



# Abingdon Primary School

## English Policy

Updated September 2020

### Intent

At Abingdon Primary School we aim for all children to be passionate about reading and writing. We want our children to have a positive attitude towards communication and to be able to independently express their emotions and ideas.

We believe all children should be provided with the foundations to become confident readers and writers. Our literacy curriculum helps to instil a lifelong love of reading, the ability to access the wider curriculum and give pupils the confidence to explore their imagination and creativity.

We want our pupils to have an awareness of the world, widen their horizons and develop their cultural capital through immersion into a world of high quality texts. By providing a school rich in vocabulary, with classrooms being language rich environments this will support our pupil's language knowledge, enrich their lives and prepare them for the next stage in their education.

#### **We want every child to leave Abingdon with the skills of an excellent writer who:**

- can write for a range of purposes;
- has the ability to write with fluency and has an author's voice;
- can think about the impact they want their writing to have on the reader and knows how they will achieve this;
- can structure and organise their writing to suit the genre they are writing and include a variety of sentence structures;
- ensures their writing is well presented, punctuated, spelt correctly and neat;
- re-reads, edits and improves their writing so every piece of writing they produce is to the best of their ability and better than the last.

At Abingdon we strive to build foundations to enable every child to become literate, preparing them with the skills for adult life. The English teaching we provide will allow all children to fulfil their potential whilst giving them the skills to understand and use language in all its aspects.

## **Aims**

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
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## **Implementation**

### **Planning**

At Abingdon we use the 2014 English Programmes of Study for Key Stages 1 and 2. Daily English lessons are delivered from Year 1 to Year 6 each week. Children in Early Years and Key Stage 1 receive five phonics lessons per week following the Read, Write Inc scheme. (RWI)

Foundation Stage plans are based on the Early Learning Goals as set out in the revised Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Long, medium and short term plans facilitate the development of English skills through cross curricular links in the foundation subjects. Weekly grammar, spelling and punctuation lessons are delivered and then followed up by children applying the skills they have learnt to their independent writing. Clear objectives are set for each session and are shared with pupils. Teachers differentiate according to the needs of the pupils and use intervention programmes for targeted support.

## **EYFS**

Children in the EYFS will be working towards completing the Early Learning Goals, therefore preparing the children for starting the National Curriculum by using the 'Development Matters in the EYFS.' Children work towards achieving the Early Learning Goals by the end of the year and activities are planned to build the skills in order to achieve this.

Learning opportunities through play, both indoors and outdoors, is a key way in which young children learn with enjoyment and challenge. At the beginning of the year children are assessed and gaps in their learning identified. Focus groups are planned for those children who need them. Links are made to engage children's interest. Through communication and language children are given opportunities to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations. Through physical development they will improve their coordination, control, and movement. Through literacy development they will be encouraged to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children will be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

## **Spoken language**

The National Curriculum for English reflects 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.

Teachers at Abingdon ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills through the following experiences:

- discussions, talk partners, debates, role play, drama, responding to others and presentations/productions
- Teachers use DEAL at every opportunity to facilitate language development and immerse children with new vocabulary linked to units of work

## **Reading**

The programmes of study for reading at Key Stages 1 and 2 consist of two dimensions:

- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading)

It is essential that teaching focuses on developing pupils' competence in both dimensions; different kinds of teaching are needed for each. At Abingdon skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. Phonics is emphasised in the early teaching of reading when they begin school. Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills are developed through pupils' experience of high-quality discussions with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction. We encourage pupils to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum.

