

Duke Street Primary School



English Policy

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The school contact for English is: Miss Parkinson
(Sept 16 - July 17: Mr Reay)

1 Aims and objectives

- 1.1 The English curriculum develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including the communication of their ideas, opinions and feelings. Children are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as of non-fiction and media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations.
- 1.2 Teachers and pupils in our school usually use the term 'English' to describe the English curriculum. English skills will be taught and practised in many areas across the curriculum, and not just in 'English' lessons.
- 1.3 Our objectives in the teaching of English skills are:
- to enable children to speak clearly and audibly, to communicate effectively through speech and to take account of the perspective of those to whom they are speaking;
 - to encourage children to listen with concentration, in order to identify the main points, and sometimes the detail, of what they have heard;
 - to show children how to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands;
 - to enable children to become effective communicators, both verbal and non-verbal, through a variety of drama activities;
 - to help children become confident, independent readers, developing their understanding of meaning conveyed at word, sentence and whole text level;
 - to enable children to develop as enthusiastic and reflective readers, through contact with a wide range of different types of material, including challenging and substantial texts;
 - to foster the enjoyment of writing for a wide range of purposes, and a recognition of its value;
 - to encourage accurate and meaningful writing, be it narrative or non-fiction;
 - to develop skills in planning, drafting, evaluating and editing their writing;
 - to engender in children a love of literature and an appreciation of our English heritage;
 - to enable and encourage pupils to apply their English skills across the whole curriculum.

2 Teaching and learning

2.1 We use a variety of teaching and learning approaches in our English lessons, as recommended in the New National Curriculum in English and Mathematics. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in relation to English. Our timetable ensures that pupils have a substantial daily lesson which focuses specifically on the development of English skills, for example, engaging in a whole-class reading or writing activity, a whole-class focused word or sentence analysis activity, a guided group or independent reading or writing activity, or a whole-class session to review progress and learning. We incorporate objectives from the Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling documents provided by STA and Lancashire into lessons to make sure that the children are prepared for the Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling test, which will be in both key stages from 2016. There is a high proportion of whole-class and group teaching, the independent activity gives an opportunity to talk and collaborate, and so embed and enhance pupils' learning. They have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts, and to support their work with a variety of resources, such as word banks, phonic resources, dictionaries and thesauruses.

Daily grammar and spelling starters are incorporated into daily lessons to expose the children to key objectives and develop further key skills needed to reach National Expectations. 'Words of the Week' are also used to help develop and extend children's vocabulary and help provide further opportunities to use a dictionary and thesaurus. There has also been a scheme developed at Duke Street called 'Star Spelling', which incorporates all words from the year group specific word lists, to develop the spelling of the words. This readies the children for the spelling section of the grammar, punctuation and spelling tests. Each class also has a 'dictionary corner' to help extend children's vocabulary and incorporate this into their writing.

Children use ICT in English lessons where it enhances their learning, such as in drafting their work and in using multimedia resources to study how words and images are combined to convey meaning. Wherever possible, we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum, and will often use incidental opportunities to teach and reinforce English skills in other subject areas.

Topics are carefully selected in both key stages to help provide further opportunities to engage and motivate pupils to read and write, particularly focussed to help improve boys' writing.

2.2 In all classes, children have a wide range of abilities, and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons, we do it through differentiated group work, while in others, we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop

their own ideas. We use classroom assistants to support some children, and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

- 2.3 In order to raise standards in writing within English, and across the curriculum, teaching staff have received training for 'Talk for Writing'. Teachers will use the 'Talk for Writing' scheme originally for fiction writing but attempting non-fiction towards Summer term 2016. Talk for writing allows the children to be creative and fully immersed in texts and changing parts or all of it to include different functions of writing.

3 English curriculum planning

- 3.1 English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the guidance from the revised Primary Framework and New National Curriculum for English and Mathematics as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements.

We use the interim assessment objectives released by the DfE for years 2 and 6 and objectives from the New National Curriculum for all other year groups. The objectives are used to support class teachers with planning for the main English lessons and also within grammar starters of each English lesson. When planning and assessing, teachers cater for all pupils and will identify who are 'basic', 'advancing' or 'deep' learners. These three cognitive domains relate to the depth of learning and provision of learning opportunities.

