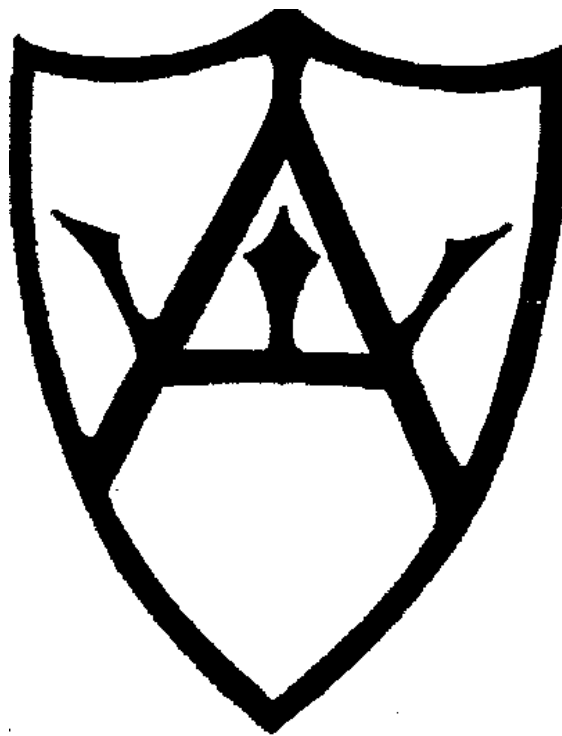


Alfriston School



English Policy

Reviewed: September 2021



ALFRISTON SCHOOL 'Fair, Friendly, Fulfilling & Fun!'

Our Curriculum Intent



Collaborative Bee

Our curriculum and wider school community provide opportunities for us to work together and learn from each other in a supportive environment.

We model effective communication and teach coaching skills to enable children to recognise their own needs and those of others.



Independent Cat

Through our curriculum, we provide opportunities for all children to be independent learners with high aspirations. Pupils of all abilities and social backgrounds are given the opportunity to achieve. Every child is recognised as a unique individual.

VISION

We have high aspirations for all of our children to be happy, confident, responsible and knowledgeable individuals who can learn at their best. We delight in equipping all children to achieve personal success and develop a lifelong love of learning.



Creative Spider

We have a diverse and creative curriculum, providing a wide range of first hand experiences and extra-curricular activities. We celebrate the individuality of all our learners, giving them the confidence to express themselves. We provide a safe and supportive environment in which they can find different ways to deepen their learning.



Curious Meerkat

Our curriculum is designed to enable children to become critical thinkers and develop a thirst for new experiences. We encourage children to develop their questioning skills in order to build on prior learning and deepen their knowledge.



Determined Tortoise

Our curriculum provides breadth, depth and challenge. We model the importance of resilience, encouraging children to embrace mistakes as part of learning and development. We motivate each child to believe that they can persevere in order to meet their own potential.

Kind Hands

Kind Feet

Kind Words

Kind Everything

Introduction

"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. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised."

Primary National Curriculum for English (DfE) 2014

"The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment."

Primary National Curriculum for English (DfE) 2014

At Alfriston Primary school we strive for excellence in all areas of English achievement throughout the school. Reading and literature sharing are at the heart of our teaching of English as we believe that reading is one of the main resources we have for showing children what words can do. We recognise that the acquisition of English, both spoken and written, is fundamental to the overall development of

the child and their access to the curriculum in all its aspects 'Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects' (*National Curriculum in England: framework for key stages 1 to 4, Section 6.1*) Our main aims are to ensure every single child becomes primary literate and progresses in the areas of reading, writing, speaking and listening and to allow them access to the full curriculum on offer.

Curriculum

Our English curriculum is built around the 'rich text'. In placing high quality texts at the heart of our planning in every year group, we can offer a diverse landscape of learning experiences and develop children's knowledge, understanding and use of spoken and written English within a balanced and exciting curriculum.

Curriculum aims

- to provide a well-planned and resourced curriculum;
- to provide a rich and stimulating language environment, where speaking and listening, drama and role play, reading and writing are integrated;
- to develop a love of books and high-quality literature that will not only support learning across the curriculum, but also extend beyond the classroom environment and enrich our children's lives;
- to develop enthusiastic and reflective readers, through contact with challenging and substantial texts;
- to enable pupils to speak clearly and audibly, and to take account of their listeners;
- to encourage pupils to listen with concentration, in order to identify the main points of what they have heard;
- to teach pupils to adapt their writing depending upon context, purpose and audience;
- to develop an awareness of purpose and audience for both written and oral language;
- to encourage accurate and meaningful writing, be it narrative or non-fiction;
- to improve the planning, drafting and editing of their written work;
- to enable pupils to apply their knowledge and understanding across the curriculum.

