

Julian's Primary School

English Policy



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Approved by Alison Møller, Executive Headteacher; Governing Body

Signed by Chair:

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English Strategic Coordination			
Phonics Lead (RWI Phonics) – Rosie Blocksidge	EYFS and KS1 Phase Leader (assists with coordination of English across phase) – Geraldine Bibby	KS2 Phase Leader (assists with coordination of English across KS2 with a focus on Destination Reader programme) – Lawrence Anderson	English Lead – Catherine Osborne

The Contribution of English to the School's Curriculum

At Julian's Primary School we recognise the crucial importance of studying the English language. Improved performance at reading, writing and spoken language will enable our pupils to express their thoughts and ideas more fluently, accurately and, ultimately, to their greater satisfaction. This will also help them to deal more successfully with other curriculum subjects, while enriching their lives beyond school. The teaching and learning of language skills are, therefore, given a high priority in our school and where possible the creative curriculum and ICT are used as tools.

Our overarching aim for English 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.

We aim for our pupils to:

- 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 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.

At Julian's Primary School we encourage all children to become independent learners and be confident in all strands of learning. The children will be given opportunities to speak in a variety of contexts and learn to listen to and value the views of others.

We promote an ethos where children are prepared to take risks in their learning and are secure in the fact that their contributions will be respected and valued.

Statutory Requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum in England: Framework Document (2014).

Curriculum Delivery

In Nursery through to Year 6, children are taught English within their classes. Through differentiation and the support of Teaching Assistants, all children will receive high quality teaching and appropriate support in order for every child to reach their full potential. Children may receive additional support if necessary outside of the English lessons. Children that have an 'Access Passport' may also be withdrawn in order to receive an intervention that focuses on the child's more specific individual needs. A clear lesson objective and success criteria are a feature of all English lessons. Working walls support learning in the classrooms. Formative marking is used. Assessment informs planning and reference is made to the National Curriculum in medium-term plans. The use of computing enables children to use and apply their developing skills in English in a variety of ways. We encourage children to use ICT as a resource for learning, whenever appropriate. We provide a rich and varied experience for pupils to draw on in their writing and reading which should include the whole curriculum.

Approaches to Speaking and Listening

The four stands of speaking and listening: speaking, listening, group discussion and drama permeate the whole curriculum. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise reading and writing standards. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life. We aim for children to be able to speak clearly, fluently and coherently, to be able to listen attentively with understanding, pleasure and empathy and contribute to group discussions effectively.

We achieve this by:

- giving our children confidence in themselves as speakers and listeners by showing them that we value their conversations and opinions. We also encourage a respect for the views of others.
- being aware that as adults, we provide a model of speakers and listeners in our day-to-day interactions with them and with other adults in our school.
- helping them to articulate their ideas and provide purposes and audiences for talk within a range of formal and informal situations and in individual, partner, group and class contexts.
- by providing opportunities to perform to a larger audience, in presentations and productions, where children's efforts and skills are acknowledged by staff, parents, carers, visitors and peers.
- by providing a range of experiences where children can work collaboratively and participate in opportunities to reflect on talk and explore real and imagined situations through role play, hot-seating, drama and discussions.
- by developing the children's ability to listen with attention and understanding in all areas of the curriculum and where necessary, asking and responding to questions appropriately.

Approaches to Reading

Our pupils learn to read effectively and quickly using the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme. They progress onto Destination Reader once they can read with accuracy and speed.

The Read, Write Inc. Phonics programme is for:

- Pupils in Year R to Year 2 who are learning to read and write
- Any pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 who need to catch up rapidly
- Struggling readers in Years 5 and 6, particularly if they are new to English

Phonics pupils:

- Decode letter-sound correspondences quickly and effortlessly, using their phonic knowledge and skills
- Read common exception words on sight
- Understand what they read
- Read aloud with fluency and expression

In addition, we teach pupils to work effectively with a partner to explain and consolidate what they are learning. This provides the teacher with opportunities to assess learning and to pick up on difficulties, such as pupils' poor articulation, or problems with blending or alphabetic code knowledge.

