

# English Policy

Reviewed September 2021



**The Stour Academy Trust**

## **Intent**

Our intent is to develop in our pupils the ability to communicate effectively in speech and writing, and to listen with understanding, enabling children to succeed in education, employment, participate fully in society and promote mental wellbeing. We aim to develop children into enthusiastic, fluent and responsive readers and writers who can learn and gain pleasure from producing and reading the written word. We strive to provide pupils with opportunities to interrelate, consolidate and reinforce English skills within a broad and balanced curriculum, facilitating the development of Building Learning Power Skills and opportunities to explore and communicate British Values. Children should be able to communicate their ideas and emotions to others effectively. A range of technologies are embraced to develop English learning. This policy needs to be read in conjunction with the Phonics, Feedback, Assessment, Homework and Teaching and Learning policies and the Reading, Handwriting and Phonics guidance.

Children deserve:

- to be set appropriate learning challenges
- equal access and opportunity to be taught well and be given the opportunity to learn in ways that maximise their chances of success as well as reaching their full potential
- to have adults working with them to tackle the specific barriers to progress they face

*"Excellent teaching gives children the life chances they deserve... Enjoyment is the birthright of every child. But the most powerful mix is the one that brings the two together. Children learn better when they are excited and engaged - but what excites and engages them best is truly excellent teaching."*

Our intent for children is by the end of Key Stage 2 to be able to:

- achieve their full potential in all aspects of English.
- read and write with confidence, fluency, understanding and enjoyment, demonstrating a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct.
- develop their oral and listening skills through drama, assemblies and other structured activities.
- have an interest in texts and read for enjoyment, as well as understand a range of text types and genres.
- be able to write accurately, and in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to different audiences and purpose.
- develop a broad vocabulary, with depth of understanding to articulate and elaborate their oral and written responses clearly, and to acquire the skills to continue to develop their lexicon.
- appreciate British literary heritage after experiencing different historical authors of fiction.
- confidently communicate ideas and knowledge through formal presentations, informal dialogue, debate and demonstrations with and to others.

## **Implementation**

### **English lessons**



In our trust we believe our teachers must work together to plan, deliver and moderate the teaching of English in order to ensure that expectations are high and children are able to achieve to the best of their ability. We use a variety of teaching strategies such as: teacher demonstration, modelling, explanation, questioning, discussion, guided and shared reading, guided and shared writing, and group work to develop children's confidence, fluency and independence as readers and writers and in speaking and listening.

The separate skills of English are best developed through work which integrates and links these skills. We seek to provide activities which are interesting and motivating themselves and lead to worthwhile outcomes. Such activities provide the best context for increasing children's knowledge about the English language. It is also necessary to focus separately on aspects of language at times, for example handwriting; we ensure that these aspects are taught in a systematic way, and that these skills are then applied and combined with other skills in context.

The National Curriculum for English 2014 promotes assessment for learning, which enables teachers to identify and plan how to address any gaps in skills within the English Programme of Study for that year. Children learn to build links to other curriculum areas and to recognise how their English skills contribute to their overall development. The focus in the curriculum is on children writing for a variety of audiences and purposes and how to adapt their writing for these appropriately. Progression in writing may include: exploration of the text type through reading, discussion and drama; focussed work on vocabulary, punctuation and grammar linked to the text; extended writing time; and the teaching and time for peer and self-editing, both for correction, and for development of content for the reader. Children are encouraged to reflect on and adapt their work, both independently and with their peers.

## **Planning**

English lessons are planned using the National Curriculum Programme of Study for English 2014.

All class teachers (Years 1 – 6) are responsible for weekly planning using the agreed format. Medium term plans will be carried out by teachers who liaise with year groups and plan according to the Topic/book they are learning for that term. There are five English-hour lessons per week and in addition five reading sessions, most of which link to the English hour.

In planning teachers:

- Ensure coverage of the National Curriculum Programme of Study for English 2014.
- Use the long-term genre planning document to ensure coverage of text types for their year group, as well as revise earlier text types. Technical skills being taught and meaningful opportunities through the texts/topics form the basis for genre focus, ensuring aspects such as grammar and punctuation are appropriate for audience and purpose.
- Identify the appropriate learning strategies required, including aspects of Talk4Writing in EYFS/KS1 and part of year 3.
- Provide balance, progression and variety within the classroom for content, organisation and learning opportunities.
- Link aspects of the curriculum together when possible, utilising background knowledge and providing meaningful opportunities and links to practise skills.
- Ensure children have opportunities to see high quality, authentic model texts on which to base their own writing.
- Assess and plan for the specific needs of children within their own class.



- Give opportunities through speaking and listening to develop correct language structures.

Teaching and planning will be monitored by the Head teacher, Assistant/Deputy Head teacher, Phase Leaders and English Leads according to the agreed policy for the monitoring of teaching and learning.

## **Reading**

See Trust Reading Guidance

## **Writing**

To develop our pupils as writers we:

- Demonstrate, model, explain, question and discuss how to write effectively. Ensure teachers model good writing and there is evidence in books of purposeful, quality writing regularly with daily writing opportunities.
- Encourage children to write with interest, commitment and enjoyment through careful, relevant and creative planning.
- Provide children with the opportunity to write independently regularly for a range of purposes/audiences such as: stories, poems, reports and letters. Provide children with daily opportunities to write effectively for a range of readers, adapting their vocabulary and style as appropriate.
- Provide children with opportunities to see high quality, authentic model texts on which to base their own writing.
- Show children how to evaluate and improve their own writing.
- Show children how to use punctuation to make meaning clear to their reader.
- Give children the knowledge and the strategies to become confident and accurate spellers through systematic teaching in context.
- Teach children a fluent and legible style of handwriting, promoting an understanding of how to present work appropriately.

