



Dunstall Hill Primary School

English Policy



Intent

The National Curriculum states that teaching the English language is an essential, if not the most essential role of a primary school.

'Teachers should develop pupils' 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)

English and the teaching of English is the foundation of our curriculum at Dunstall Hill Primary School. We have designed our English curriculum with the intent that all children become primary literate and progress to the best of their ability in the areas of reading, writing and speaking and listening by the time they leave our school in Year 6. Regardless of starting point, we strive to ensure that all children will become fluent, insightful readers and skilled, creative writers to ensure their capability to succeed in all subjects. Our children will engage with a range of genres and develop their understanding of a range of fiction and non-fiction. Furthermore, we have developed a curriculum that will instill in all children a love of reading and writing that we hope will stay with them for life. We understand that a good grasp of English is part of the 'essential knowledge' (p6 National Curriculum) that is needed in society and 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)

Implementation

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 can develop '*culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually*'.

Reading at Dunstall Hill supports our pupils to '*acquire knowledge*' and to '*build on what they already know*' (p13).

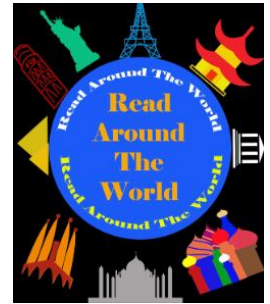


Reading is a developmental process and part of life-long learning. **Early reading** at Dunstall Hill starts with phonics, comprehension and reading for pleasure, and our practice reflects the importance of all three of these core areas in ensuring children become confident, fluent and competent readers. Before our children are able to read independently, talk and reading for pleasure is the foundation of reading.

To develop a broad vocabulary and an enjoyment and comprehension of stories, children need to be given the opportunity to listen to and talk about them from the earliest stages. (Please see details under EYFS)



- Pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure both inside and outside of school. This is supported by:
 - A vibrant, appealing and up-to-date selection of accelerated reader books which are chosen by the children weekly according to the level assigned to them by their half-termly 'Star Reader' test
 - After school reading clubs
 - Meetings and workshops with parents
 - Regular book recommendations from other children
 - Home reading booklets for parents
 - Lunch time opening of the library
 - Our reading challenge which encourages children to read widely and regularly, enjoy books at home and complete challenges which encourage them to share recommendations
 - Ongoing class texts read daily by the teacher
 - MYON- an online library where children are set texts to read at home, often linking to topics



- Through carefully-chosen stories, read aloud in the classroom, children can be given opportunities to expand their vocabulary, develop empathy for others, build connections and the foundations for deep comprehension of texts as well as to build a love of reading. Because of this, each year group has an age-related 'reading spine' which is a specially selected collection of books which are read throughout the year. Children are read to by their teacher at least four times a week in every year group during DEAR time.



- Texts are chosen which will extend children's vocabulary, with challenging words and phrases which are explicitly taught, reviewed and activated
- We ensure multiple readings of chosen texts: focusing on reading for pleasure, echo and choral reading, understanding vocabulary and comprehension.
- We believe that children should be able to 'see themselves' in the texts that they read, therefore texts are chosen carefully with the diversity of our school in mind and our children enjoy reading and being read a range of texts with characters and authors who are representative of our school community.
- Children learn to read easily and fluently through daily phonics both in RWI and in class in EYFS and Key Stage One and as interventions and smaller groups in Key stage two.
- Sets of high frequency words are used to build reading speed and children achieve certificates to celebrate this.
- Children read to find information in lessons across the curriculum as well as reading non-fiction for pleasure weekly.
- We have a special class 'reading journal' which is taken home by a different child each week. The children use this journal and the box of craft resources to respond to their text in a way of their choosing. This creates fantastic engagement and conversations with parents and this is then shared with the rest of the class.
- We have our reading vending machine, where our most improved readers each week are chosen to receive a gold coin to use in the vending machine to choose a book to take home.
- Children are encouraged to read widely through library books, class texts, library visits and high-quality appealing texts in both our classrooms and our library.
- A 'book club' takes place weekly in all year groups where children choose, review and recommend books to their peers.
- Reading interventions with a focus on either fluency, word reading or comprehension