We group pupils homogeneously, according to their progress in reading rather than their writing. This is because it is known that pupils' progress in writing will lag behind progress in reading, especially for those whose motor skills are less well developed. In Reception, we emphasise the alphabetic code. The pupils rapidly learn sounds and the letter or groups of letters they need to represent them. Simple mnemonics help them to grasp this quickly. This is especially useful for pupils at risk of making slower progress. This learning is consolidated daily. Pupils have frequent practice in reading high frequency words with irregular spellings – common exception words.

We make sure that pupils read books that are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and the common exception words. This is so that, early on, they experience success and gain confidence that they are readers. Re-reading and discussing these books with the teacher supports their increasingly fluent decoding.

Alongside this, the teachers read a wide range of stories, poetry and non-fiction to pupils.

Our aim is for pupils to complete the phonics programme as quickly as possible. The sooner they complete it, the sooner they will be able to choose books to read at their own interest and comprehension level.

Outcomes for children: tracking progress

We assess all pupils following Read Write Inc. Phonics using the Entry Assessment. We use this data to assign them to either Read Write Inc. Phonics or a Destination Reader group. This gives us a very good indication of how well they are making progress relative to their starting points. We do this for all pupils, whenever they join us, so we can track all of them effectively.

Towards the end of Year 1, all children take part in the national phonics screening test. They achieve either a pass or fail. If a child does not pass the screening test, they retake this in Year 2. These children receive additional interventions. KS2 children who still need to develop their fluency levels also receive phonics interventions and further small group or one-to-one reading sessions.

In addition, we use a standardised reading tests, PIRA (Progress in Reading Assessments), so that we can ensure that the gains our pupils are making are age-appropriate. By the end of Key Stage 1, our

aim is for pupils to read aloud age-appropriate texts accurately and with sufficient speed for comprehension. This means that we can focus on developing their comprehension, preparing them well for the transition to Key Stage 2.

Reading to Learn, Year 2 to Year 6 (Destination Reader)

When children can read fluently and accurately, they no longer need to learn to read on the Read Write Inc. programme. We continue to group pupils homogeneously, according to their progress in reading. Children are then taught explicit reading strategies through the Hackney wide programme Destination Reader. Destination Reader lessons begin with whole-class modelling of a reading strategy by the class teacher. This is followed by independent (partner) reading time focusing on the application of the reading strategy. Finally, there is a plenary in which children demonstrate their application and record their learning in Reading Albums. The KS2 Phase Leader works closely with the English Lead to oversee the implementation and coordination of this programme. Teachers are supported by a CPD cycle of joint planning, modelling and team teaching.

Home Reading

Every classroom across the school has its own Book Corner stocked with high-quality picture books and chapter books, across a range of genres. Each week children who access the Read, Write Inc. programme will bring home three books. The first book is a black and white copy of the Storybook they are reading in school so children continue to develop their fluency and reading confidence. The second book is a Book Bag or a colour banded book that closely matches the grapheme-phoneme correspondences they have been taught. The third is a book selected from the class book corner. This book is to encourage reading for pleasure and is read by the adult, not the child.

Children in KS2 either borrow a 'levelled reader' (reading a book from a colour band, which fits their reading progress level) or an appropriately levelled chapter book. Teachers keep a record of the books children take home.

Where there are opportunities throughout the day, children have a book at their tables that they read for pleasure. The school has a soft-start to the day and children often read these books first thing in the morning.

Parents and carers are:

- Encouraged to listen to and/or support their child with reading at home. Children are encouraged to read for 10 minutes every night in Foundation Stage, 15 minutes every night in KS1 and 20 minutes (and beyond) every night in KS2.
- Encouraged to engage with reading at home. In EYFS and KS1, parents comment on their child's reading in a Home Reading Record each week and share this with the class teacher. The class teacher then responds to these comments so there is a dialogue about each child's reading progress.
- Invited into school for regular 'Open Reading Mornings'. The class teacher and Year 6 children read with children whose parents cannot attend either in small groups or individually.
- Encouraged to attend workshops led by members of the English Team. These are designed to support parents and their understanding of how the curriculum is designed and its intent to support learners.

