



Coundon Primary School
Together Everyone Achieves
More



English Policy

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Aims and Objectives:

The English curriculum develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including the communication of their ideas, opinions and feelings. Children are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as non-fiction and media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations.

English skills will be taught and practised across many areas of the curriculum, and not just in 'English' lessons.

Our objectives in the teaching of English skills are:

- to enable children to speak clearly and audibly, to communicate effectively through speech and to take account of the perspective of those to whom they are speaking;
- to enable children to listen with concentration, in order to identify the main points, and sometimes the detail, of what they have heard;
- to show children how to adopt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands;
- to enable children to become effective communicators, both verbal and non- verbal, through a variety of drama activities;
- to help children become confident, independent readers, developing their understanding of meaning conveyed at word, sentence and whole text level;
- to enable children to develop as enthusiastic and reflective readers, through contact with a wide range of different types of material including challenging and substantial texts;
- to foster the enjoyment of writing for a wide range of purposes, and a recognition of its value;
- to develop understanding of spelling patterns and English grammar and the effective use of standard English;
- to encourage accurate and meaningful writing, be it narrative or non narrative;
- to develop skills in planning, drafting and evaluating and editing their writing;
- to develop handwriting skills, including the foundations for cursive writing;

- to engender in children a love of literature and an appreciation of our literary heritage;
- to enable and encourage pupils to apply their English skills across the whole curriculum.

Teaching and Learning:

We use a variety of teaching and learning approaches in our English lessons, as is recommended by the National Curriculum. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in relation to English. Our timetable ensures that pupils have a substantial daily lesson which focuses specifically on the development of English skills, for example, engaging in a whole-class reading or writing activity, a whole-class focused word or sentence analysis activity, a guided group or independent reading or writing activity, or a whole-class session to review progress and learning. Whilst there is a high proportion of whole-class and group teaching, the independent activity gives an opportunity to talk and collaborate, and embed and enhance pupils' learning. They have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts, and to support their work with a variety of resources, such as word banks, phonic resources, dictionaries and thesauruses.

Children use ICT in English lessons where it enhances their learning, such as in drafting their work and in using multimedia resources to study how words and images are combined to convey meaning. Wherever possible, we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum, and will often use incidental opportunities to teach and reinforce English skills in other subject areas.

In all classes, children have a wide range of abilities, and we seek to 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 offering a layered learning approach (where tasks are differentiated but no child is prevented from challenging themselves to aim higher and work at a level where all children have an opportunity to reach their full potential), differentiated group work, while in others, we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use teaching assistants to support some children, and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals. Intervention strategies are put into place for children who are at risk of not fulfilling their potential.

English curriculum planning:

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use a broad range of resources, books and websites, as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the Programme of Study for English as stated in the National Curriculum and from September 2014, the new National Curriculum 2014. We carry out curriculum planning in English, in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The new National Curriculum 2014, details long-term teaching objectives. Our yearly teaching programme identifies the key objectives / key skills in literacy that we teach to each year group.

Our medium-term plans, give details of the main teaching objectives for each term. At the start of our Reception Year, children are taught to read and write by following The Read, Write, Inc. Phonics approach. This continues through into Key Stage One until they have completed the programme (ideally, before the end of the Autumn Term in Year 2). From here, our teaching sequence follows Jane Considine's 'The Write Stuff' approach for the teaching of writing. Year 6 use a bespoke approach by combining the Write Stuff alongside units that were previously developed by the English leader in liaison with an English Consultant and the Year 6 group teaching team to ensure that our Year 6 pupils are on track for the end of Key Stage 2 outcomes.

In addition, all our pupils are provided with an Extended English lesson each week where pupils have the opportunity to apply the skills they have been taught to their Discovery Topic or in creative writing opportunities.

These plans define what we teach, and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across

each term. The subject leader is responsible for overseeing and reviewing these plans.

Class teachers follow a weekly (short-term) plan for the teaching of English. This lists the specific key skills for English and expected outcomes for each lesson, and gives details of how the lessons are to be taught. It also includes details of what each group of children will be learning and their differentiated challenges. The class teacher keeps these individual plans.

We plan the activities in English so that they build on the children's prior learning. While we give children of all abilities the opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding, we also ensure progression in the key skills for English, so that there is an increasing challenge for the children as they move up through the school.

The Early Years Foundation Stage:

We teach English skills in our Reception year as an integral part of the EYFS curriculum. Progressive skill development is outlined in Communication, Language and Literacy (CLL), one of the seven Areas of Learning in the EYFS curriculum. In particular, in the EYFS, the CLL curriculum cannot be covered in isolation from the other six areas of learning. Opportunities to practise literacy skills, for example, reading labels, responding to written instructions, mark-making and early writing as part of play-based learning will be provided throughout the learning environment in the Reception classroom and outdoor area. Children have a daily RWI phonics lesson as a crucial element in developing their early reading and writing skills.

We plan the teaching and development of English skills to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals, which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged 0 to 5. We give all children

the opportunity to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and extend their vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore words and texts, to enjoy them, to learn about them, and to use them in various situations.

Reading Policy:

The teaching of reading and children's acquisition of reading skills is the bedrock of our English curriculum. Becoming an effective and proficient reader is the gateway to learning for our children, and success in most other subjects of the curriculum is dependent upon learning to read well. Children begin to develop pre-reading skills involving, for example, the ability to visually focus, to concentrate for increasingly sustained periods, to distinguish between visual shapes and to notice similarities, and to begin to understand that pictures, symbols and print can convey meaning, from the very youngest age.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, we aim to give children continuous experience of the medium of print and text through all their learning experiences and across all Areas of Learning in the EYFS curriculum. The environment is rich with appropriate text: labels, captions, simple instructions, names, alphabet prompts and children's own mark-making. Adults continuously model reading in the learning environment, embedding in children's understanding the idea that print conveys meaning and is invaluable to us in our lives. Children are taught from the youngest age to value and care for books, to understand their structure, to handle them appropriately and to enjoy sharing them with each other.

We believe that an understanding and knowledge of phonics, the relationship between graphemes (letters or groups of letters) and phonemes (the 44 constituent sounds of spoken English) is essential as children learn to read. Children's ability to phonetically 'decode' letters and words into oral sounds is continuously assessed throughout the EYFS and Key Stage 1, in order that the next steps in children's knowledge of phonics can be effectively planned and taught. All children in these key stages have a daily phonic session that follows the Read, Write, Inc. Phonics programme to support their development of both early reading and writing skills, following national guidance on teaching a programme of progressive, structured phonics. There is a statutory Phonics Screening Check, during the Summer Term of Year One for all children. Children who have not successfully met the benchmark score in Year One are required to retake a second Phonics Screening Check in the Summer Term of Year Two.

However, children cannot learn to be skilled readers through phonics alone. We teach children to use a wide range of clues in tackling unfamiliar words and phrases in their reading: whole word recognition, picture clues, contextual clues based on the meaning of the text and grammatical correctness.

Our children learn to read by using the RWI Phonics books. These reading books have been closely matched to the spellings of the sounds that they have been previously taught. Children do not read books with the spelling of sounds that they do not yet know. This means that they build confidence quickly. Once they have completed the RWI Phonics Program children move onto the phonetically decodable Big Cat reading scheme. In addition, we also read lots of stories to children that contain all the spellings of the sounds in the English language to develop a love of reading and soon children will be able to read these books for themselves too.

Alongside ensuring that children read books of progressive difficulty, we do not deny children access to books which interest them but which may be too difficult for them to read independently.

Children become avid readers through developing a love of books and through reading being made fun by teachers and other adults, providing excitement and inspiring the imagination. Parents and carers have a key role to play in helping to promote a love of books and reading at home, and we regard sharing books and support for reading to be one of the most important aspects of 'home school learning' which parents can provide. We take pride, in our Reading Buddies Intervention aimed at targeting our lowest 20% readers in each class where our older pupils support our younger pupils with their reading. We also have a dedicated Reading Blog on our school website to promote reading for enjoyment and to involve parents in their child's reading journey.

All our classrooms have dedicated reading areas, which we aim to make comfortable and inviting, and in which teachers ensure there is a range of stimulating and attractive books and other reading material. We display and promote books throughout our school and classrooms, including our well stocked library. All children have frequent and regular access to books in their classrooms, both for free choice of reading material and to do book-based research in order to support their learning across the curriculum. We also value and promote computer-based reading resources and the internet to support children's reading.

Reading pervades the curriculum and children have continuous opportunities to develop their reading skills, whatever the area of learning. However, throughout the school, classes have daily reading lessons, during which they engage collaboratively in purposeful reading activities or exercises, or are taught directly by the teacher or a teaching assistant. During reading lessons, the teacher can read text at an appropriate level with a group of children, or sometimes with the whole class, teaching next step reading skills, including higher level skills such as using inference and deduction to understand meaning. Reading lessons are teachers' key opportunity to assess children's reading and to plan which skills they need to develop next. We believe that well-planned guided reading activities are more effective in developing children's reading skills than simply ensuring that every child reads aloud from a 'reading book' every day. We do, however, give all children the opportunity to read aloud regularly, to an adult, and encourage parents and carers to support this activity at home.

We use Fast Track Phonics and Shine Reading Interventions to support children who need additional support with their reading. When children need such extra support, we liaise closely with parents and carers and seek to work in partnership with them to ensure that all children make the expected progress in reading.

