

English: Key Stages 1 and 2

The overarching aim for English in the National Curriculum is to promote high standards of literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the written and spoken word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. It involves the development of a child's speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. It is a very important area as it is so inter-related with all the other areas of the curriculum.

The National Curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate

The programmes of study are set out year-by-year for Key Stage 1 and two-yearly for Key Stage 2. They are divided into the following core areas:

Spoken language

Pupils should be taught to develop their competence in spoken language and listening to enhance the effectiveness with which they are able to communicate across a range of contexts and to a range of audiences.

The New Curriculum for English has the following statutory requirements for all year groups.

Drama has also been introduced as a statutory requirement within spoken language:

Pupils should be taught to:

- listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers
- ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge
- use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary
- articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
- give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings
- maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments
- use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas
- speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English
- participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play, improvisations and debates
- gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s)

- consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others
- select and use appropriate registers for effective communication
- through drama, adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role
- improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances

The New National Curriculum reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. Talking is a major means of communication for both children and adults. The children are encouraged to express themselves and their ideas in speech, and we provide them with the opportunities to do so. A child's spoken language forms the basis for their early reading and writing development. It is as important for a child to be able to listen, as it is to be able to talk. We try to set an example, by listening to the children, and encouraging them to listen to others. Apart from listening to conversation, children listen to rhymes, poetry, stories and music. They are given lots of opportunities to speak in front of different audiences and drama is used very successfully to build confidence, expression and intonation.

You can help at home by:

- Looking, listening to and responding appropriately to your child
- Asking relevant questions to expand their vocabulary
- As much as possible, encourage your child to use the correct Standard English (eg. because not 'coz)
- Encourage discussions to share opinions and appreciate other viewpoints about topical issues



Reading

The programmes of study for reading at Key Stages 1 and 2 consist of two dimensions: **word reading** and **comprehension** (both listening and reading). Children learn to become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama as well as non-fiction and media texts.

A range of reading books and schemes are used in school so as to ensure a broad reading experience for all children. However, Oxford Reading Tree, Project X and Rigby Star are widely used. Both fiction and non-fiction texts are encouraged.

The emphasis on systematic synthetic phonics is still very much present. In Key Stage 1, an appendix outlines revision from Reception and a focus on knowing all of the 40+ phonemes. However, for children who are still struggling to decode words in other year groups, they should have a rigorous systematic phonics programme that follows the year group programmes of study in terms of listening to books, learning new vocabulary and spelling new words.

"It is essential that, by the end of their primary education, all pupils are able to read fluently, and with confidence, in any subject in their forthcoming secondary education."

We teach phonics from Reception and it remains a strong focus during KS1. It continues in more advanced forms in KS2 also. We use Jolly Phonics and Letters and Sounds to develop skills and the children's phonic development is tested at the end of Year 1 using the government's statutory test. Results are reported to parents and submitted to the local authority.

Reading for pleasure is emphasised throughout the Key Stages. Children are required to recite poetry by heart in Year 1 and through the Key Stages. This increases to retelling stories in Year 2, performing play scripts in Year 3 and 4 and preparing plays and reading a range of books in Year 5 and 6. Teachers are free to support their children with retelling stories in all year groups but explicit reference is made to this in particular year groups.

"All pupils must be encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum."

You can help your child at home by:

- Reading fiction and non-fiction
- Reading to your child as well as listening to your child read to you
- Discussing with your child what they have read



Writing

The programmes of study for writing at Key Stages 1 and 2 are constructed similarly to those for reading, comprising of: **transcription** (spelling and handwriting) and **composition** (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing).

"It is essential that teaching develops pupils' competence in these two dimensions. In addition, pupils should be taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. These aspects of writing have been incorporated into the programmes of study for composition."

Children should be taught to write down their ideas fluently, spelling quickly and accurately and using effective composition. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Handwriting should be fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy.

In order to spell quickly and accurately, children learn the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words.

Composition involves forming, articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently in writing. Pupils are taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. Children rehearse and improve their writing through speaking and listening activities. They are taught to structure and improve the impact and clarity of their writing. Teachers also use the Ros Wilson VCOP teaching method to improve the quality of sentences through the use of high quality

Vocabulary, Connectives and conjunctions, sentence Openers and Punctuation. High quality writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting. At our school, we use the Penpals handwriting scheme in all classes.

The skills of writing are taught through a wide range of activities and all genres covered. Handwriting, grammar and spelling are all given equal importance. The study of English helps children understand how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Using this knowledge, children can choose and adapt what they say and write in different situations.

You can help at home by:

- Encouraging your child to talk in clear sentences about everyday experiences and events
- Talking to your child and providing them with a good role model of spoken language
- Exploring books and talking about the words and their meanings

Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation

'Pupils should be taught to control their speaking and writing consciously and to use Standard English. They should be taught to use the elements of spelling, grammar, punctuation and 'language about language' listed.'

The new National Curriculum has a large emphasis on using the correct grammar in spoken and written sentences.

Vocabulary is an additional focus to spelling, grammar and punctuation and a statutory word list is provided, containing a mixture of words that pupils spell frequently and words that they often misspell.

Specific statutory requirements include:

- In Year 1, children are expected to learn suffixes and prefixes
- Subordinating and co-ordinating conjunctions are introduced in Year 2
- In Year 4, children are introduced to fronted adverbials (e.g. Later that day , I heard the bad news)
- In Year 6, the use of the subjunctive and explicit teaching of the semi-colon and colon are core knowledge for all pupils

" Throughout the programmes of study, teachers should teach pupils the vocabulary they need to discuss their reading, writing and spoken language. It is important that pupils learn the correct grammatical terms in English and that these terms are integrated within teaching. "

You can help at home by:

- Encouraging your child to talk in complete and grammatically correct sentences
- Encouraging your child to talk and write using the correct tense
- Becoming familiar with the different word classes (eg, nouns, verb, adjectives) and how these can be used effectively when speaking and writing
- When reading with your child, encourage discussion about the use of particular words and why they were chosen by the author

- Highlighting and questioning the different use of punctuation found in books and in their own writing
- Having fun with words and play word games

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