### **Approaches to reading at Abingdon:**

- ❑ Each class has an ongoing class novel (or in Reception a basket of books) which will be read by the class teacher throughout the week on a daily basis. There will be subsequent discussion and questioning around the language and children's understanding of the book. Basket of books in Reception read often.
- ❑ Quality texts are linked to each Creative Curriculum topic and each phase has a designated list to choose from each term. These texts are taught in a cross curriculum way and it is at the class teacher's discretion on how many texts should be used during a term dependent on the age and ability of each year group.
- ❑ All children have access to the 100-book challenge. This is split up into bronze, silver, gold and platinum. All children have access to this with gold and platinum books aimed at those who are free readers. Each book in bronze must be read three times and all books must be signed by parents once read. Assemblies will take place each half term to celebrate children taking part in the challenge and the rewards will be as followed:

10 books= certificate

25 books= bookmark

50 books= pin badge

75 books= voucher

100 books= book of choice

- Each class has a reading spine. All children will read these books on multiple occasions throughout the year.
- Children in KS1 are encouraged to take a new library book each week on a Wednesday.
- In the Autumn term EYFS and KS1 children who follow the RWI scheme are assessed and grouped every six weeks across the phase. They receive a 75-minute lesson each day split over two sessions
  - 30 minutes of phonics and guided reading
  - 50 minutes literacy lesson (writing and reading)
- The children take home decodable reading books based on the sounds they have been learning in class. These are changed twice a week.
- Children who have completed RWI move onto the reading scheme. Our reading scheme is colour banded and includes a broad range of different texts. Children are benchmarked every half term to assess if they are ready to move levels
- Once children have completed RWI they then begin to follow No Nonsense Spelling and Reading Gems schemes. Reading Gems and No Nonsense are taught every day in KS1 for the children who have completed Read, Write, Inc. This consists of 30 minutes per day.
- In KS2 children complete No Nonsense Spelling 3 times per week and Reading Gems 4 times per week in all classes. Children following RWI interventions do not complete Reading Gems.
- Children who still require additional support with reading in Year 3 and 4 have 3 RWI sessions each week as an intervention. Children who still require writing support access bespoke RWI replacement English sessions 5 times per week
- All classes provide a stimulating reading environment, promoting book ownership and recommending books to pupils. Classroom and central displays are language rich and special displays promote authors and books

## **Writing**

The programmes of study for writing at KS1 and 2 are constructed similarly to those for reading:

- transcription (spelling and handwriting)

- composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing).

Pupils are taught how to plan, revise and evaluate 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, word structure and spelling structure. 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. At Abingdon writing is facilitated through modelling, scaffolding and analysis of texts to provide children with a broad range of skills.

Approaches to writing at Abingdon:

- Each class has access to a wide range of writing opportunities that include:
  - planning, drafting, editing, upgrading and presenting independent writing at least once every half term for KS2 and twice a term for KS1.
  - Children on the RWI scheme will have daily 30 minute Get Writing sessions.
  - writing different text types and narrative styles
  - writing related to own experiences and enjoyment
  - writing from a variety of stimuli across the curriculum
  - collaborative writing
    - using ICT
    - in upper KS2, children also use a 'think pair share' approach, whereby they edit their work in smaller chunks, as they draft, with feedback from a writing partner.
    - in Year 6, children also engage in whole class feedback where one piece of work is edited as a class and relevant feedback is implemented independently.
    - all classes have an English working wall where spellings, key phrases, examples are written using joined handwriting in Twinkl cursive un-looped font. In Reception and Year 1 this will be Twinkl non-cursive.

## **Handwriting**

At Abingdon we believe that it is paramount that children are rigorously taught correct letter formation from the very beginning of their time in school. All members of staff, class teachers and teaching assistants, model the school handwriting style at all times i.e. when writing on the board or in children's books. By the end of Key Stage 2, all children should be

displaying an efficient, quick, neat and legible handwriting style that is effective in recording their ideas. Please see the handwriting policy for more information.

- Each class from Reception to Year 6 will:
  - have a handwriting book/folder
  - be taught to sit properly with correct posture for writing
  - be taught to hold a pencil in the correct tripod grip and develop a legible and joined handwriting style
  - in KS1 children complete daily handwriting practise as part of the RWI scheme. In addition to this children have two dedicated handwriting sessions each week
  - in Years 3 and 4 handwriting is taught daily and practiced daily during the start of English sessions. Children also access a 30 minute focused handwriting lesson each week
  - in Years 5 and 6 a minimum of three effective handwriting lessons per week be taught to have an increasing regard to presentation

### **Spelling, Punctuation, Grammar and Vocabulary**

(See National Curriculum 2014 for year group expectations)

At Abingdon Primary teachers provide opportunities to enhance pupils' vocabulary through their reading and writing. As vocabulary increases, teachers show pupils how to understand the relationships between words, how to understand the meaning, and how to develop their understanding of, and ability to use, figurative language. We teach pupils how to work out and clarify the meanings of unknown words and words with more than one meaning. Pupils are taught to use Standard English and use the elements of spelling, grammar and punctuation.