- Pupils read regularly to each other as well as adults in class.
- Pupils have home reading books at a level which they can read independently. These books are changed regularly and are taken home.
- Guided reading is taught daily in KS2 in order to learn to respond to a range of texts using a range of reading skills. In these sessions, the children study texts which are more challenging than those which they are able to read independently.
- We also use 'cracking comprehension' resources in KS2 to expose children to a range of unseen texts with a range of genres and to model answering a range of question types.

Spoken Language

As a school with the vast majority of children speaking English as an additional language, we understand how important spoken language is in the development of children. The National Curriculum states that pupils should be 'taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently in Standard English' (p10)

Ways in which we support this:

- Teachers both teach and model the appropriate register for effective communication in a range of situations and genres. We focus particularly on the development of academic language through our 'Progression in Language Structures' document.
- We have enhanced our oracy education by becoming a 'Voice 21' oracy school. This enables us to develop. For example, our understanding of different types of talk and use a range of discussion formats.
- Staff implement training to encourage all children to prepare answers to whole class questions as well as encouraging lengthier responses to questions including justification and expansion of ideas as well as to evaluate and build on the ideas of others.
- The use of talk partners to ensure that children are able to share, practice and develop their ideas with a peer.
- A school councillor to represent each year group to encourage children to share opinions and verbalise their thoughts and opinions in discussions.
- As well as taking part in school plays and performances throughout the year, children are given the opportunity to watch or listen to texts, poems or shows being performed by visiting authors, poets or theatre groups.
- Children are encouraged to speculate, hypothesise, and explore ideas throughout the curriculum.
- Oracy outcomes are planned in throughout the curriculum.



Writing

The 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

It divides writing skills into two dimensions:

- Transcription (spelling and handwriting)

- Composition (articulating ideas in speech and writing)

Transcription

- We follow the 'Kinetic letters' handwriting scheme throughout the school to encourage a consistent approach to letter formation which develops into joined writing. This is a fun, systematic and energising scheme which aims to make handwriting automatic. Engaging stories, characters and role play underpin the learning in this program. Handwriting is taught daily for 15 minutes and focuses on:



- Making bodies stronger
- Underpinning writing for all ages
- Learning the letters
- Letter shapes and writing resources
- Pencil hold and diagnosing / treating difficulties
- Flow and fluency
- Joined writing, speed and fluency



We aim to transfer these skills in handwriting throughout all areas of the curriculum to ensure correct letter formation and to encourage automaticity.

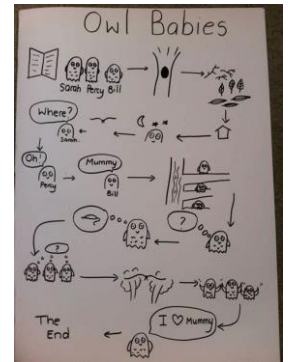
- The daily teaching of phonics for children who are still accessing the RWI programme.
- The daily teaching of differentiated spelling in KS2 using the RWI programme which uses a range of games and activities to support children in learning to spell.
- The RWI speed sound chart is displayed in each working area throughout the school in order to support the teaching of spelling in each lesson.
- Spelling intervention groups are used to plug gaps that have been highlighted through the RWI programme and its assessments
- Spelling lists/ key words/ spelling patterns are given to the children to take home and learn using the methods taught in class.

Composition

- Working walls provide support, encouragement, modelling and next steps that are appropriate for the genre of writing being taught.
- Children's and teacher's work and models are displayed in order to share 'what a good one looks like'.
- We encourage and promote children to build confidence orally before writing. We use drama such as thought tapping, hot-seating or conscience alley to help pupils to think about another point of view.
- We use high quality, age-appropriate texts, modelling and shared/ collaborative writing to demonstrate good practice.
- Time is provided for planning, editing and drafting. We give children time to discuss and build on their ideas in pairs or in groups.
- Checklists are used for pupils to self or peer-assess in order to evaluate effectively as well as set themselves targets.
- Interventions are used to plug gaps in learning as well as to target misconceptions.
- Teachers plan for opportunities to apply their English skills through pieces of writing in other subject areas.