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 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;
- All year groups (with the exception of the Early Years) are expected to provide five English lessons each week;
- The teaching of spelling, vocabulary, grammar and punctuation is planned using the most appropriate approach for each particular group or cohort;
- Each unit of work has a teaching sequence which typically involves children reading and exploring texts, practising skills, applying these through writing activities and evaluating their work (our 'Reading into Writing' approach).

Foundation Stage

In the foundation stage, children will have regular phonics sessions and also reading and writing activities linked to the termly Learning Journey topic. There will be opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills through sharing opportunities, guided activities, presentations and performances.

Key Stage 1

Key stage 1 have a phonics session each day. Children learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They learn to read and write independently, at length. Rich texts are used in the planning and teaching of English, and to provide cross-curricular links within the learning journey for each term. Writing is taught to fit a range of audiences and purposes*. Grammar objectives are taught as set out in the National Curriculum 2014.

Key Stage 2

Key stage 2 teach/revise some element of spelling, vocabulary, grammar or punctuation each day; either discretely or within the lesson objectives. Children learn to speak or write to fit the audience or purpose*. A rich text/s are used in the planning and teaching of English, and to provide cross-curricular links within the learning journey for each term. Through this, along with supporting resources, children will encounter a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry. They explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works. Children in Key Stage 2 develop their knowledge and understanding of grammatical terminology.

**See Appendix 1 – Michael Tidd: Writing for a Purpose*

Approaches to Speaking and Listening

Speaking and listening underpins the learning in all subject areas. Questioning is valued highly within the classroom and we strongly encourage children to be inquisitive and to share their thoughts confidently in a supportive environment.

In class, pupils are offered a language-rich environment, where their opinions are sought and valued and where they can take risks. 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.

Public speaking opportunities are provided to enable children to develop confidence in speaking and listening. 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, and the efforts and skills of children are acknowledged by staff, parents, carers and friends. Teachers may plan for a variety of special activities, such as debates, mock elections and story-telling events which provide opportunities to develop speaking skills in class or across the school. Additional activities, including assemblies and competitions, are led with the School Council, House Captains and Play Leaders.

Approaches to reading

Pupils are encouraged to become confident, enthusiastic, critical and independent readers. The 2014 Curriculum divides reading skills into two dimensions:

- Word reading/decoding
- Comprehension

We recognise that both of these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of these skills through various methods.

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 as well as 'non-scheme' texts. Children in all classes have access to a wide range of books that are banded according to the Oxford Reading Tree scheme. Care is taken to assist them in choosing suitable books and learning how to choose books.

As children begin to read, we focus on decoding, primarily through phonics in addition to other strategies, e.g. whole word recognition, rhyme and context. To support the pupils in the complex skill of learning to read we use “Letters and sounds” supported by “Jolly Phonics”. Children who are developing decoding skills read one to one to a member of staff at least every fortnight.

As children build fluency, comprehension skills become our main area of focus and questioning looks at skills such as retelling, inference and prediction. Children who are struggling when developing reading fluency are provided access to teacher-led interventions on a regular basis (see ‘interventions’ for further details).

Reading is taught regularly and frequently within the classroom through a range of activities including shared reading, echo reading, group reading, paired reading, performance reading. Pupils in key stage 2 will complete appropriately differentiated activities linked to their reading, 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.

Reading for pleasure is highly encouraged outside of classroom. Volunteer readers support identified children by sharing books with them on a regular basis. Each classroom has a class library of appropriate, colour-banded books which may be borrowed as frequently as pupils wish. Book selection is monitored and supported by adults within the classroom. 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 Reading Record. Reading Records are regularly checked in class and children will have access to an in-class reward system to reward regularly recorded reading at home.

Approaches to Writing

Our aim is to develop children’s ability to produce well-structured writing with appropriate detail, in which the meaning is clear and the interest of the reader is engaged. The 2014 Curriculum divides writing skills into two dimensions:

- Transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- Composition (articulating ideas in speech and writing)

We recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods.