- 3.2 We carry out curriculum planning in English, in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The revised Primary Framework and New National Curriculum for English and Mathematics provide detail long-term teaching objectives. Our yearly teaching documents identifies the key skills in English that we teach throughout the year for each year group to make sure that full coverage takes place.
- 3.3 Our medium-term plans, which can sometimes be based on the New National Curriculum and suggested unit summaries provided by Lancashire, give details of the main teaching skills for each term. The suggested unit summaries are not obligatory as long as there is a clear coverage of fiction and non-fiction units where the stated objectives throughout the year are covered. However, the unit summaries can be used to support teachers with their planning for particular units. The subject leader is responsible for overseeing and reviewing these plans.
- 3.4 Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan for the teaching of English. This lists the specific learning skills and expected outcomes for each lesson, and gives details of how the lessons are to be taught. It also includes details of what each group of children will be learning and doing. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, and the class teacher and subject leader often discuss them on an informal basis. Skills identified from the year group expectations are listed on weekly plans, identifying skills covered through grammar / spelling starters and the main teaching objectives. Shared planning is used in both key stages and

coverage of skills and objectives are recorded and passed on to make sure full coverage takes place in each year group.

- 3.5 We plan the activities in English so that they build on the children's prior learning. While we give children of all abilities the opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding, we also ensure progression, so that there is an increasing challenge for the children as they move up through the school. This provides an opportunity for children to deepen their understanding in a different context.

4 The Early Years Foundation Stage

- 4.1 We teach English skills in reception year as an integral part of the EYFS curriculum.

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is followed to ensure continuity & progression from entering Nursery, moving on to Reception Class and then through to the English National Curriculum in KS1 & KS2.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum is divided into prime & specific areas of learning & development. 'Communication & Language' is one of 3 prime areas that are fundamental to, and support development in all other areas.

'Communication & Language' is made up of the following 3 aspects: Listening & Attention, Understanding and Speaking. The use of 'Talk for Writing' helps the children in EYFS to develop vocabulary and also their speaking and listening skills preparing them for some basic writing, in line with their expectations in the Development Matters document.

'Literacy' is one of 4 specific areas which include essential skills and knowledge. They grow out of the prime areas and provide important contexts for learning.

'Literacy' is made up of the following 2 aspects: Reading & Writing.

Children learn through play, speaking and listening activities, teacher modelling, group work and self-direction. The children will aim to achieve the skills identified in the New English Curriculum following the Development Matters in EYFS in CLL provided by Lancashire.

Children have a daily phonics lesson as a crucial element in developing their early reading and writing skills. They will also have an EYFS approach to completing 'Star Spelling' sessions which will familiarise the children with the reading and spelling of their key words to know by the end of EYFS.

- 4.2 We plan the teaching and development of English skills to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals, which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. We give all children the opportunity to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and extend their vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore words and texts, to enjoy them, to learn about them, and to use them in various situations.

5 Reading Policy

5.1 The teaching of reading and children's acquisition of reading skills is the bedrock of our English curriculum. Becoming an effective and proficient reader is the gateway to learning for our children, and success in most other subjects of the curriculum is dependent upon learning to read well.

5.2 Children begin to develop pre-reading skills involving, for example, the ability to visually focus, to concentrate for increasingly sustained periods, to distinguish between visual shapes and to notice similarities, and to begin to understand that pictures, symbols and print can convey meaning, from the very youngest age.

5.3 In the Early Years Foundation Stage, we aim to give children continuous experience of the medium of print and text through all their learning experiences and in all the Areas of Learning in the EYFS curriculum. The environment is rich with appropriate text: labels, captions, simple instructions, names, alphabet prompts and children's own mark-making. Adults continuously model reading in the learning environment, embedding in children's understanding the idea that print conveys meaning and is invaluable to us in our lives.

Children are taught from the youngest age to value and care for books, to understand their structure, to handle them appropriately and to enjoy sharing them with each other.

5.4 We believe that an understanding and knowledge of phonics, the relationship between graphemes (letters or groups of letters) and phonemes (the 44 constituent sounds of spoken English) is essential as children learn to read. Children's ability to phonetically 'decode' letters and words into oral sounds is continuously assessed throughout the EYFS and Key Stage 1, in order that the next steps in children's knowledge of phonics can be effectively planned and taught. All children in these key stages have a daily phonics session to support their development of both reading and writing skills, following national guidance on teaching a programme of progressive, structured phonics.

5.5 However, children cannot learn to be skilled readers through phonics alone. We teach children to use a wide range of clues in tackling unfamiliar words and phrases in their reading: whole word recognition, picture clues, contextual clues based on the meaning of the text and grammatical correctness.

5.6 We do not use one single structured 'reading scheme' in our school, but believe in guiding and supporting children to read 'real books' with text of an appropriate level of difficulty.

For this reason, many of our books, fiction and non-fiction are colour-coded to indicate their level of difficulty, in the EYFS, Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2. Alongside ensuring that children read books of progressive difficulty, we do not deny children access to books which interest them but which may be too difficult for them to read independently. We seek to support children in accessing such books and encourage the use of 'paired reading' with an adult or a more able reader.

5.7 Children become avid readers through developing a love of books and through reading being made fun by teachers and other adults, providing excitement and inspiring the imagination. Parents and carers have a key role to play in helping to promote a love of books and reading at home, and we regard sharing books and support for reading to be one of the most important aspects of 'help with homework' which parents can provide.

5.8 Teachers ensure that there is a range of stimulating and attractive books and other reading material in classrooms and plan lessons around texts that will engage and inspire our children. We display and promote books throughout our school, including our well stocked library and home readers area to which all children have frequent and regular access, both for free choice of reading material and to do book-based research in order to support their learning across the curriculum. We also value and promote computer-based reading resources and the internet to support children's reading.

5.9 Reading pervades the curriculum and children have continuous opportunities to develop their reading skills, whatever the area of learning. However, throughout the school, classes have daily sessions of group and guided reading, during which they engage collaboratively in purposeful reading activities or exercises. From September 2016, there are changes to the Guided Reading system at Duke Street Primary School, to develop and promote the children's comprehension skills and curiosity and love for reading alongside promoting understanding of vocabulary. In order for children to develop their reading skills they will have various activities to promote reading and raise standards. Children will have vocabulary activities, pre-reading (in mixed ability pairs or directed by a teaching assistant), in depth reading and discussion led by the class teacher and focussing on different question types to familiarise the children with inference and retrieval from texts, comprehension activities and extensive written task based on what they have read. Guided reading sessions are teachers' key opportunity to assess children's reading and to plan which skills they need to develop next. In this planning, the school uses the reading objectives identified in the new National Curriculum to be in line with National Expectations.

We believe that well-planned group, independent and guided reading activities are more effective in developing children's reading skills than simply ensuring

that every child reads aloud from a 'reading book' every day. We do, however, give all children the opportunity to read aloud regularly, to an adult, and encourage parents and carers to support this activity at home.

Each class also shares a class novel on a daily basis or provides a 10-15 minute slot for children to read their own books which engage and inspire them.

5.10 The library is used to promote reading and there are weekly timetabled slots for classes to visit. The library is also open before school every Tuesday and after school on a Thursday, to children and parents.

6 Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas

6.1 The English skills that children develop are linked to, and applied in, every area of our curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work at school.

6.2 Mathematics, Science and Design Technology

The teaching of English skills contributes significantly to children's mathematical understanding, in a variety of ways. Children in the EYFS develop their understanding of number, pattern, shape and space by talking about these matters with adults and other children. Children in Key Stage 1 meet stories and rhymes that involve counting and sequencing. Children in Key Stage 2 are encouraged to read and interpret problems, in order to identify the mathematics involved. They explain and present their work to others during plenary sessions, and they communicate mathematically through the developing use of precise mathematical language.

Pupils will be expected to engage in research as part of their learning in science and design technology, to write a range of types of report on their work and to explain and communicate verbally about their learning, to the teacher and each other.

6.3 History, Geography and Religious Education (RE)

While these humanities subjects involve significant subject specific knowledge, skills and conceptual understanding, the medium for researching, learning about and communicating is, of course, the English language. Pupils will constantly call upon and develop their English skills in finding information, ordering and making sense of what they have learned and communicating it in writing and orally.

6.4 Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship

The teaching of English skills contributes to the teaching of PSHE and citizenship by encouraging children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues. Older children also research, debate and write about topical social problems and events. They discuss lifestyle choices, and meet and talk with visitors who work within the school community.

6.5 Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

The teaching of English skills enables our children to offer critical responses to the moral questions they meet in their life, both within and outside school. Their understanding and appreciation of a range of texts bring them into contact with their own literary heritage and with texts from a diverse range of cultures. The organisation of our lessons and break times allows children to work and play together, giving them the chance to use their speaking and listening skills in developing social collaboration and understanding.

7 English and ICT

- 7.1 The selective use of computer software, with clear learning objectives, will promote, enhance and support the teaching of English at word, sentence and text levels. It also offers ways of developing learning which are not always possible with conventional methods, for example, through individualised interactive learning. Software is used to support independent reading (text to speech) and writing (predictive word processors, word banks and spell checkers). A range of software is used to develop specific grammatical and spelling skills.
- 7.2 Pupils frequently use word processing facilities to record and edit their writing, and have regular access to the ICT suite and use of I pads in the classroom.
- 7.3 ICT is used at whole-class, group and independent levels. Screen projection of text, and the use of visualisers enables published texts and pupils' own writing to be read, shared and discussed. Through these means, classes engage in writing and reading, guided or modelled effectively by the teacher. A wide variety of text types and resources are available through the internet, PowerPoints or CD-ROMs to support specific learning, focused on particular textual analysis.

8 English and inclusion

- 8.1 All children, whatever their ability and individual needs, have a basic entitlement to be taught essential English skills, and to have the opportunity to develop those skills to the best of their ability. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our teaching of English skills, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this.
- 8.2 When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the pupil may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors - classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation - so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively, including 1:1 tuition. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

8.3 Intervention will be based on a pupil's Individual Learning Plan (ILP), where appropriate, for children with special educational needs. Depending on the pupil's needs, the ILP or provision map may include specific targets relating to English. (See the SEND policy and SEND information report for more detail)

8.4 Teaching assistants provide support for English by using:

- individualised guided writing and reading;
- differentiated texts that children can more easily read and understand;
- visual and written materials in different formats;
- ICT and other technological aids;
- alternative communication such as signs and symbols;
- translation and amanuensis.
- Intervention - helping to address the area of need

9 Assessment

9.1 Teachers assess children's work in English in three phases. The short-term assessments that teachers make as part of every lesson help them to adjust their daily plans. They match these short-term assessments closely to the learning objectives. Written or verbal feedback is given to help guide children's progress. Older children are encouraged to review their work and make self-assessments about how they can improve their own work.

See the Marking Policy for more information.

9.2 Teachers use the objectives from the New National Curriculum or interim documents (Years 2&6) to plan, assess and measure progress against the key skills, and to help them plan for the next unit of work. The skills identified in the documents are used to identify achievements made on a half termly basis. Judgments are reported to the SLT (e.g. PIVAT, Previous Year group Expectation (PYE) or Foundations {Interim}, Basic, At, Deep) on a termly basis and Pupil Progress meetings are used to identify achievements and key focus children who need to make further progress to be in line with National Expectations. Strategies and interventions are identified in order to cater for all children in the classroom.

9.3 Teachers make long-term assessments towards the end of the school year, and they use these to assess progress against school and national targets. With the help of these long-term assessments, they are able to set targets for the next school year, and to summarise the progress of each child before discussing it with the child's parents or carers. The next teacher then uses these long-term assessments as the planning basis for the new school year.

9.4 These long-term assessments are based on teacher assessments, supported by national assessment guidelines, and may be informed by the use of standardised, optional tests. Pupils participate in the national tasks and tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Teachers also make termly assessments of children's progress based on the objectives from the New National Curriculum or interim document for writing and reading.

9.5 From September 2016, each child will have pieces of their independent written work in a portfolio which will follow them throughout the school and show the progress in writing. The subject leader also keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio. These demonstrate what the expected level of attainment is in English in each year of the school. Teachers meet regularly to moderate assessments across a range of writing and other activities to ensure that our teacher assessments are accurate and in line with national standards.

Moderation also takes place through the use of cluster moderations, where teachers meet on a termly basis to compare writing in each school, making sure that judgments / outcomes are consistent.

9.6 Staff are continuously developing their English subject knowledge and the subject leader takes an active role in disseminating best practice and making recommendations for staff training.

10 Resources

10.1 We have a very wide range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries and a variety of age-appropriate learning materials. Each classroom has a Working Wall which is used to scaffold learning, sharing key skills and WAGOLs (What a Good One Looks Like).

All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts. Children have access to the internet in the classroom, the library and in the ICT room. Pupils have regular access to the library, which contains a range of books to support children's development of reading skills and independent or group research.

11 Monitoring and review

11.1 The co-ordination and planning of the English curriculum are the responsibility of the subject leader, who also:

- supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping abreast of current developments in English and by providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject;
- gives the headteacher / governors an annual summary report which evaluates the strengths and areas for development in English in the school, and indicates areas for further improvement;
- reports to the headteacher and governors on a termly basis, producing data for each year group
- uses specially allocated regular management time to review evidence of the children's learning through book sampling and pupil conferencing, and to observe and review English lessons across the school.

11.2 A named member of the school's governing body is briefed to oversee the teaching of English. The English governor meets regularly with the subject leader to review progress.

11.3 This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.