Approaches to SPaG at Abingdon:

- Each class from Year 1 to Year 6 will:
  - have weekly spelling lists to learn and practise at home in readiness for testing . Children in KS1 who follow RWI follow the programme for spelling as set out in the scheme.
  - In KS2 children's spellings are either sent based on the RWI Phonics scheme being accessed or from the lists from 'Appendix 2' of the National Curriculum.

- have the opportunity to self correct key spellings in written pieces of text. In KS2 these are to be transferred to children`s personal spelling journals and practised and referred to when writing. Children should be given an opportunity to correct, practise and learn the spellings.
- be encouraged to use learnt spellings within their everyday writing
- have access to dictionaries, thesauruses and word banks within the classroom. Common exception words should be available on each desk. From Year 2 children will be taught how to self-correct using these.
- have weekly SPaG lessons covering the age related expectations for the year group. They will have opportunities to apply this knowledge in their writing over the subsequent week(s).
- have SPaG expectations continually revisited and highlighted during every day English lessons.
- children in Year 6 have a minimum of 3 SPaG lessons per week

### **Information and Communication Technology**

Opportunities to use ICT to enhance teaching and learning in English will be planned for and used as appropriate. (See ICT Policy)

## **Impact**

### **Assessment, Marking and Target setting**

At Abingdon teachers use effective assessment for learning to ensure planning is based on prior attainment and that pupils know what they need to do to achieve the next steps. Marking is in line with the school marking and feedback policy.

Approaches to assessment of English at Abingdon:

- Reception

Each child has a Learning Journal where evidence is collected in the form of comments, observations, samples of work photographs. This is then used to highlight the progress the children have made towards the ELG.

- Reception to 6

- Phonics

Children will be assessed from Reception every half term to track progress .

- Reading

Teachers continually assess reading through Reading Gems sessions, individual reads and comprehension based activities as well as more formal reading tests at the end of each term. Benchmarking is also used as an indicator for teachers to assess levels of decoding and comprehension ability.

○ Writing

Children will be given precise targets in writing which will be continually reviewed to assess progress and their developing writing skills.

Key Stage One

The success criteria for the session is shared on the whiteboard. In accordance with the marking policy children respond with green pen. Independent writing is assessed through the writing checklists. Whole class marking and feedback is given as a lesson after the independent write.

Key Stage Two

The children are provided with a targeted checklist for a significant piece of writing so that they can self-assess their work prior to the feedback from the teacher. They will have the opportunity to proofread and edit before the teacher marks their work. Children will then respond with green pen. Taught and focused targets for each piece of writing are highlighted by the class teacher on teacher copies for point in time assessments.

(Please see Marking and Feedback Policy)

## **Role of the Literacy Leader**

Approaches to the monitoring of English at Abingdon:

- The Literacy Leaders will undertake the following activities each year to ensure curriculum coverage and progression:
  - attendance at Literacy Coordinator meetings and courses
  - book scrutiny
  - planning scrutiny
  - moderation of writing between year groups and key stages
  - moderation of writing within the local cluster group
  - interviews with children
  - learning walks
  - lead staff meetings for CPD
  - collect and analyse data
  - be aware of school strengths and weaknesses
  - write action plans
  - audit and purchase resources

- enrichment Days such as Abingdon Reading Week and World Book Week.
- evidence of displays reflecting the high profile nature of the subject
- auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD
- updating SLT with recent developments

### **Inclusion**

At Abingdon we aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils who are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment. Gifted children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided.