

# Ashmole Primary School



## English Policy

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<b>Updated on:</b>	<b>Changes made / notes:</b>
7/10/16	Altered assessment information to remove 'baseline' assessments. Updated section on reading to include removal of AR and changes to Key Stage 2 arrangements for reading. Addition of section 3.7: arrangements for teaching phonics.

## English Policy

### 1 Aims and Objectives

- 1.1. Our aims are that all learners attain or exceed age-related expectations by having clear and consistent approaches to the teaching of English and also a flexible curriculum that can be adapted to the children's needs and make their learning more meaningful.
- 1.2. 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 and writing across a range of different situations.
- 1.3. 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 drama 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 and editing of their written work.

### 2 Teaching and Learning

- 2.1. At Ashmole School, we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our English lessons, as recommended by the National Curriculum (2014). Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding. We do this through daily phonics lessons in which children take part in whole-group sound blending and segmenting activities, a whole-group focused word or sentence writing activity, a paired/guided group or independent reading activity, and a whole-group 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 so embed and enhance learning. Children have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts, and to support their work with a variety of resources, such as dictionaries, thesauri and word banks. Children use ICT in English lessons where it enhances their learning, using interactive whiteboards as a tool to aid visual learning. Regular Philosophy for Children enquiry sessions enable children to develop their speaking skills as well as their critical thinking and reasoning skills. Wherever possible, we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum.
- 2.2. 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 ensure that all children have a right to an education at Ashmole, which develops their personality, talents and abilities to the full (in accordance with UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, Article 29). We achieve this through a range of strategies. 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 and Planning**

- 3.1. English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. English teaching in our school is based on:
  - The National Curriculum (2014) English Programmes of Study
  - Ashmole's English Curricula (English and Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar)
  - The CLPE Power of Reading core texts and creative approaches to the delivery of English lessons.
  - The EYFS Framework – CLL and Literacy objectives
  - Letters and Sounds – phonics programme
  - Handwriting – Ashmole Cursive Handwriting Policy
  - The PM Reading Programme – where applicable
- 3.2 We carry out the curriculum planning in English in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The National Curriculum and Ashmole's English Curricula give an outline of key objectives that need to be covered over the year for each year group. Class teachers are expected to cover the objectives through a balance of fiction and non-fiction units using the guidance from the national framework and including the CLPE elements, which are appropriate for our curriculum.
- 3.3 The Ashmole English Curricula set out medium-term plans, which give details of the main teaching objectives for each term. These plans define what we teach, and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term. The Subject Leader is responsible for creating and reviewing these plans. These plans and sequences of work can be located in the English Subject Folders in each class. These plans are designed to ensure consistent coverage of all the objectives.
- 3.4 Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan for the teaching of English. This lists the specific learning objectives 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 differentiated work. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, and the class teacher and Subject Leader often discuss them on an informal basis and through work monitoring.
- 3.5. We plan the activities in English to build on the children's prior and existing knowledge whilst also extending their knowledge further with motivating and purposeful tasks. While we give children of all abilities the opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding, we also plan progression into the scheme of work, so that there is an increasing challenge for the children as they move up through the school. The children are aware of their English targets and are constantly given the opportunity to review their learning and their targets. Teachers provide children with clear next steps in order for children to progress further.
- 3.6 Handwriting: At Ashmole, all children are taught to write in the cursive style. This allows for easy joining, fluent writing and high standards of presentation. In the

EYFS, children are exposed to print in a range of forms, both printed and handwritten, which is reflected in their learning environment. All handwritten print in the classroom environment (visible to children) is in the pre-cursive style (moving to cursive when appropriate in the Reception Year). Throughout the rest of the school, all handwritten print in the classroom environment is in the cursive style. In Key Stage 1, children have daily handwriting lessons where they are taught correct letter formation and how to join letters correctly. They then have time to practise this independently in books. In Key Stage 2, any child who is not yet joining correctly or writing in a consistent cursive style will continue to have regular handwriting practice. High standards of presentation are promoted through the awarding of Pen Licences and certificates in assembly. Teachers need to model writing using a cursive style at all times and marking in the children's books should also be in a cursive style.

3.7 Phonics: Phonics is an important part of learning to read and write. At Ashmole, Phonics is taught in the EYFS and Key Stage 1 on a daily basis for between 20-30 minutes, as well as provision being made during independent learning activities, particularly in the EYFS. We teach children in small groups, led by a teacher or teaching assistant and planned for by a teacher. Children are grouped according to the Phase they are working in across the EYFS and KS1. We use the 'Letters and Sounds' document to teach and assess children, which separates phonics into Phases 1-6. Lessons aim to be interactive, stimulating and age appropriate and over the course of a week will cover:

- Phoneme and grapheme recognition
- Blending for reading
- Segmenting for writing
- Application of phonics strategies for reading and writing
- Handwriting

At the end of Year 1, children will take the statutory Phonics Screening Check, which assesses their ability to blend sounds to decode unknown words. If children do not reach the age-expected level in this check at the end of Year 1, they are required to take it again in Year 2. For children who are not securely working at Phase 6 of letters and sounds by the end of Year 2, their phonics teaching may continue in Year 3 as an intervention, appropriate to their level of attainment. When formative and summative assessments show children are working securely within age expected levels, this intervention program will stop.

