



English Policy

Reviewed: April 2016

Next review: April 2019

Introduction

This document outlines our ethos, principles, aims and strategies for the teaching and learning of English at Loose Primary School. It gives guidance for the planning, teaching and assessment of English throughout the school within the context of the National Curriculum and our own core-text approach.

The expectations for teaching and learning at Loose Primary are outlined in our Teaching and Learning policy and underpin the foundations for a high-quality and highly effective English education.

We aim to foster a love of literature, reading and storytelling which is led by a creative core-text based curriculum. Links between high-quality texts and other curriculum areas such as art, enable relevant and exciting speaking, reading and writing opportunities to take place each day. Daily literacy lessons teach specific skills and these are embedded throughout the curriculum allowing children to become fluent, proficient and creative in the application of their abilities in these areas.

Aims

In line with the new National Curriculum for English we aim to ensure that all pupils:

- speak and listen in a wide variety of social situations demonstrating their ability to re-tell, act out and discuss texts, themes and ideas
- become fluent readers from an early age showing the ability to decode text accurately and demonstrate their comprehension and understanding of what they have read
- write for a variety of purposes, using a cursive, joined handwriting style and showing a development in fluency, speed and style dependent on genre
- apply their knowledge and understanding of phonics, spelling patterns and rules, grammar and punctuation to reading and writing opportunities across the curriculum

Purpose of Study

English holds a vital place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to communicate and write fluently, expressing ideas and concepts, and through their reading and listening enable others to communicate with them. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading enables pupils to acquire knowledge but also to develop socially, emotionally and spiritually. Skills of literacy are essential to enable pupils to develop into young people who can articulate their ideas, read for pleasure and speak, think and write with eloquence to communicate effectively in an ever-changing society.

Literate pupils should:

- 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

Alongside the expectations for high quality teaching and learning opportunities outlined in the Teaching and Learning policy, subject specific information is outlined below.

Organisation and progression

Teaching and learning in English is based on the National Curriculum as well as the Foundation Stage guidance to guide planning for children in each year group.

Content and structure of objectives

The curriculum content for each year group will cover all aspects of the subject, including speaking and listening and spelling, punctuation and grammar. The progression of skills develops year on year. Grammar and spelling objectives are grouped according to year group on our own progression maps.

Planning

In order for children to benefit from rich, effective learning experiences, each teaching sequence must be well planned. At Loose, we start by having an in-depth knowledge of the National Curriculum objectives for each year group. We use the Power of Reading teaching approaches developed by the Centre for Literacy Practice in Education (CLPE) to structure our medium term planning. Texts are carefully chosen to enhance our curriculum with whole text studied in depth each term. Themes, topics and texts are interwoven to provide a rich, cohesive learning experience to embed speaking, reading and writing in engaging contexts. Short term planning takes account of formative assessment strategies and is more personalised to each teacher and their class. These must include clear learning intentions and steps to success which are communicated to the pupils. Teachers support consistency across the year group by planning together and sharing best practice.

High Quality Lessons

We have identified these additional factors that contribute to highly effective English teaching and learning.

- Teaching backwards from excellent outcomes – these are shared with children at the beginning of a unit of learning or lesson
- Speaking, reading and writing is explicitly modelled in every lesson
- ‘Talk for Writing’ strategies used to develop articulate speakers and storytellers
- Talking partners used effectively
- Active learning opportunities engage children in every lesson
- Strong subject knowledge of spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Rich opportunities to apply skills in all curriculum areas
- Planned opportunities for children to use ICT to publish, present and create
- Effective use of learning walls during lessons

Differentiation/ Special Educational Needs

Our SEN policy applies to all subject areas and should be read alongside the following information.

- Teaching is organised to enable all pupils to access the highest quality learning opportunities in English.
- Intervention programmes are used to support children who need more support to meet age related expectations. These include BRS, Lexia and Phonics Support Groups. Corrective teaching ensures that pupils are immediately identified as needing further support and are given the opportunity to develop their learning in this area on the same day.
- All children are provided with appropriately challenging learning opportunities to develop their skills and achieve excellent outcomes.

Assessment

As part of the on-going teaching and learning process, teachers will assess children's understanding, achievement and progress in English. Assessment may be based upon observation, questioning, informal testing and the marking and evaluation of work (in accordance with our marking policy). This will inform day to day teaching and learning and provide feedback to children. Learners will also be taught to assess and evaluate their own achievements, learning from their own mistakes and identifying areas for improvement using our peer and self-assessment formats.

Formal statutory assessments will be administered at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 in line with National Guidelines to assess attainment in Reading and Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar. There will also be an assessment of writing which will be teacher-assessed.

Pupils will take part in the Phonics Screening Check at the end of Year 1.

In order to track in year progress effectively in English, teachers will regularly keep track of pupil progress using formative assessment strategies and keeping effective records. Assessments in Reading and Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar will take place termly or at the end of the year as appropriate to the year group.

Assessment in the Foundation Stage

Assessment in the Foundation Stage is carried out through planned observations; incidental observation during child initiated activities and during teacher directed activities which are informed through planning in line with Development Matters and the ELG from the EYFS.

All information obtained from these assessment strategies is transferred into the children's individual profiles and recorded against the relevant Early Learning Goals. All assessment evidence is stored within the individual learning journeys, including observations, photographs, examples of learning and next steps.