Pupils are provided with a wide range of stimuli for producing their own writing. There is a ‘writing for purpose’ focus. Pupils are given opportunities to write for a range of purposes and audiences, adapting their language and style according to purpose. Teachers plan regular activities designed to enhance children’s writing experiences and to develop the effective use of vocabulary and punctuation.

Modelled and shared writing in English lessons enables teachers to model good practice in writing skills, grammar and conventions of writing. 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 as well as enforcing the ‘writing for purpose’ focus.

Children are taught how to improve their writing throughout Key Stages 1 and 2: In Key Stage 1, they will identify and correct spellings and punctuation. In Key Stage 2, they also identify words, sentences or sections of writing to improve through redrafting. In Key Stage 2, pupils are encouraged to use ‘response partners’ to help them in the process of editing and re-drafting their work – ‘United Improvement’.

Children in Key Stages 1 and 2 also have personal Writing Journals or Big Writing books in which they are encouraged to write independently. Activities and opportunities are provided by teachers to support and respond to the needs of the class.

Children are taught spelling, grammar and handwriting skills appropriate to their ability, in line with the objectives set out in the National Curriculum 2014. These may be embedded within the lesson or through discrete sessions or lessons.

Children have individual targets for writing linked to the National Curriculum. These 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.

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 phases. 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. Regular interventions will be provided to children, as required, to support acquisition of skills and progression through these phases.

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 Curriculum 2014 Non-Statutory Rules and Guidance. Pupils complete spelling investigations to support the development of spelling ability. These may commence in foundation stage 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 Books to support the learning of individual spellings. Children's spelling is assessed as part of the ongoing assessments in class and through the end of Key Stage 2 assessments.

See also Appendix 2 - "The Teaching of Spelling"

Approaches to Handwriting

Children are taught continuous cursive handwriting** from key stage 1 where they are learn how to form letters with the correct orientation with leaders and exit points.*** Our expectation is that by the end of key stage 1 children will be able to join their writing with emphasis on presenting writing that is neat and legible. Children continue to take part in weekly handwriting sessions throughout key stage 2. Children are encouraged to use neat and joined handwriting through the 'Pen Licence' scheme in which children earn the right to use a handwriting pen. They are awarded a certificate when they are able to use joined handwriting neatly and consistently.

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. Pupils will be taught to follow a progression to continuous cursive, but will be supported to develop a personal style to demonstrate mastery.

***See Appendix 3 – Clarity on Continuous Cursive and the Handwriting Style*

**** See Appendix 4 – Handwriting Progression Grid and KS1 Overview*

See also Presentation of Work Policy

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.

Technology

- The use of technology in English allows children to develop their information processing, research skills, creative thinking and writing skills, as well as providing opportunities to review, modify and evaluate work;
- Technology 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.

SEND and Equal Opportunities

Every pupil with SEND and disability in our inclusive school has an entitlement to fulfil their 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.

Rich and supporting texts will be chosen to accommodate a variety of needs according to the cohort. There will also be consideration of how texts and resources, chosen and made available to all children, will promote diversity and a wide view of cultures and communities.

**See also SEND Policy*

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 for each class in order to focus support appropriately as well as individual APDR sheets when appropriate. Interventions may be teacher- or TA-led and will respond to the specific needs of the pupil(s) targeted.

Herts for Learning Intervention: In KS2, pupils with reasonable decoding but low reading fluency skills will be targeted for this intervention. This should be teacher-led and will be for 6-8 children over an 8 week period to develop reading fluency, prosody and comprehension using group reading strategies and questioning.

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 children to learn their personal spelling lists;
- Discussing homework and topics;
- Using local libraries;
- Supporting World Book Day and other occasional activities.

Role of the Subject Leader

- 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 network meetings and monitoring the success in meeting targets;
- Ensure good standards in English.

** see also Subject Leadership Policy*

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

Assessment Policy

Feedback and Marking policy

Subject Leadership Policy

Equality Policy

SEND Policy

Appendix 1:

**English Policy –
Sept 2021 Appendix**

Appendix 2:

**English Policy –
Sept 2021 Appendix**

Appendix 3:

**English Policy –
Sept 2021 Appendix**

Appendix 4:

**English Policy –
Sept 2021 Appendix**