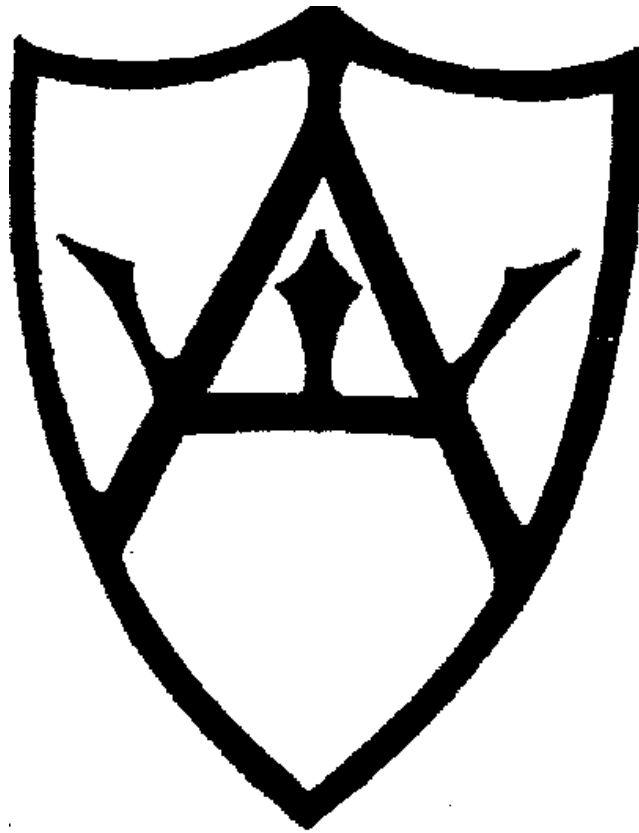


Alfriston School



English Policy

Reviewed: January 2017

A Policy Document for **English at Alfriston School**

‘English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them.’

National Curriculum for England, September 2013

This policy is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of English and Literacy at Alfriston School.

AIMS

To recognise the foundation laid by the home and to build upon this to produce:

- Attentive, open-minded and enquiring *listeners*;
- Clear, fluent and confident *speakers*;
- Well-informed, enthusiastic and expressive *readers*;
- Imaginative, neat and accurate *writers*.

In English, we provide a wide range of experiences and tasks appropriate to the needs of individual children, ensuring that each pupil progresses as well as he or she possibly can.

EQUALITY

Alfriston School believes that every child has the right to access a quality education that addresses his/her needs and has an entitlement to fulfil his/her optimum potential.

* See also *Teaching and Learning Policy*

TEACHING AND LEARNING

- The school is organised into four class bases: Foundation stage, Years 1 & 2, Years 3 & 4 and Years 5 & 6;
- Within each class, differentiation is expected to be evident. Teaching can be differentiated by outcome, task, questioning and level of support;
- Provision is in line with the new National Curriculum 2014 which details teaching objectives for each year group; teaching staff ensure that the teaching and tasks are appropriate to the individual child;
- A rolling programme has been developed, linked to the National Curriculum 2014. This ensures planning across a sequence of lessons that offers children continuity with a blend of approaches that sustain the challenge and maintain an interest in learning. Each child has access to the range of texts included in the scheme of work. The teaching of spelling, vocabulary, grammar and punctuation is planned using the most appropriate approach for each particular ability group;

- Medium term plans use the National Curriculum 2014 objectives. Weekly short term plans are recorded on the weekly English planning sheets and evaluated by teaching staff;
- Each unit of work has a teaching sequence which typically involves children reading and exploring texts, orally rehearsing their ideas, practising skills, applying these through writing activities and evaluating their work (our 'Reading into Writing' approach);
- All year groups (with the exception of early years) are expected to provide five English lessons each week;
- Key stage 1 have a phonics session each day;
- Key stage 2 teach/revise some element of spelling, vocabulary, grammar or punctuation each day.
- Key stage 1 and 2 teach the grammar objectives as set out in the National Curriculum 2014.

