

Ashfield Junior School: English Policy

At Ashfield Junior School, we believe that communication, language and literacy is fundamental to the overall development of the child and their access to the whole curriculum. 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. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils, therefore, who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively alienated. We aim to deliver high quality teaching of reading, writing and speaking and listening in order to develop confident and successful life-long learners.

Aims

- To provide a language rich environment for all children that promotes a positive culture of reading and writing.
- To develop children's speaking and listening skills in order that they can express and share their views and ideas clearly and confidently.
- To develop children's basic and higher order reading and comprehension skills.
- To teach children the skills and techniques for writing in order that they can construct well crafted pieces for a range of purposes and audiences.
- To develop in children an interest in books to support their learning across the curriculum that will also enrich their lives.
- To meet the requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study for English at Key Stage 2.

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.

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.

Teaching and Learning

At Ashfield Junior School, English is taught every day to all children. The teaching and learning of English takes place within whole class and group settings. During these lessons, children will be explicitly taught a range of skills that they will then practise in other literacy contexts. Lessons will have clear learning question.

Within English lessons, teachers use a range of teaching techniques including modelled and shared reading and writing. Literacy will also be taught through cross-curricular links wherever possible.

Spoken Language

At Ashfield Junior School, we value the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. We value the importance of giving children of all ages and abilities the opportunities to take part in a range of speaking and listening activities for different purposes. We also believe that it is vital that teachers model these skills for the children at all times.

We believe that spoken language should be developed in a number of ways:

- Encouraging children to share their ideas and opinions with their peers.
- Teaching children how to respond appropriately to the ideas of others.
- Teaching and encouraging children to work collaboratively.
- Developing a capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write.
- Making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others using discussion to probe and remedy their English misconceptions.
- Understanding and using the conventions for discussion and debate.
- Modelling of good speaking and listening skills by all adults around the school but especially teachers and learning support assistants.
- Providing a range of opportunities for children to talk and listen across all curriculum areas.
- Creating opportunities to use ICT to support speaking and listening skills..
- Participating in and gaining knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama.
- Adopting, creating and sustaining a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role.
- Improvising, devising and scripting drama for one another and a range of audience, as well as rehearsing, refining, sharing and responding thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.
- Giving children opportunities to take part in assemblies.

Reading

We believe that it is vital for children to learn to read confidently in order for them to become independent learners. We aim to develop a rich reading culture throughout the school through teacher modelling, the school library, vocabulary rich displays and classroom libraries.

Reading in Key Stage 2 consists of two components: word reading and comprehension. At Ashfield Junior School, we believe it is essential that teaching focuses on developing pupils' competence in both elements and understand that different kinds of teaching are needed for each. Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the quick recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. This is why phonics is emphasised in the teaching of reading to children. Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge and knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills develop through pupils' experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction.

At Ashfield Junior School, we strongly believe that reading widely and often increases pupils' vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. Reading also feeds pupils' imagination and leads curious young minds. We know that it is essential that, by the end of their primary education, all pupils are able to read fluently, and with confidence, in any subject to be successful in their forthcoming secondary education.

Children, who require support with their reading, are listened to in a dedicated capacity for a minimum of three times a week. This will be dependent on the specific child and their reading ability. Teachers communicate with parents through Class Dojo, reading records and the importance of supporting children to read at home is promoted.

At Ashfield Junior School, reading is taught in a number of ways. Children will be given many and varying opportunities for reading which are not restricted to English lessons. These include: independent reading, shared reading and whole class reading.

Independent Reading

All children will have a personal reading book which they will read both in school and at home. This reading book may be a book from a specific reading scheme but for more able free readers it can be a book chosen from the school or classroom library. Children will have a reading record which can be used to record reading sessions with teachers and parents and can also be used for parents and teachers to communicate.

Shared Reading

Shared Reading takes place within the English lesson. The teacher models reading skills and strategies to the whole class as an expert reader. The texts selected for shared reading should be quality texts that reflect the teaching objectives.

Whole Class Reading

This is teacher led reading with the children listening and responding to the text as appropriate. This activity will take place in all classrooms with all children. During whole class reading, children will gain exposure to and experience of a range of genres which they can then apply when choosing books for independent reading. The book chosen for whole class reading should be a book that is aimed slightly above the strongest readers in the class in order to expose all children to a wider range of books than they can access independently. This book could be the whole class text driver or a book in addition to this.

Writing

We believe that all children, by the end of Year 6, should be able to write independently in a range of genres, for a range of real life purposes. Children should leave primary school as confident, successful writers.

Writing in Key Stage 2 is also split into two components: transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing). In addition to developing these two elements, pupils at Ashfield Junior School are taught how to plan, draft, share, evaluate, revise, edit and publish their writing. Writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription: that is, on spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words. Effective composition involves forming, articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting.

Writing will be taught and promoted in the following ways:

- By the end of each term, children are expected to have written three major pieces of independent, extended writing within their English lesson. This is part of a three-week teaching process commencing with planning and finishing with publishing. Writing takes place in other curriculum areas, too.
- Children's writing is encouraged and praised in order to develop a positive image of themselves as writers.
- A range of purposes and contexts are provided for writing.
- Children will be encouraged to present their work with care, paying increasing attention to spelling, grammar, punctuation and handwriting as they become more confident and independent writers.

Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation

At Ashfield Junior School opportunities for teachers to enhance pupils' vocabulary arise naturally from their reading and writing and through speech. As vocabulary increases, teachers show pupils how to understand the relationships between words, how to understand nuances in meaning, and how to develop their understanding of, and ability to

use, figurative language. They also teach pupils how to work out and clarify the meanings of unknown words and words with more than one meaning.

We believe that 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 the language about language listed in the National Curriculum. We feel that it is important that pupils learn the correct grammatical terms in English and that these terms are integrated within all lessons so that pupils become more comfortable with using them.

Assessment

By the end of each Key Stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the National Curriculum. All class teachers will assess their children both informally and formally throughout each term and report their assessments DC Pro and Pupil Progress meetings. Assessments are used by teachers to evaluate learning and inform teaching, and by teachers and senior leaders to evaluate individual and groups of children's achievements to inform future provision and potentially school development.

Assessment in English also includes:

- On-going Assessment for Learning (AfL) practices within class and group sessions, including the sharing of and reference being made to the learning question and success criteria, as well as self and peer assessments of understanding, outcomes and progress.
- Marking and the feedback of children's work.
- Moderation of children's major pieces.