English and Inclusion:

All children, whatever their ability and individual needs, have a basic entitlement to be taught essential English skills, and to have the opportunity to develop those skills to the best of their ability. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our teaching of English skills, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the pupil may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, and differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against the national standard. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

For some children who require SEN support, additional provision will be based on a pupil's Individual Provision Map (IPM), where appropriate, for children with special educational needs. Depending on the pupil's needs, the provision map may include specific targets relating to English. This is evidenced through provision maps and in some cases an IEP.

- Teaching assistants provide support for literacy by using: individualised guided writing and reading;
- differentiated texts that children can more easily read and understand;
- visual and written materials in different formats;
- ICT and other technological aids;
- alternative communication such as signs and symbols or translation.

Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas:

The literacy skills that children develop are linked to, and applied in, every area 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 at school.

Mathematics, Science and Design Technology:

The teaching of literacy skills contributes significantly to children's mathematical understanding, in a variety of ways. Children in the EYFS develop their understanding of number, pattern, shape and space by talking about these matters with adults and other children. Children in Key Stage 1 meet stories and rhymes that involve counting and sequencing. They explain and present their work to others during review and plenary sessions, and they communicate mathematically through the developing use of precise mathematical language. Pupils will be expected to engage in research as part of their learning in Science and Design Technology, to write a range of types of report on their

work and to explain and communicate verbally about their learning, to the teacher and each other.

History, Geography and Religious Education (RE):

While these humanities subjects involve significant subject specific knowledge, skills and conceptual understanding, the medium for researching, learning about and communicating is, of course, the English language. Pupils will constantly call upon and develop their literacy skills in finding information, ordering and making sense of what they have learned and communicating it in writing and orally.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship:

The teaching of literacy skills contributes to the teaching of PSHE and citizenship by encouraging children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues. Older children also research, debate and write about topical social problems and events. They discuss lifestyle choices, and meet and talk with visitors who work within the school community.

English and ICT:

The selective use of computer software, with clear learning objectives, will promote, enhance and support the teaching of English at word, sentence and text levels. It also offers ways of developing learning which are not always possible with conventional methods, for example, through individualised interactive learning. Software is used to support independent reading (text to speech) and writing (predictive word processors, word banks and spell checkers). A range of software is used to develop specific grammatical and spelling skills.

Pupils frequently use word processing facilities to record and edit their writing, and have access to laptops and i-pads. ICT is used at whole-class, group and independent levels. Screen projection of text enables published texts and pupils' own writing to be read, shared and discussed. Through these means, classes engage in writing and reading, guided or modelled effectively by the teacher. A wide variety of text types and resources are available through the internet or CD-ROMs to support specific learning, focused on particular textual analysis.

Assessment

Teachers assess children's work in English in three phases. The short-term assessments that teachers make as part of every lesson help them to adjust their daily plans. They match these short-term assessments closely to the learning objectives. Written or verbal feedback is given to help guide children's progress. Children in Key Stage One are encouraged to review their work and make self-assessments about how they can improve their own work. Teachers use medium-term assessments to measure progress against the key objectives, and to help them plan for the next unit of work. A wide range of assessment is used throughout each class including peer and self-assessment by the children.

Teachers make long-term assessments towards the end of each half term and school year, and they use these to assess progress against school and national targets. With the help of these long-term assessments, they are able to set targets for the next term and/ or school year, and to summarise the

progress of each child before discussing it with the child's parents or carers. The next teacher then uses these long-term assessments as the planning basis for the new school year. These long-term assessments are based on teacher assessments, supported by national assessment guidelines. Pupils participate in the Year One Phonics screening tests, and the national tasks and tests at the end of Year Two. Teachers also attend Pupil Progress Meetings with Senior Leadership Team to make termly assessments of children's progress based on the expected national standard for each year group.

The English Leader keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio. These demonstrate what the expected level of attainment is in English in each year of the school. Teachers meet regularly to moderate assessments across a range of writing and other activities to ensure that our teacher assessments are accurate and in line with national standards. This is carried out across year group teams as well as throughout the key stages. Staff are continuously developing their English subject knowledge and the English Leader takes an active role in disseminating best practice and making recommendations for staff training.

Resources:

We have a very wide range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries and a variety of age-appropriate learning materials. Each classroom has a reading area. All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts. There is also wi-fi access in all classrooms, with Interactive whiteboards that have access to the internet.

Monitoring and review:

The co-ordination and planning of the English curriculum are the responsibility of the English leader, who also:

- supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping abreast of current developments in English and by providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject;
- gives the Headteacher an annual action plan in which she evaluates the strengths and areas for development in literacy in the school, and indicates areas for further improvement;
- uses specially allocated regular management time to review evidence of the children's learning, and to observe and review literacy lessons across the school.

A named member of the school's governing body is briefed to oversee the teaching of literacy. The literacy governor meets regularly with the English leader to review progress. A separate Handwriting Policy and Spelling Policy are to be read alongside this.

