English Policy

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Reviewed every three years

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Aims and objectives

The study of English develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, so using language to learn and communicate ideas, views and feelings. It enables children 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.

The aims of English are:

- to enable children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners
- to encourage children to listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard
- to enable children to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands
- to develop children's ability to reflect on their own and others' contributions and the language used
- to enable children to evaluate their own and others' contributions through a range of drama activities
- to develop confident, independent readers through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text-level knowledge
- to encourage children to become enthusiastic and reflective readers through contact with challenging and lengthy texts
- to help children enjoy writing and recognise its value
- to enable children to write with accuracy and meaning in narrative and non-fiction
- to increase the children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work

Teaching and learning style

At Federation of Great Ellingham & Rocklands Primary Schools we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English lessons. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in English. We do this through a daily lesson that has a high proportion of whole-class and group teaching. During these lessons children may experience a whole-class shared reading or writing activity, a whole-class focused word or sentence activity, a guided group or independent activity and a whole-class session to review progress and learning. They have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts and use a range of resources such as dictionaries, thesauruses and tablets to support their work. English is also taught throughout our themed topics and the aim is for English to make up 40% of learning time.

There are children of differing ability in all classes at Federation of Great Ellingham & Rocklands Primary Schools. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons we do it through differentiated group work, while in other lessons we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use teaching assistants to support all children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

English planning

English is a core subject in the curriculum. We use the National Curriculum as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English. In Key Stage 1, phonics is taught on a daily basis following the Sounds Write programme. This continues into Key Stage 2 where appropriate. We carry out the curriculum planning in English in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term).

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

We teach English in the EYFS as an integral part of the school's work. However, the teaching is heavily weighted towards children acquiring a good knowledge of phonics, using the Sounds Write programme. In the EYFS, we relate the English aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. We give all children the opportunity to talk and communicate in a range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and extend their range of vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore, enjoy, learn about, and use words and text in a range of situations.

Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas

The skills that children develop in English are linked to, and applied in, every subject of our curriculum. Other curriculum areas are always linked to an English focus. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work in school.

Teaching English to children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

At our school we teach English to all children, whatever their ability. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our English teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expectations. When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have SEN. 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. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs. Intervention through 'Support' may lead to the creation of a Pupil Profile. The Pupil Profile may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to English.

Assessment and recording

Teachers assess children's work in English in three phases. The short-term assessments that teachers make as part of every lesson help teachers to adjust their daily plans. Teachers match these short-term assessments closely to the teaching objectives. They use medium-term assessments to measure progress against the key objectives, and to help them plan for the next unit of work. Each pupil has a dedicated Pupil Progress book which moves through the school with the pupil. Teachers make long-term assessments towards the end of the school year, and they use these to assess progress against school and national targets. Children undertake the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, plus assessments at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5.

Each term teacher assessments are fed into our whole school tracking tool – for analysis by senior leaders and teachers. Class teachers meet with the deputy and /or the head teacher to review data at half-termly pupil progress meetings. Teachers meet regularly to review individual examples of writing against the school writing objectives and/or national exemplification criteria.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the English subject leader and senior leadership team. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The subject leader gives the Headteacher and Governing Body an annual summary report in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, and indicates areas for further improvement. English management time is given in order to enable the subject leader to review samples of the children's work and undertake lesson observations of English teaching across the school.