

# Eggescliffe C.E. Primary School



## English Policy

Reviewed: November; 2020  
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# EGGLESCLIFFE CE VC PRIMARY SCHOOL

## ENGLISH POLICY

### 'Let your light shine,' based on Matthew 5.16

#### Rationale

The National Curriculum (2014) clearly states that teaching *'the English language is an essential, if not the most essential role of a primary school'*.

At Eggescliffe CE Primary School, we ensure that English teaching is a priority and part of the 'essential knowledge' (p6 National Curriculum) that is needed in society:

*'Teachers should develop pupil's spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for pupils, understanding the language provides access to the whole curriculum. Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects.'* (p10 National Curriculum).

We recognise that this is necessarily cross-curricular and a constant through-out school life and beyond.

This policy reflects the school's aims in relation to the teaching and learning of English. It sets out a framework within which teaching and non-teaching staff can operate. The policy also gives guidance on planning, teaching and assessment. The appendices, which accompany this policy, gives more detailed guidance on the specific aims of spoken language, reading and writing and its connected provision. The policy should be read in conjunction with the updated Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework and the National Curriculum. These set out the rationale for teaching each area of the English Curriculum and specify the skills that will be developed for the majority of pupils in each year group.

We aim to develop an enthusiasm for literacy in all its forms and for pupils to develop the confidence to express themselves both orally and through the written word.

By developing a comprehensive range of reading skills we aim to foster in the children a love and appreciation of a variety of literature. These skills will enable them to access all aspects of the curriculum.

Eggescliffe CE Primary is an inclusive school, we set high expectations and recognise the importance of accurate and regular assessment in order to support individuals at every part of their learning journey and in whatever circumstances. We agree with the statement of the National Curriculum, that *'pupils...who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised'* (p13)

This document and its appendices are the outcome of consultation and review undertaken by the English Subject Leader, with staff, in all aspects of English.

## **Aims**

The aims of teaching English:

- To help children to be able to read with fluency, accuracy, understanding and enjoyment;
- To use phonological awareness to decode and encode words;
- To help them become confident, independent readers, through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text level knowledge;
- To develop enthusiastic and reflective readers, through contact with a wide range of challenging texts, which they might not necessarily choose themselves;
- To enable children to speak with clarity, confidence and expression, and to take account of their audience, purpose and differing situations;
- To encourage children to listen with concentration to others, to respond and build on their ideas and views and to identify features of language used for specific purposes;
- To show children how to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands;
- To teach children effective communication, both verbal and non-verbal, through a variety of drama activities;
- To help the children to develop an understanding that writing is both essential to thinking and learning and enjoyable in its own right;
- To enable children to learn to communicate meaning in narrative and non-fiction texts, spelling and punctuating accurately and for a range of purposes; and
- To enable the children to improve planning, drafting and editing of their work.

The above are consistent with our school's aims and take account of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, the National Curriculum Programmes of Study and end of Key Stage level descriptions.

### **1. PLANNING:**

- English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use this and Pearson's Bug Club as a basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme for the study of English.
- We carry out the curriculum planning for English in three phases (medium and short term). The National Curriculum details what we teach long term. Medium term plans give details of the main teaching objectives for each term. These plans define what we teach and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term. (The subject leader is responsible for reviewing these plans). Staff use the agreed planning proformas across school from Y1-Y6 with agreed headings from N/C overview.
- The National Curriculum appendices and the EYFS Statutory Framework are used as a basis for planning in phonics and grammar and spelling to ensure developmental learning building on prior knowledge. We acknowledge quality resources e.g. CLPE, 'Literacy Shed' and Spelling Shed as they provide useful ideas for lesson planning and support teacher subject knowledge