All pupils in a class should be present at the beginning of the lesson for the introductory teaching session and for the plenary session at the end.

Reporting

Parents are regularly informed of their child's progress through written interim reports, which detail how each pupil is progressing in line with the end of year objectives for their year group.

Progress and targets are also shared during parent consultation meetings twice a year. In addition, a written report is sent home at the end of each academic year.

Equal Opportunities

All pupils will have equality of opportunity to reach their full potential across the curriculum regardless of their race, gender, cultural background, ability or physical disability. Our Equal Opportunities Policy and Racial Equality Policy apply to all subject areas. Where appropriate, teaching materials, and individual group activities should reflect the cultural and ethnic diversity of society. Stereotyping, in terms of ethnicity, race and gender is not permitted, and pupils' progress should be monitored, ensuring that no child is disadvantaged. Equally, a child's religious beliefs and cultural differences should always be respected. See Equal Opportunities policy for further details.

Appendix 1

Reading and Libraries

Inspiring a love of reading is one of the fundamental priorities of the program of English study and underpins our teaching and learning philosophy.

All pupils are taught to read from their first days in Reception. Children read individually and in groups at school. They will bring home reading books that are appropriately levelled to ensure the correct level of challenge.

We use the 'book bands' system to allow children to select books to help them progress in fluency and progress through a structured vocabulary. The book bands also allow teachers to select reading material at an appropriate level of challenge in group reading activities, and to select books as home readers.

Children are taught comprehension strategies through their reading groups, through reading comprehension lessons and through reading individually to teachers, teaching assistants and volunteers in school.

The Power of Reading program encourages children to engage with the highest quality current and classic children's fiction and non-fiction, developing a critical awareness of their response to texts.

We also use Pearson's Bug Club to provide each child with their personalised 'online reading world' where e-Books can be allocated, assessment can be tracked and comprehension skills developed.

Our libraries are spaces designed to promote a love of reading, a calm environment and a sanctuary where reading for pleasure can take priority. A significant investment in the quality of the furniture, fittings and texts demonstrates our commitment to inspiring children with a love of literature from a young age.

Class book corners promote high quality display, encourage children to categorise, care for and review books, and provide a 'reading for pleasure' space in each classroom.

Throughout the year, reading challenges, rewards, book fairs and book weeks will be used to encourage enjoyment and pleasure in reading.

Class teachers track progress through termly and end of year tests, formative assessment during individual and group reading time, English lessons and cross curricular learning opportunities. Formal statutory assessments will be administered at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 in line with National Guidelines to assess attainment in Reading.

Appendix 2

Phonics

Pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are taught phonics systematically to provide them with the skills they need to decode words effectively.

We use Jolly Phonics songs to introduce letter sounds to children in a fun and engaging way from the earliest days in school. The structure of the DfE Letters and Sounds programme is followed from Reception to the end of Year 2. In Year 1, a wide variety of high-quality resources are used, including Collins Song of Sounds. In Year 2, children use their knowledge of phonics to build a firm foundation for spelling accurately and with confidence.

Children take the Phonics Screening Test at the end of Year 1. Children who do not pass follow a structured programme in Year 2, to enable them to consolidate these areas of phonic knowledge, and re-take the screening at the end of Year 2.

Pupils learn the first 100 high frequency words in order. These are a mixture of decodable and non-decodable words and so may need to be taught as 'sight' vocabulary.

Appendix 3

Spelling

We follow the National Curriculum requirements for each year group as set out in the English Appendix 1: Spelling.

Pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are taught phonics daily following the letters and sounds programme. This provides them with the foundation they need to develop their knowledge of spelling rules and patterns.

In Year 2, children follow Phase 6 of letters and sounds. We also use resources from our No-Nonsense Spelling programme to ensure they have a thorough grounding in the spelling rules of the English language.

From Years 3-6, children follow the No-Nonsense Spelling programme which allows us to plan progression effectively so that all spelling rules and strategies are covered for each year group.

Pupils have spelling journals to record their learning of spelling rules and patterns. The meanings of words, roots, suffixes and prefixes are discussed in line with the expectations for that year group. This provides a context for each word and encourages pupils to develop their independent use of these spelling patterns and rules in their own writing.

Pupils are set between 6 and 10 spellings each week as part of their home learning. These can be accessed on our school website.

Children also have a 'Hot 100' list displayed in their class to encourage them to develop and keep track of the common exception words for their year group, as set out by the National Curriculum, as they learn them.

Pupils are encouraged to identify spelling errors and edit their own writing, and that of their peers, for improvements.

Children are also able to use word mats, dictionaries, learning walls, thesauruses and personalised spelling aids to support them in editing and improving their spelling.

Appendix 4

Punctuation and Grammar

We follow the National Curriculum requirements for each year group as set out in the English Appendix 2: Vocabulary, Punctuation and Grammar.

Pupils are taught discrete grammar or punctuation lessons to consolidate key areas and this is applied through daily modelled writing and independent writing across the curriculum.

Termly Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation tests are used to track children's progress against year group objectives.

The progression in skills is clarified through our Grammar Progression Maps which outline the objectives to be covered in each term, in each year group.

Pupils take part in Statutory End of Key Stage assessments in Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.