Teachers must have high expectations. Children are given opportunities to evaluate and reflect on their own work in order that they may develop their own sense of achievement. Teachers give clear feedback to children so they know if they have achieved their next steps to inform the next piece of writing and discuss their next target, which is incorporated into the teachers' weekly planning.

Whilst following the English Programme of Study, children are given opportunities to write in a wide range of genres and become familiar with the features of each. Teachers use a range of strategies including modelled writing or shared writing.

## **EGPS and Vocabulary**

### **Spelling**

KS2 planning includes the spelling pattern/strategy being focused on, informed by National Curriculum for English and assessments from the previous term. No Nonsense Spelling Programme is used from years 2-6 and integrated into the teaching of writing. Year 1 include the phonics phase and graphemes/phonemes being taught during that term. KS2 follow the



revise, teach, practise, apply, assess cycle, ensuring there are strategy focused sessions appropriate to the year group incorporated too. The spelling strategies are sent home to parents termly with example words and games to play to reinforce the spelling pattern.

### **Grammar and punctuation**

Planning includes grammar and punctuation focuses for that week. Grammar and punctuation skills are linked to the text type being taught so that skills can be embedded and applied through whole class teaching and in the children's writing in a meaningful way that focuses on audience and purpose.

### **Vocabulary**

Vocabulary is of high importance during English lessons. Linking of reading and writing supports the children in using an increasingly broad range of vocabulary relevant to the audience and purpose of their own writing by providing high quality examples. In reading sessions, a focus on first read skills develops inference skills which in turn supports the acquisition of vocabulary and vice versa. Vocabulary is taught explicitly, with the focus mainly on tier 2 vocabulary, and tier 3 when writing about a specialist subject (e.g. science). A cross-curricula approach to planning and teaching facilitates repeated use of vocabulary to embed meaning.

### **Handwriting**

Regular handwriting lessons are incorporated into each week throughout the school. During this time, teachers teach children the conventions and rules of handwriting. Handwriting books are introduced to Year 1 pupils, as appropriate, with handwriting books used for all children from Year 2 onwards, initially to assist in the setting out and formation of letters. Handwriting pen is used throughout year 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, again at the teachers' discretion.

Teachers use the cursive style on the board (see Handwriting guidance), when writing handwritten labels and when marking. Teachers are expected to model handwriting through their own good practice. Teachers are expected to plan for the teaching of handwriting related to the development of English skills and transcriptional progression. In certain cases, children may use print for writing; this will be decided between the class teacher and Senior Leadership Team.

### **Homework**

The home-school link is sustained through homework, information that children are given about their next steps in learning and sharing new developments in the curriculum with parents/guardians to keep them informed and updated. Homework is focused on a grammar or punctuation focus for the individual class.

### **Speaking and Listening**

To develop our pupils as speakers and listeners we:

- Give them opportunities to express their ideas to a range of audiences.
- Give them opportunities to take part in group discussion and drama activities.
- Encourage them to listen and respond appropriately to others.
- Help them to understand the need to adapt their speech to different situations.
- Give them opportunities to evaluate and reflect on their own speech.
- Encourage them to use the vocabulary and grammar of Standard English whenever appropriate.



Teachers provide opportunities for children to talk, both formally and informally within the classroom across the whole curriculum. Children are taught that different modes of expression, as well as language, may be appropriate in different situations. Opportunities are given for children to carry out different types of speaking, e.g. predict, reflect, recall and imagine.

## **Feedback and Assessment**

Feedback will be given regularly and in accordance with the Trust's marking and feedback policy.

In the short term, teachers will carry out continuous assessment of children's progress in all aspects of the English Curriculum and this will be noted down on the distance marking sheets on a daily basis identifying children who have/have not met the learning objectives, the nature of the misconception/lack of application, and use this to inform planning, strategies and adult support the following day. Therefore, informal assessments in all areas of English are continuous weekly and termly. The aim is to build a picture of a child's progress across a range of evidence of work. Teachers look at the evidence of work from pupils' work, other evidence (distance marking/Teaching Assistants/interventions/boosters) and assessment materials (children's writing/books).

In the long term, we assess pupils' progress using Target Tracker towards the expected level or exceeding level in the National Curriculum Programme of Study for English 2014 (see Marking and Assessment policies).

## **Entitlement and Equal Opportunities**

The school has an Equal Opportunities Policy; in addition to applying this, we will ensure that:

- All children cover the content made statutory by the programmes of study within the National Curriculum for English.
- Children access the curriculum at the appropriate level, thus ensuring progression and differentiation.
- Suitable resources and learning environments are available.

## **SEN and Inclusion**

We will ensure that:

- The class teacher, SENCO and the English Coordinator liaise to ensure that individual needs of pupils are met and that appropriate targets are set and regularly reviewed.
- Teachers set high expectations and appropriate targets which are also reviewed regularly; teachers differentiate questions and activities to allow all children access to learning.
- Children with learning difficulties are diagnosed and provision is made for individual needs.
- Where necessary, outside agencies are involved (SEN policy).
- Parents are kept informed and are encouraged to support their child's learning through homework activities and termly targets.
- Adult support is used in school to support groups/individual children.

Review: June 2022



*The Board of Directors reviews and approves this policy every two years. It may, however, review this policy earlier than this if the Government produces new regulations, or if it receives recommendation on how this policy might be improved.*