- Short term planning is flexible, allowing for Assessment for Learning after each session/unit
- Pupils entitled to Pupil Premium funding are given additional English support, where necessary, which is tracked and monitored termly by the SENDCo, in partnership with the English Lead, teaching staff and the SLT.
- In all classes, children have a wide range of abilities and learning styles and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability and learning style of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies, such as collaborative group work; extension activities; tasks of increasing challenge; open-ended tasks; precision support by a teacher or teaching assistant; use of scaffolds; authorial choices.
- Each 'Reading into Writing' learning journey will begin with immersion in a quality text. The whole class teaching of reading (including VIPERS) can be taught through the whole class text or through extracts etc. The length of this will depend on the text length and the scope for writing. Opportunities for writing should be planned within reading week/s, which build on reading skills.
- Non-fiction writing will be given equal priority and taught discreetly. The whole class text can then be revisited or linked to another curriculum area e.g a Science explanation; a letter to a historical figure; a discussion text. This is to ensure that the build-up of knowledge and skills is progressive and clear (see planning proforma). Poetry can be taught as a discreet unit of work; linked to the whole class text or a mix of both.
- There is an expectation that each stage of the learning journey takes place and is evident through children's books; the learning environment and in planning. Learning journeys can be based on texts (whole or part), videos, poetry, visits/visitors, real life events, images and even lyrics from a song.

## **2. ASSESSMENT:**

- The N/C statements on Scholar Pack are used as a guide when assigning the current level the child is working at e.g. Emerging/Developing/Secure. This information, alongside Assessment for Learning, enables teachers to track progress on a termly basis. Data is entered into Scholar Pack and used to track progress within and across year groups.
- Assessment for Learning is ongoing. Teachers adapt practice and English plans accordingly.
- Where written feedback is given, it is constructive as it allows children to focus on shared success criteria, learning objectives and next steps. Children are informed about what they have achieved at that particular time and developmental points for improvement. Teachers refer to ongoing skills such as grammar, punctuation, spelling and sentence structure and organisation in written feedback. Teachers look for common weaknesses/misconceptions and address these accordingly.
- Children may peer or self-assess, within a lesson and also at the end of a unit. Editing and redrafting are regularly taught and revisited.
- Reading ages are assessed using 'New Salford Sentence Reading Test' at the end of each term. Teaching staff then match it with the correct reading scheme level. The books are colour coded. The child's comprehension ability is also taken into account as the child may

need to access an earlier colour band if this is at a lower level. It is the *class teacher's responsibility* to allocate reading books and move children on in the scheme.

- Staff attend moderating sessions within school as well as with other schools within the Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Learning Trust. The purpose of this is to promote consistency of teacher judgement across years; to inform consistency in the reporting process; to encourage professional dialogue regarding standards; to provide mutual assistance in deciding on standards for assessment of pupil work and to specifically attribute evidence in pupil's writing with appropriate standards criteria.
- Assessments are analysed by the teacher and, when necessary, the Subject Leader and SLT and feed into the SIP and Performance Management.

### **3. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:**

- The English Subject Leader, teaching staff and teaching assistants attend relevant training within the LEA or with partner schools in the Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Learning Trust, where appropriate, and disseminate to staff. Staff are expected to attend relevant courses during the school year
- Moderation takes place in house, with partner schools and with support from the LEA in Year 2 and Year 6

### **4. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT:**

- Home School Link Books are used from Y2-6 to aid communication between home and school. Comments and next steps are made following Precision Guided Reading sessions. Parents and children are also encouraged to do this.
- Information regarding the child's colour band can be found at the front of the child's book to help parents support their child.
- Curriculum information is uploaded to the school's learning platform, DB Primary, at the start of each term, detailing the aspects of learning each child will undertake, and how parents/carers might support that learning, for example homework expectations, trips and visits, websites, etc.
- Parents are informed on a regular basis about their child's progress. We have termly parents' evenings; SEND review meetings, curriculum workshops on reading, writing and spelling and will meet parents outside of these times, where necessary.
- We provide high quality information to parents/carers – website, advance notice of all school events, including curriculum workshops and curriculum evenings.

### **CONCLUSION**

It is our aim, through careful implementation of the guidelines set out in this policy and appendices, children at Egglecliffe CE Primary School develop confidence and competence in their use of all aspects of the English language, a genuine love of literature and the ability to communicate successfully in many different ways.