3.8 Grammar: All children are taught daily discrete lessons in Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling. The framework for what to teach when is set out in the Ashmole Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPAG) Curriculum, which covers all National Curriculum objectives. Children will complete a short written SPAG task daily in lessons. At the end of the week, children have a piece of homework that will provide extra practice of the objective(s) taught that week, as well as spellings linked to the spelling content for that year group in the National Curriculum. Alongside discrete lessons, English lessons will also regularly have a SPAG focus so that children can embed and apply what they have learned in their writing. Teachers will also expect high standards in SPAG in written work across all areas of the curriculum.

## **4 Early Years Foundation Stage**

- 4.1. We teach English in Reception as an integral part of the school's work. The format for the daily lesson reflects the format of good Early Years practice. As the Reception class is part of the Early Years Foundation Stage, 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 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. Children have daily Phonics, Reading and Handwriting instruction to help them apply their early phonic knowledge to reading and writing.
- 4.2 We encourage children to develop an appreciation of reading from an early age. Children as young as nursery age are able to take school books home to read with their parents/carers. At school, young children have individual reading sessions with the teaching staff in their class as well as whole class shared reading sessions. Teachers have created reading and writing stations to engage the learners and encourage them to become more confident readers and writers as well as extending their opportunities to experience these.

## **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. 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.
- 5.2 Mathematics

The teaching of English contributes significantly to children's mathematical understanding, in a variety of ways. Children in the Early Years 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 during lessons, and they communicate mathematically through their developing use of precise mathematical language.
- 5.3 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 will 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. Regular Philosophy for Children lessons will also provide these opportunities.
- 5.4 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. The children participate in enriching assemblies and have many

opportunities throughout the school year to share their learning and perform for others, where they can develop their SMSCD awareness.

- 5.5 General cross-curricular links: Through the teaching of creative topics, teachers are encouraged to make English links throughout all lessons due to the importance of reading and writing as a whole, therefore not isolating the English objectives and teaching it only in the English hour. English topics, mainly non-fiction topics, are often linked to other areas of the curriculum in order to maximise the children's awareness of the English focuses but also making the learning more meaningful and relevant.

## **6 English and Computing (ICT)**

- 6.1 The use of Computing, with clear learning objectives, will promote, enhance and support 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 Computing 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 computer keyboard permits the writing process to be modelled effectively. A wide variety of text types are available through the Internet or displayed from examples prepared by class teachers to encourage the framing of explicit questions. Software is used to develop specific reading skills. 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). Clear sets of instructions given by teachers will enable the children to progress further with their listening and interpretation skills.
- 6.3 Teachers are encouraged to record speaking and listening activities with the use of cameras and other recording devices. Children are then able to assess their learning and discuss improvements according to the learning outcomes.

## **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 with the provision of appropriate dictionaries, posters, displays and other resources. For further details, see separate policies: Special Educational Needs; Disability Discrimination; Gifted and Talented Children; Inclusion Policy.
- 7.2 When progress and/or attainment 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. Careful 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 Interventions for SEN identified children in KS1 include differentiated phonics groups where children work on their reading at their own pace. Additional small group phonics intervention takes place daily for children who are not making expected progress or whose attainment is below age related expectations for that point in the year. Interventions for SEN identified children in KS2 include more regular

reading, groupings across classes to target individual needs, extra writing groups and additional handwriting practice.

- 7.4 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.
- 7.5 English for non-speakers of English: At our school we have children from a wide variety of backgrounds who bring a diverse linguistic knowledge with them, including those who are new to learning English. It is therefore important that a programme of study is implemented for these children on arrival to the school to enable them to show better rates of progress and access the curriculum as a whole. The class teacher will assess children's understanding on arrival and plan activities and support to meet their immediate needs. Sessions may be supported by ICT resources and by a Teaching Assistant. The sessions are short and pacy, therefore allowing the children to continue to be integrated in their timetabled curriculum sessions.
- 7.6 Teaching assistants provide help to all children, especially those with SEN, by using:
- texts that children can more easily read and understand;
  - visual and written materials in different formats;
  - other technological aids and taped materials;
  - alternative communication, such as signs and symbols