Approaches to Writing

Where possible, core texts are selected to match the topic of the wider curriculum each term so children have an immersive experience both in terms of developing vocabulary and a broader understanding of the context of a text. The school uses the resources on Literacy Tree to inform planning and year groups adapt lessons according to the needs of the cohort. The teaching sequences embed the teaching of phonics, grammar, punctuation and spelling into a rich English curriculum. Opportunities for revisiting prior learning are mapped into planning and connections to reading are referred to throughout lessons so children understand how to become successful writers.

Children engage with high quality picture books, novels, poetry, fiction, and non-fiction through a wide range of teaching approaches. Children are immersed in the text through a wide range of approaches including drama, discussion, role-play, Book Talk, story mapping and shared writing.

To develop our children as writers we:

- treat children as writers, from the earliest stage, who have ideas that they will want to communicate, building on writing skills they have acquired and their knowledge of print from their environment.
- provide experiences where the children can acquire confidence and a positive attitude to writing.
- develop and sustain writing skills by providing opportunities for children to write for a range of purposes and audiences.
- ensure that the children build the success criteria (What Makes Good) through lessons and then use it as an evaluative self-assessment tool.
- give opportunities to practise their writing skills in meaningful and varied contexts.
- immerse the children in high quality texts using a range of approaches
- use guided writing sessions to model writing skills, teaching children how to compose, amend and revise their writing.
- teach children to become critical readers of their own writing and others by using self-evaluation and peer assessment to check their work independently for sense, accuracy and meaning.
- encourage children to use a dictionary and/or thesaurus to introduce and explore new words.
- teach grammar and punctuation in the context of children's own writing, as well as through discrete lessons.
- teach children to develop their ability to organise and present imaginative and/or factual writing and poetry in different ways.
- further develop their writing skills by the provision of cross curricular activities and opportunities.
- teach strategies for spelling to enable children to become confident and competent spellers.

Appropriate time is given in order for the child to succeed. Regular feedback is provided to the child so they can learn to evaluate and improve their own work in order to become a successful writer.

Handwriting and Presentation

Handwriting is taught two to three times a week and is linked to spelling where appropriate. In EYFS, the children should be taught to develop a tripod pencil grip. As the children progress through the

Key Stages it should focus on developing speed in line with legibility. Teachers must model the school handwriting policy in marking and when writing on the board and in books.

Children in KS1 should write with a sharp pencil. In KS2, children work towards a pen license. When handwriting is joined consistently, children can begin writing in pen. The expectation is that all children should receive their pen license by the end of Year 4. Children should be encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work.

Presentation Expectations:

- Children may write their own name neatly on the front of a new English book. It should also have the subject and the year (eg Sarah, Maths, Year 2).
- Children must not graffiti book covers.
- All work must be dated and have a title or learning objective.
- Dates, titles and learning objectives should be underlined with a ruler. Children should also use a ruler for straight lines, graphs and diagrams.
- Worksheets should be kept to a minimum and if used should be trimmed.

Assessment and Target Setting

Work is assessed in line with the Assessment Policy. Teachers use developmental feedback in order to identify where children have included elements of the success criteria, set next steps targets (where appropriate) and give children the opportunity to revisit their work in order to make improvements.

Summative assessment is used three times a year in order to level the children's writing against Symphony Assessment criteria. Writing targets will be generated as a result of termly summative assessments and ongoing formative assessment. It is expected that pupils will have writing targets in place by the end of September and these are reviewed, at least, half termly. As much as possible, the children should be responsible for identifying when they have met their target and setting the next one.

Reading attainment will be assessed throughout the year using the PIRA reading tests. Year 2 pupils undertake SATs in May and the information is used to build a picture of attainment and is reported as Teacher Assessment scores. Year 6 pupils undertake SATs in May.

Inclusion

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. We identify which pupils or groups of pupils are underachieving and take steps to improve their attainment. More-able children are identified and suitable learning challenges provided. Children with identified SEND in English receive tailored support from Teaching Assistants and appropriately tailored learning within the classroom environment. Children who are identified as having additional needs with reading, receive extra support and interventions.

Equal Opportunities

All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

Conclusion

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Feedback and Marking Policy
- SEND Policy
- Computing Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

This policy will be reviewed by staff and presented to governors for approval at least every three years.