**H. McCarthy**  
(English Subject Leader)

## **APPENDICES**

**Including the aims for spoken language, reading and writing and the connected provision:**

### **1. SPOKEN LANGUAGE:**

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be *'taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently in Standard English'* (p10). They should:

- Justify ideas with reasoning
- Ask questions to check understanding
- Develop vocabulary and build knowledge
- Negotiate
- Evaluate and build on the ideas of others
- Select the appropriate register for effective communication
- Give well-structured descriptions and explanations
- Speculate, hypothesise and explore ideas
- Organise their ideas prior to writing using the 'rehearse/write/read strategy

### **Our aims and connected provision:**

We encourage our pupils to speak clearly and confidently and articulate their views and opinions. We teach that children need to express themselves orally in an appropriate way, matching their style and response to audience and purpose. Listening and responding to literature, giving and receiving instructions. They develop the skills of participating effectively in group discussions. Ways in which we support this include:

- Activities which are planned to encourage full and active participation by all children, irrespective of ability
- Preparing, participation and evaluation of daily Worship
- School plays/performances including events in the church calendar
- Class discussion/debates e.g. 'Is Plastic Fantastic?'
- Events within the community, including Services at St John the Baptist Church
- Regular School Council/ Rights Respecting meetings/presentations/fund raisers
- Talk partners and 'talk for writing' are a regular feature of lessons within school
- Drama/role play is incorporated across the curriculum as a stimulus for writing

### **2. READING:**

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose and be encouraged to read for pleasure. Reading is singled out as of extreme importance since through it *'pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually'* Reading allows pupils to *'acquire knowledge' and to 'build on what they already know'* (p13).

The 2014 Curriculum divides reading skills into two dimensions:

- Word reading/ decoding
- Comprehension

We recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods. We recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, writing, grammar and vocabulary. We also understand that reading is a developmental process and part of life-long learning and we encourage and praise children at every stage of it.

### **Our aims and connected provision:**

- At Eggescliffe CE Primary School, we build firm foundations in reading with fully decodable books using Bug Club Phonics, a systematic synthetic phonics scheme, which fully matches the national curriculum and early learning goals.
- Pearson's Bug Club enables teachers to teach phonics in a fast and engaging way so that all children become confident readers by the age of six. We are determined that pupils learn to read easily, fluently and with understanding, through daily phonics in Reception and Key Stage One, regular reading with adults in school, reading partners and are encouraged to read regularly at home.
- Alongside the rigorous teaching of synthetic phonics, the breadth of reading materials on offer provides children with a secure first step on their reading journey to become confident and motivated readers.
- Pupils are encouraged to read widely, through our use of class texts, independent reading books, guided reading resources, and high quality books in classrooms and our school library.
- Pupils are exposed to a range of texts from their literacy heritage during their school career as outlined in medium and short term plans.
- Precision Reading sessions are based on children's needs as highlighted in ongoing assessments. Children have access to a wide range of genres including the guided reading sets in KS2 corridor, classrooms and extracts. An inferential reading resource has been purchased and staff received training in its use.
- Key Stage One and Two pupils who are making less than expected progress are given accelerated reading support. This includes 'Toe by Toe' intervention; 'Inferential Reading' intervention within a small group and an early morning reading club where children are paired with a reading buddy
- There is a minimum of one whole class reading lesson each week. A specific reading skill is taught directly (VIPERS). Tasks/questions relate to that focus. Foci include:
  - **Vocabulary:** meaning of words in context
  - **Retrieval:** identify key details from fiction/non-fiction/poetry
  - **Summary:** summarise main ideas from one or more paragraphs
  - **Inference:** explain and justify using evidence from the text
  - **Prediction:** from details stated or implied
  - **Authorial intent:** how is meaning enhanced through vocabulary?
  - **Compare and contrast:** how is content related and contribute to meaning
- In all classes, there are learning walls for English and other core subjects. These include subject specific vocabulary; analysis of text; reading displays; key words; phoneme displays. These are updated for each new genre.

