a strength of our school. Reception – Year 6 use drama as a strategy throughout the curriculum. History and English are the main subjects which are linked to drama. The literacy planning identifies opportunities to use drama strategies. As part of our PPA provision drama specialists come into school to work with the children on teaching drama skills and the development of improvisations. There are many opportunities throughout the academic year for the children to perform – Christmas and Easter performances, class assemblies as well as an end of year leaving performance by year 6. In order to develop a love of drama there are two outdoor stages for the children to use both during curriculum time and playtimes.

Cross- Curricular Opportunities

Reading, writing, speaking and listening skills which are taught in English lessons are applied in all subject areas. All year groups adopt a thematic approach to planning literacy, using cross curricular links and a focus on a whole class novel. This cross curricular writing is recorded in big write, literacy and topic books. Over the year there are a number of additional cross-curricular project opportunities such as Book Week, Super Hero Week, India Day, Mad Science Week etc., which provide the children with opportunities to apply their skills. The introduction of the Global Learning Programme offers further opportunities for cross curricular opportunities.

Creative Approaches

All staff are trained to use creative strategies to enhance teaching and learning. Strategies such as: Meet and Greet, KWL, Paired Talk and Thinking Time etc are all used to ensure an inclusive curriculum in which all learners are engaged and make progress. Collaborative strategies are at the heart of these approaches.

Equal Opportunities

The teaching of all aspects of English is accessible for all pupils regardless of race, culture or gender. There are a range of multi-cultural books available in each classroom. Setting in the upper juniors is used to provide for more specific needs of some children. The support of classroom assistants in all Key Stages facilitates the learning of individuals and small groups.

Spiritual , Moral, Social and Cultural Development and the Promotion of British Values

We aim to encourage an awe and wonder of the written word in all its forms. Children have the opportunity to enjoy a wide variety of literature and the rich complexities of our language. They are encouraged to appreciate how information, lessons and opinions can be taught and learned through reading and writing. They will find satisfaction in their own self-expression and others. They learn about other cultures and their literacy heritage.

We aim to enrich, deepen and broaden pupils' experiences of reading and writing in the real world, of which the school community is part, through encouraging children to be involved in community projects.

Health and Safety

Books are kept clean and in a good state of repair. Very worn or damaged books are regularly disposed of. Children are taught to handle books with care, particularly when reading. This is also emphasised for books that are taken home. Care is taken when books are standing up on display so that they may not easily fall or become dislodged. Children are encouraged from an early age to become responsible for finding their own reading books from the corridor baskets.

Homework

In all key stages children take home their individual reading book. There is also a home/ school comment book. Each child also has the opportunity to take home 2 library books. Parents are encouraged to listen to their child read throughout the school, not just at FS and KS1, and participate in the school's Reading Challenge.

From Y1 children learn 5 (progressing to 10) spellings for homework. The number and difficulty is appropriate to their age and ability. They are learned by using the look, say, cover, write and check method. Children in Reception take home a sound book with spellings, when ready, to reinforce work done in class.

In Years 1,2,3, and 4 English homework is set every other week, mainly a grammar focus. From year 5 to year 6, children have English homework weekly. This homework uses a range of literacy skills such as researching, reporting and creative writing.

Inclusion

Schools have a responsibility to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils. We set suitable learning challenges, respond to pupils learning needs and seek to overcome potential barriers to learning by:

- ✓ Adapting questions during shared input
- ✓ Revising and securing work from previous terms and year groups

- ✓ By planning differentiated tasks in guided and independent work
- ✓ By setting differentiated tasks in guided and independent group work
- ✓ By setting differentiated reading and writing targets each half term

Children on the Code of Practice (from School Action) have Individual Education Plans that are updated regularly and discussed with parents.

As a school we have also introduced our own target groups for Literacy support, which focus on word recognition and sentence writing. This is throughout KS1 and KS2.

Planning

The long term plans follow the new National Curriculum. Teachers use these to produce their own medium term plans which focus on a particular novel or set of books. Year groups identify cross-curricular writing opportunities, ICT resources and assessment opportunities and produce a half termly overview of these.

The class teacher writes the weekly short term planning and shares this with the support staff in the class. Short term planning is uploaded weekly by the class teacher onto the school's network.

Assessment

Formal assessments are carried out each half term and the results of these assessments are recorded on school pupil tracker.

FS Assessments

- ✓ Letters & Sounds
- ✓ HFW/tricky words recognition
- ✓ Developmental Matters

KS1 and KS2 Assessments

- ✓ Letters & Sounds
- ✓ HFW
- ✓ Writing
- ✓ Reading (comprehension at Y2 onwards)
- ✓ Phonic Screening in Y1

A formal reading age assessment is carried out from Y2-Y6. The Assessment / Data team leader and the SLT evaluate the outcomes of these assessments and present the findings to staff.

Formative reading records, guided reading targets as well as writing targets are updated half termly to reflect the assessed needs of the children.

Monitoring

The short term planning, reading records and children's books are available for monitoring by the English Team Leader and the Head teacher. Feedback is given to individual teachers and in general terms to the whole staff.

The Team Leader is responsible for keeping the Head teacher and the Governing Body informed of the strengths and areas for development as a result of subject monitoring. The governor responsible for Literacy is Mr. Martin Cox who meets with the Team Leader to ensure an accurate overview of English provision and progression throughout the school.

After each half term writing assessment, teacher’s levelling of children’s writing is moderated by the English Team leader and in-house trained moderators.

Parent Workshops

In order for children to achieve their potential we need to work in partnership with parents and carers. Throughout the year we run a series of workshops to help parents support their child’s learning at home. These workshops are a combination of in house training and training provided by the local authority and recently have included “Handwriting , “Helping your G&T Writer”, “Early reading” and “Helping Your Child with Phonics”.

ICT Resources

A range of ICT resources are used to enhance the delivery of English lessons.

- Shared IWB texts
- Films
- Music
- Word level games
- Listening centres
- Laptops
- Apple Macs
- Intervention such as Nessy

Review

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Promoting British Values and Equality policies. English is reviewed each year in the summer term by the whole staff, where teachers at each Key Stage discuss areas of strength and development. The curriculum team review the discussion findings and any new initiatives that are to be implemented, so that we may facilitate the continuing improvement in our school standards in English.

The policy document will be reviewed as required to reflect changing needs of the school.

Review and Agreed by Governing Body

Signed (Chair of Committee)

Date