## **8 Assessment for learning**

- 8.1 Teachers assess children's work in English throughout the year, using a variety of methods, such as phonics checks, running records and independent levelled writing. Assessments are made as part of every lesson to help teachers adjust their daily plans. They match these assessments closely to the teaching objectives in the English Curricula. Written and/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. Teachers use a range of innovative methods to encourage children to evaluate their learning and assess their work in relation to the success criteria for each lesson.
- 8.2 Teachers administer regular assessments throughout each academic year in phonics (EYFS and KS1), reading, SPAG and writing. These assessments are used to monitor progress and attainment and support teachers in setting targets for the next school year, and to summarise the progress of each child before discussing it with the child's parents.
- 8.3 Teachers meet regularly to moderate individual writing samples against age-related expectations, using writing assessment criteria linked to the National Curriculum, and reach shared agreements. We also highly value the opportunity to work with partner schools to discuss and moderate children's learning and validate our assessment judgements.
- 8.4 Staff are encouraged 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, thesauri and a variety of age-appropriate small

apparatus. Each classroom has a reading area with a wide range of texts with appropriate levels of challenge for the year group. All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts related to areas of interest or topic areas. Laptops and iPads are used by classes to promote independent learning. Children are also able to use the library for research or to borrow books.

- 9.2 English Folders: All teachers have an English curriculum which contains full details and expectations for their year group and the year groups either side to support SEN and AGT planning. These files contain each year group's curricula for writing, reading and speaking and listening. There is also a SPaG curriculum for teachers to follow. The files contain clear learning objectives and ensure a range of genres are represented.
- 9.3 Promoting the enjoyment of Reading and Writing: In Key Stage 1, children join the PM Reading Programme of books, which are colour-banded according to their level of challenge. Teachers assign pupils reading books appropriate to their reading attainment through a combination of on-going teacher assessment and running record analysis. Teachers also use these reading scheme texts during taught reading sessions. In Key Stage 2, children continue to read books from the reading scheme until they complete all of the colour levels. They then become a free reader. Free readers take high-quality class library books home to read daily. Teachers have reward systems in place for regular reading and parents signing record books daily. A programme of events has been created to promote the enjoyment of reading and writing throughout the year, these include special days or weeks such as: National Poetry day and Book Week.

## **10 Monitoring and review**

- 10.1 The coordination and planning of the English curriculum are the responsibility of the Subject Leader, who will also:
- Support colleagues with their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in English and by providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject and using teacher voice to make necessary improvements.
  - Provide the Head Teacher, and other stakeholders, with a termly summary report in which they evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in English across the school and indicate areas for further improvement.
  - Use specially allocated regular management time to review evidence of the children's work, analyse data, identify trends, observe English lessons across the school, model lessons and organise peer observations where areas of strength need to be shared.
  - Deliver Professional Development Meetings that are relevant to the needs of the teaching staff and the learners, making these informative in order to address any issues identified through monitoring.
- 10.2 A named member of the school's governing body is briefed to oversee the teaching of English. The English governor meets regularly with the Subject Leader to review progress.
- 10.3 This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.



APPENDIX 1 (more information can be found in the 'Ashmole Teaching and Learning Handbook')

All English teaching will contribute to skill development in the following areas:

- Phonics
- Speaking and listening
- Reading
- Writing

#### Phonics

- EYFS/KS1/Yr 3 (if still required) - daily phonics lessons using Letters and Sounds programme
- Direct Phonics intervention programme (or similar) for children in KS2 in need of phonics catch-up

#### Speaking and Listening

To be developed through:

- Provision of a range of opportunities for children to talk and listen in formal and informal settings (Talk for Writing activities, paired, group and whole class book talk leading to writing opportunities)
- The use of drama and role play to explore imagined settings (hot seating, conscience alley, freeze frames, performance poetry)
- A daily story time session when the class teacher or other adult reads aloud to the class
- Class discussion and debate on topical issues (e.g. Debate Mate, Show and Tell, sharing news)
- Circle time/PHSE
- Regular Philosophy for Children enquiry sessions

#### Reading

- Taught reading lessons
- One to one reading with an adult
- Independent reading with sustained concentration
- Reading aloud
- Paired/shared reading opportunities

- Daily reading with TA and volunteers
- Home/school reading
- Library club

### Writing

- Shared writing
- Guided writing
- Independent writing (including 'Big Write' sessions)
- Writing a variety of genres: labels, reports, instructions, letters, diaries, posters, leaflets, narrative, poetry, biographies, autobiographies, recounts, explanations, journals, play scripts, emails, story maps, story boards, emails, short stories, magazines newsletters and newspapers.

### Handwriting

Whole school focus on handwriting (refer to Ashmole handwriting policy) with a cursive style taught from EYFS upwards and KS2 pupils writing with handwriting pens, where Pen Licences have been awarded.