- Home School Link Books evidence regular reading sessions with teacher/TA, appropriate breadth, challenge and pupil response
- Advice is given to parents about how they can support at home as information specific to each colour band is updated in the Home School Link book. Information is also given on DB Primary.
- Planned opportunities to read across the curriculum including research – skimming/scanning; use of etexts/ipads; non-fiction library. We consider the value of ipads as opposed to paper-based text and aim to balance the two. Providing chn with pre-planned websites is recommended.
- Teachers routinely plan Mastery questions each week in Precision Guided Reading and whole class reading sessions.
- There is an emphasis on ‘Authorial Technique’ e.g. pick out words & phrases that appeal to the reader (emotive, creative, descriptive, metaphorical, etc)
- There is an expectation that every new English unit begins with a quality text, which challenges pupils, including the more able.
- We actively promote reading for pleasure through access to high quality materials; appropriate reading challenge; engaging, interactive displays; reading across the curriculum and the daily, ‘Drop Everything and Read’.
- Each term, there will be a whole school book study, ‘Share One Book’. Some of the book choices will lend themselves to wider learning opportunities, making connections with other areas of the curriculum. We will not force connections; some books have more potential than others.

### **3. WRITING:**

The National Curriculum states that pupils should:

- Develop the stamina and skills to write at length
- Use accurate spelling and punctuation
- Be grammatically correct
- Write in a range of ways and purposes including narratives, explanations, descriptions, comparisons, summaries and evaluations
- Write to support their understanding and consolidation of what they have heard or read

The 2014 Curriculum divides writing skills into two dimensions:

- Transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- Composition (articulating ideas in speech and writing)

We recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods. We recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, reading, grammar and vocabulary.

#### **Our aims and connected provision:**

- Grammar, punctuation and spelling are taught within English lessons, across other curriculum areas and as separate lessons, where necessary. A balance of the above are

taught, depending on the needs of the children, following AFL. These activities are recorded in English plans as part of the 'Reading into Writing Journey'.

- Grammatical errors are corrected orally and in written work, where appropriate. We teach children to independently edit independent work for grammatical errors.
- Pupils deconstruct model texts in order to create a more meaningful opportunity to use and apply grammar.
- We have a systematic approach; we revisit key learning and build upon it in all areas from phonics, through to grammar and spelling
- Spelling as a key priority in school. The appendix from the National Curriculum provides a teaching structure from Y2 – Y6.
- Spelling Shed provides a platform for children to practise Statutory Key Words and weekly spelling rules/patterns. Teachers update this weekly/as required.
- We use high quality texts, modelling and shared/ collaborative writing to demonstrate good practice
- We encourage and promote 'talk for writing', using the rehearse/write/read strategy
- Children access scaffolds such as writing frames and vocabulary/spelling mats to support the writing process
- Time for planning, editing and revising is allocated. These strategies are taught so children can revise independently
- A joined handwriting script is expected from Y2 onwards to support spelling and stamina for writing
- Drama and hot-seating activities are used to help pupils to think about another point of view
- We plan support for pupils with learning and motor difficulties, liaising with the SENDCo
- Working in partnership with parents helps them support their child

We acknowledge writing is an amazingly complex activity. The writer has to deal with many skills simultaneously:

- thinking what to write about
- selecting appropriate content, supporting information and detail
- linking it all together
- layout of the text
- grammar
- spelling
- punctuation
- letter formation and legibility

Even skilled and talented writers find it challenging to control all these aspects simultaneously. The N.C non-statutory guidance states: *'Pupils should understand, through demonstration, the skills and processes essential to writing: that is, thinking aloud as they collect ideas, drafting, and re-reading to check their meaning is clear.'*

Pupils write from the first week of a new English unit e.g. character studies; setting descriptions; writing from another character's perspective so they begin to master the new genre. We draw out key features from quality texts and provide opportunities for children to practise this. *We do not provide checklists of features unless created with children as part of*

*their learning.* As the model unfolds there is a gradual shift in emphasis away from the adult towards independent outcomes.

At Eggescliffe CE Primary School, we provide a balanced writing programme:

#### **Fundamentals of effective shared writing at Eggescliffe CE Primary School:**

**1. A focus:** on a particular aspect or aspects of writing (between one and three- absolute maximum.)

**2. Keep it short:** A maximum of 20 minutes in upper; 15 minutes in lower KS2 and 10 minutes in KS1;

**3. Encourage ideas:** To promote discussion, children discuss or quickly draft key words, phrases or sentences; so that they can contribute during the shared exercise and have a bank to use later in their own writing.

**4. Model drafting:** We involve the children in reading work back and making improvements, making reference to the success criteria and checking for grammar and punctuation errors. Teachers speak their internal writer's dialogue aloud and make decisions explicit.

**5. Display the work:** Children may refer to the draft when creating their own to 'magpie' words/phrases/whole sentences. We praise independent efforts

**6. Mix it up:** A session is not exclusively modelled (watch me) or exclusively shared (let's write together). We aim to include a mixture of the two.

**7. Fish for words** This habit of rapid 'word generating' is accompanied by the ability to judge which word or phrase best suits the sentence being composed.

We build in 'thinking time' to challenge the children's ideas as well as using 'talk partners'. We demonstrate rereading to develop the habit of checking for accuracy, quality and coherence (whether the sentences flow). Finally, we reread and tease out the key learning.

**10. Now them:** Following shared writing, the children moving straight into independent composition. We keep the transition swift so the atmosphere is not lost. Success criteria is revisited. Supported composition with one group takes place now - which is not another shared writing session!

**11. 'Pit-stops':** We read aloud a good example and ask for children to comment on 'What makes this effective and why?'

#### **Handwriting**

It is an expectation that all children demonstrate good posture when writing and hold their pencil/pen accordingly. A high standard of handwriting is expected across all subjects.

- In Early Years, children practise manipulative skills in order to prepare them for writing. They are taught to hold a pencil effectively and form recognisable letters.

- At first, children are not be taught to join letters or to start every letter 'on the line' with a 'lead-in', because these practices cause unnecessary difficulty for beginners. Children may be taught to join the letters in digraphs.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, handwriting is modelled on a regular basis by the class teacher, followed by independent practice. During this session, teachers model the formation of letters and letter joins for the children to practise.
- From Year 2 onwards a continuous cursive script is modelled.
- Our aim is that the majority of pupils by the end of Year 5 are writing in pen in a joined, cursive script. By Year 6, children should be experienced in using pens for handwriting.

Teachers ensure that their own writing in the classroom, on whiteboards and in pupils' books mirrors the agreed style and provides a model for the children to aspire to. We display examples of cross-curricular writing across school as a model for children.

#### **4. VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT:**

The National Curriculum makes clear that learning vocabulary is key to '*learning and progress across the whole curriculum*' (p11) since it allows pupils to access a wider range of words when writing and for them to understand and comprehend texts efficiently.

Vocabulary teaching needs to be:

- Active
- Progressive/ systematic
- Making links from known words
- Develop understanding of shades of meaning
- Include 'instruction verbs' used in examinations
- Subject specific- accurate mathematical and scientific words

#### **Our aims and connected provision:**

We encourage our pupils to have a wide and growing vocabulary in a number of ways, these include:

- Displays of key words linked to topics and subjects on working walls
- Expecting the correct vocabulary orally and in written work
- In-depth word based lessons looking at patterns, rules and word roots
- Using dictionaries, thesaurus across the curriculum
- Using high quality texts to explore vocabulary choices and the effect they have
- Providing feedback to pupils on their vocabulary choices inc peer feedback
- Targeted one to one/ small group support, where appropriate.
- Some vocabulary may be pre-taught if it is likely to be a barrier to accessing the text.
- We avoid context-less teaching of new vocabulary.
- If vocabulary is introduced for children to apply, then it is copied into vocabulary banks in English books to refer to.

#### **LEGAL FRAMEWORK:**

This policy has been created with regard to the following statutory guidance:

- DfE (2013) 'English Programmes of Study: Key Stages 1 and 2'
- DfE (Sept 2021) 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage'