



Rettendon Primary School English Policy

1 Aims and objectives

1.1 The study of English develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including the communication of their ideas, views 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 of 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, reading and writing across a range of different situations.

1.2 Our objectives in the teaching of English are:

- to enable children to speak clearly and audibly, and to take account of their listeners;
- to encourage children to listen with concentration, in order to identify the main points of what they have heard;
- to show children how to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands;
- to teach children effective communication, both verbal and non-verbal, through a variety of activities;
- to help them to become confident, independent readers, through an appropriate focus on word-, sentence- and text-level knowledge;
- to develop enthusiastic and reflective readers, through contact with challenging and substantial texts;
- to foster the enjoyment of writing, and a recognition of its value;
- to encourage accurate and meaningful writing, be it narrative or non-fiction;
- to improve the planning, drafting, revising, editing and publishing of their written work.

2 Teaching and learning

2.1 In the morning there is a daily reading lesson. Children are set according to their ability rather than their age. Together they read a range of fiction texts and reflect on what they have read.

2.2 There is a daily writing lesson in the morning when children are focused on writing stories. They are taught to plan, draft, revise, proof-read and evaluate their work. Grammar, spelling, punctuation and handwriting are also taught during these sessions. The children are set according to ability although we try not to hold back a child by more than one set or advance a child by more than one set. There is a mixture of whole-class and group teaching, independent and collaborative activities.

2.3 We teach a thematic curriculum during the afternoons and children read and write non-fiction texts and poetry as part of their topics. They learn to apply the skills they have acquired in a cross-curricular way.

2.4 In all classes we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. In some lessons, we do it through 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 classroom assistants to support some children, and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

3 English curriculum planning

- 3.1 English is a core subject in the National Curriculum and we implement the statutory requirements of the English Curriculum. This is currently under review and we will adopt the new curriculum when it is published.
- 3.2 The National Curriculum Programme of Study for English forms our long-term plan and details what is to be taught in each year group. These plans define what we teach, and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each year.
- 3.4 Class teachers are responsible for daily plans. There is no specific format for these plans but they should include specific learning objectives for each lesson, and give details of how the lessons are to be taught. The class teacher keeps these individual plans and passes a copy on to the other adults who work with the children.
- 3.5 Teachers plan activities in English so that they build on the children's prior learning. There is an increasing challenge for the children as they move up through the school.

4 Reception

- 4.1 The objectives set out in the EYFS curriculum underpin the planning for children aged three to five. 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.

5 Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas

- 5.1 The skills that children develop in English are linked to and applied in every subject of our curriculum.
- 5.2 Science, History, Geography, Design & Technology, Art, Music, Physical Education and Religious Education

Spoken language is important in pupils' development across the whole curriculum. They develop a capacity to explain their understanding and use the conventions of discussion and debate. The reading of non-fiction texts helps children to research subjects and increase their knowledge. They communicate their ideas by writing non-fiction texts in a variety of genres:

- persuasive writing – to take a position on an issue and justify it (e.g. leaflets, advertisements, flyers, brochures, letters, arguments)
- instructions – to tell someone how to do or make something (e.g. recipes, experiments, games rules, craft instructions, directions)
- non-chronological reports – to document, organise and store information (e.g. leaflets, projects, topic books)
- explanations – to give an account of how or why something happens (e.g. explain how, why ...)
- recount writing – to retell an event or series of events (e.g. newspaper reports, diaries, journals, biographies, historical accounts, science experiments)
- discussion writing – to discuss an issue and offer two or more points of view (e.g. articles, reviews, travel guides)

5.3 Mathematics

The teaching of English contributes significantly to children's mathematical understanding, in a variety of ways. Children in the Foundation Stage 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. Children in Key Stage 2 are encouraged to read and interpret problems, in order to identify the mathematics involved. They explain and present their work to others and they communicate mathematically through the developing use of precise mathematical language.

5.4 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

English 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 and debate topical problems and events. They discuss lifestyle choices, and meet and talk with visitors who work within the school community. Planned activities within the classroom also encourage children to work together and to respect each other's views.

5.5 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

The teaching of English develops skills through which our children can offer critical responses to the moral questions they meet in their work. Their understanding and appreciation of a range of texts bring them into contact with their own literary heritage and with texts from a diverse range of cultures. The organisation of our lessons allows children to work together, and gives them the chance to discuss their ideas and results.

6 English and ICT

6.1 The use of ICT promotes, enhances and supports the teaching of English at word, sentence and text levels. It also offers ways of impacting on learning which are not possible with conventional methods, e.g. interactive and non-linear stories.

6.2 ICT is used at whole-class, group and independent levels. The screen projection of text enables it to be read and shared. The projection of a word processor permits the writing process to be modelled effectively. A wide variety of text types are available through the Internet to encourage the framing of explicit questions. Groups can work at a computer and input text using a keyboard. Lessons can focus on what pupils have achieved using ICT, or ICT can provide the means of presenting their outcomes (via multimedia presentation or the school website).

7 English and inclusion

7.1 At our school, we teach English to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. 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 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. For further details, see separate policies: Special Educational Needs; Disability Discrimination; Gifted and Talented Children; English as an Additional Language (EAL).

7.2 When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, 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 expected levels. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

- 7.3 Intervention through School Action and School Action Plus will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs. The IEP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to English.
- 7.4 Sometimes children are taught alongside older or younger children in order that their specific needs may be met.
- 7.5 We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning English. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom (a theatre trip, for example) we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.
- 7.6 Teaching assistants provide help by using:
- texts that children can more easily read and understand;
 - visual and written materials in different formats;
 - ICT, other technological aids and taped materials;
 - alternative communication, such as signs and symbols;
 - translators and amanuenses.

8 Assessment for learning

- 8.1 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 teaching objectives. Written or verbal feedback is given to help guide children's progress. Older children are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own work.
- 8.2 Teachers use medium-term assessments to measure progress against the key objectives, and to help them plan for the next unit of work.
- 8.3 Teachers carry out assessments at the end of each term 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 school year, and to summarise the progress of each child before discussing it with the child's parents. The next teacher then uses these long-term assessments as the planning basis for the new school year.
- 8.4 These long-term assessments are based on end-of-year tests and teacher assessments. Children undertake the national tests at the end of Year 1, Year 2 and Year 6, and the optional national tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5. Teachers also make annual assessments of children's progress based on the level descriptions of the National Curriculum.
- 8.5 Staff are keen to improve their subject knowledge and the subject leader takes an active role in disseminating best practice and making recommendations for staff development.

9 Resources

- 9.1 There is a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries and a variety of age-appropriate fiction. Each classroom has an interactive whiteboard, a visualiser and access to the Internet through the teacher's laptop. The library contains a range of books to support children's individual research.

10 Monitoring and review

- 10.1 The coordination and planning of the English curriculum are the responsibility of the subject leader, who also:
- supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in English and by providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject;
 - contributes to the school development plan and gives the head teacher an annual summary report in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in English and indicates areas for further improvement;
 - uses specially allocated regular management time to review evidence of the children's work, observe English lessons across the school and prepare INSET;
 - supports a library assistant to help with the upkeep of the library.
- 10.2 A named member of the school's governing body is briefed to oversee the teaching of English. The English governor meets annually with the subject leader to review progress.
- 10.3 This policy will be reviewed at least every three years, the next review being due in 2016.

Mrs J. Dillon
English Leader