APPROACHES TO SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Speaking and listening underpins the learning in all subject areas.

- Pupils are offered a language-rich environment where their opinions are sought and valued;
- Circle times and class discussions are developed to enable children to express their ideas and opinions;
- Pupils are encouraged to listen, discuss, re-enact and develop their own ideas in co-operation with others;
- Staff emphasise the importance of listening and reinforce this throughout the school day;
- Children are encouraged to present ideas and completed work to their peers, including homework projects;
- Class assemblies, whole school productions and Celebration assemblies provide opportunities to perform to a larger audience, as well as special activities such as mock-elections, and the efforts and skills of children are acknowledged by staff, parents, carers and friends.
- Additional activities, including assemblies and competitions, are led with the School Council, House Captains, Playleaders and Sports Crew.

APPROACHES TO READING

- "Oxford Reading Tree" is the core scheme used to develop early reading skills, supplemented by a vast range of reading books from other complementary schemes and "real books";
- Children begin to transfer from the Oxford Reading Tree scheme from stage 5+. Care is taken to assist them in choosing suitable books and learning how to choose books;
- Children who are developing decoding skills read to a member of staff at least every fortnight;
- Volunteer readers also support identified children by sharing books with them on a regular basis;

- Pupils take their reading book home daily to enable parents and carers to share the experience of learning to read along with their child and record in their Home Reading Record;
- Each classroom has a class library of appropriate books which may be borrowed as frequently as pupils wish;
- Pupils participate in a variety of reading activities, including regular shared and group reading sessions each week;
- Pupils in key stage 2 will complete appropriately differentiated activities linked to their reading each week, often linked to a class text which is also used to lead into written work – our ‘Reading into Writing’ approach;
- It is important that children are taught specific research skills during English lessons and in other subjects;
- To support the pupils in the complex skill of learning to read we use “Letters and sounds” supported by “Jolly Phonics”.

APPROACHES TO WRITING

- Pupils are provided with a wide range of stimuli for producing their own writing. They are given opportunities to write for a range of purposes and audiences, adapting their language and style according to purpose;
- Modelled and shared writing in English lessons enables teachers to model good practice in writing skills, grammar and conventions of writing;
- Guided writing is an essential part of the English lesson and teachers decide the skills they need to teach according to the objectives set out in the National Curriculum 2014 and the needs of the class; they decide on the grouping of children according to their ongoing assessment;
- Displays and ‘Working Walls’ support the use of relevant vocabulary, sentence structure and punctuation;
- When able, pupils are encouraged to use a “response partner” to help them in the process of editing and re-drafting their work;
- The school uses the ‘Big Writing’ approach to writing, including regular use of activities designed to develop the use of vocabulary and punctuation;
- Children in Key Stages 1 and 2 also have personal Writing Journals in which they are encouraged to write independently;
- Children are taught spelling, grammar and handwriting skills appropriate to their ability, in line with the objectives set out in the National Curriculum 2014.

APPROACHES TO SPELLING

- Phonics is taught in a systematic way which involves teaching all the major grapheme-phoneme correspondences in a clear sequence through Letters and Sounds. Learning takes place at a swift pace but takes account of children’s developing abilities;

- There are six clearly identified phonic phrases. It is our aim to ensure that all pupils reach phase six before they enter Key Stage 2 and teachers track pupils progress on an ongoing basis;
- Phonics must be taught daily until pupils have achieved phase 6;
- In Key stage 2, or once pupils have achieved phase six, teachers use appropriate teaching resources to support the teaching of spelling including the National Strategies 'Support for Spelling' to support their teaching;
- Pupils complete spelling investigations to support the development of spelling ability. These may commence in FS if pupils are ready. In key stage 1 spelling patterns investigated relate to the phonics phase the child has reached;
- In Key Stage 2, pupils have Spelling Logs to support the learning of individual spellings;
- Children's spelling is formally assessed in September and June, using Young's Comparative Spelling Tests.

See also "The Teaching of Spelling", appendix

APPROACHES TO HANDWRITING

Reception – children learn to form letters correctly;

Year 1– children begin to learn cursive handwriting;

In Key Stage 1 all pupils write in pencil;

In Key Stage 2, pupils write in pencil until their script is legible, fluent and even and then transfer to pen for most written work.

**See also Presentation of Work Policy*

Handwriting is taught by teacher demonstration with pupils copying the demonstration. Handwriting should be taught daily until most of the pupils in a class are fluent. In key stage 2, handwriting may be linked to spelling patterns.

CROSS CURRICULAR LINKS

- Alfriston school recognises the value of the creative curriculum and where ever possible links are made to other areas of the curriculum;
- Children should be taught specific skills for research both in English and in other lessons;
- The same standards for writing should apply in all subjects;
- Children can be immersed in the meaning of text through drama, art, music and other activities;
- Specific texts can be chosen to enhance pupil's understanding and empathy in other curriculum areas;
- English lessons may be used to explore texts relevant to science and other topic areas.

ICT

- The use of ICT in English allows children to develop their information processing, creative thinking and writing skills, as well as providing opportunities to review, modify and evaluate work;
- ICT should be used not just for the presentation of work. Children should have access to electronic texts and be taught to scan specific electronic texts for information.

ASSESSMENT, MONITORING EVALUATION & TARGET SETTING

Work will be assessed in line with the School Assessment policy.

Children have individual targets for Reading and Writing which are part of our Assessment tools, linked to the National Curriculum 2014. These are in 'I can ...' format and are shared with children and parents (during Parent Consultation meetings).

Children's writing targets are recorded in their writing books and are also transferred to other curriculum areas to support writing across all subjects.

SEN

Every pupil with SEN and disability in this inclusive school has an entitlement to fulfil his/her optimum potential.

We value the contributions that all children make and aim to support and inspire them all to learn and develop to the very best of their abilities.

English teaching is effectively differentiated within mixed ability classes and lesson plans identify the different ability levels and needs of the children. In accordance with their individual needs, children cover the statutory content of the English programmes of study within the National Curriculum 2014 to ensure all pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum. Some pupils may need to follow an adapted English curriculum.

Children with identified difficulties in literacy such as Dyslexia will have appropriate provision targeted at their individual needs.

INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES

To support children we provide extra support in addition to English lessons. This is discussed and updated during termly Pupil Progress meetings, using assessment data. Provision maps are created in order to focus support appropriately.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are encouraged to become actively involved in the development of their child's literacy skills through:

- Reading with their child;
- Completing the reading record;
- Supporting spelling investigations and handwriting;
- Discussing homework and topics;
- Using local libraries;
- Supporting World Book Day and other occasional activities.

ROLE OF SUBJECT LEADER

It is the role of the English Co-ordinator to:

- Ensure curriculum coverage, continuity and progression in English for all pupils;
- Establish and implement clear policies and practices for assessing recording and reporting on pupil achievement;
- Lead professional development of English through informing staff of new initiatives, attending cluster meetings and monitoring the success in meeting targets;
- Ensure good standards in English.

** see also Subject Leadership Policy*

ROLE OF HEADTEACHER:

- Ensure that teachers are clear about the teaching objectives in lessons, understand the sequence of teaching and learning in the subject, and communicate such information to pupils;
- Identify and monitor realistic and challenging targets for the improvement of English;
- Evaluate the teaching of English and use these observations to identify effective practice and areas for improvement and take action to improve further the quality of teaching in conjunction with the subject leader.

This policy links to other school policies and therefore should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

Teaching and Learning Policy

Assessment Policy

Feedback and Marking policy

Subject Leadership Policy

APPENDIX:

The Teaching of Spelling

Aims

Although we live in an electronic age, children do need to be able to express themselves on paper and we therefore believe that the ability to be able to spell accurately is an essential life skill.

Our aim is to enable children to become confident and competent spellers through the teaching of spelling patterns and rules and also by keeping personal Spelling Logs in Key Stage 2. Children are then encouraged to develop their own strategies in order to learn unfamiliar words. We also recognise the links between spelling and handwriting and the skills are taught side by side.

Confidence in their abilities as spellers in turn allows children to become increasingly creative in their written work and to use more ambitious vocabulary.

The teaching of spelling

In Reception and Key Stage 1, children are taught spelling through the development of their phonic knowledge. This is taught in discrete 'Letters and Sounds' sessions on a daily basis. They also learn the spelling of high frequency and common exception words through teaching in English and within other subject areas.

In Key Stage 2, children are taught spelling as part of the daily English lesson and within other subject areas where specific vocabulary is necessary. They are given activities appropriate to their abilities, investigating rules and patterns that will help them to develop strategies for spelling. They are then encouraged to apply these in the spelling of unfamiliar words. Every child also has a Spelling Log in which they record personal lists to be learned.

Attempting the spelling of unfamiliar words

Children are expected to attempt the spelling of unfamiliar words through the use of known phonemes and spelling patterns.

- In all writing activities, if children are unsure of the spelling of a word, they may draw a line under the word at the review stage so that the teacher can see that this is an unfamiliar word.
- At the redrafting stage in their work, children are encouraged to check their own spellings, independently or with a response partner. They are encouraged to use resources including word banks and dictionaries to support this.

Identifying the spelling errors

Incorrect spellings across the curriculum may be indicated by the letters 'sp' in the margin. Depending on the ability of the child, children may be encouraged to identify the incorrect word and find the correct spelling. Alternatively, the teacher may underline the incorrect section of the word in the text; the correctly spelt version will be written with the corrected part underlined.

Use of the spelling log (Key Stage 2)

Once each fortnight (as a minimum), spelling errors from children's work are recorded in their spelling logs. As an aide memoir, the words are ticked in their written work as they are copied across. In the event of a child having an unmanageable number of spellings to learn, the teacher will identify those appropriate to the child's ability. Younger children should generally have a minimum of 10 words, while older children will be able to learn up to 16.

In addition to their own spelling errors, children may be asked to include words relevant to other curriculum areas in their lists. They may also include words that follow spelling patterns investigated in class.

Children then take their Spelling Logs home in order to learn their spellings.

Spelling lists (Key Stage 1)

Children will bring home lists of common exception words with their own errors highlighted. They are encouraged to practise 5 – 10 of these depending on their ability. More able children may progress to using a spelling log in preparation for Key Stage 2.

Special Needs

We recognise that some children find spelling difficult and may need more support in order to make the progress of which they are capable. All SEN children with spelling needs will be taught spelling strategies along with their class group and be given spelling lists appropriate to their needs. When appropriate, they will also be supported, for example through specific interventions, including focussed computer programmes, sometimes delivered by the teaching assistant in the classroom.

Assessment

Monitoring of children's progress and achievement in spelling is ongoing, carried out by the class teacher when work is marked and when individual lists are tested. In Year 6, spelling is assessed as part of the end of Key Stage SATs.

In Year 2 and in Key Stage 2, spelling is also assessed using the Young's Parallel Spelling tests in September, February and June. These tests give a spelling age and a spelling quotient which can be used to track the progress of individual children and of cohorts of children.

This information is monitored by the English Lead teacher in the school.

Home/School links

We recognise that parents and carers have an important role to play in all aspects of their children's learning. The children's results and progress are discussed with parents at Parent Consultation Evenings, together with ways that parents can support their children's learning. In Key Stage 2, children are encouraged to take their Spelling Logs home in order to learn their spellings and revise the rules that they have been taught and this forms part of their regular homework. In Key Stage 1, children also have spelling lists that they take home to learn.