Talk for writing







In nursery, reception and year one, talk for writing is used to structure our English units. Talk for Writing is an approach which supports children to explore, through talk, the thinking and creative processes involved in being a writer. Story maps, images and symbols are used to retell a story. These maps are used for children to confidently retell stories independently, supporting them to build a bank of structures to tell stories of their own.



Linked English

In years two to six, we use the '6 Rs' as shown below to structure our English units.

The foci shown are interwoven throughout a unit based on a wonderful, deliberately sequenced text, ending with a piece of writing. Children write with a genuine audience in mind and focus on purpose, form and the intended impact on the reader.

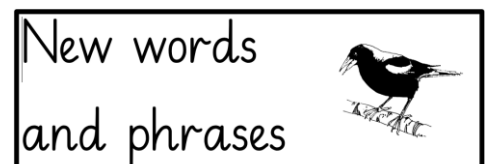
					
<p>Link 1: Relate Before we read, we connect our learning to what we already know as well as finding the things that will help us understand our reading.</p>	<p>Link 2: Read We read widely and often so that we are familiar with, understand and have an opinion about texts. We understand the PURPOSE and FORM of a text and who it has been written for (AUDIENCE)</p>	<p>Link 3: Rip We read like writers, using high-quality texts to help us gain knowledge of the writer's craft (i.e. structure, grammar and language choices). We spot and name writers language choices when reading and can explain the impact they have on the reader</p>	<p>Link 4: Rehearse Before writing we rehearse the language, vocabulary and grammar we might use, through short writing, talk and drama. We also practice writing using the vocabulary and grammar we have learnt from what we have read.</p>	<p>Link 5: Write When we are ready, and we know why and what we want to write, we spend time crafting our writing overtime. We draft, edit and publish our writing so it can be read and enjoyed by others.</p>	<p>Link 6: Review Once we have written, we take time to evaluate the impact of our writing on its intended audience i.e. has it fulfilled its purpose? Could it be improved to have the intended impact on the reader.</p>

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.

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

- Displaying and encouraging the use of key/ technical vocabulary across all curriculum areas including subject specific, accurate mathematical and scientific language.
- The use of word logs or jotters in order for children to 'collect' new words or phrases in each subject to extend their vocabulary.
- The use of oracy within lessons to give all children the opportunity to orally rehearse new vocabulary.
- New or challenging words and phrases are added to our success criteria in each lesson in all subjects to support children in learning their meaning.



- PILS (Progression in Language Structures). This gives children sentence starters to support within verbalising and rationalising their thoughts and workings.
- Encouraging children to use the context and the word itself to work out the definition.
- Sharing and activating new vocabulary before reading a class text to ensure that children are reading for meaning.
- The collection and reinforcement of new vocabulary from a range of texts.
- Giving children access to a dictionary (including a grammar and maths dictionary) and thesaurus in each lesson in order to encourage pupils to check the spelling, meaning or class of a word and to extend their vocabulary by using synonyms.
- Dual coding used within both planning slides and success criteria to support children's understanding of vocabulary.
- Retrieval practice of key vocabulary at the start of lessons to strengthen their comprehension in long term memory.
- Focus on 'tier 2' high utility academic vocabulary that is used across a range of topics and subjects.

EYFS

Each and every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. The National Curriculum states that children develop rapidly in the early years and 'a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances'. We know that English is at the very heart of this and our Early Years provision reflects this. Our EYFS curriculum has been formulated using the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage, the non-statutory guidance set out in Development Matters (July 2021) and Birth to 5 Matters by Early Education (2021).

As well as the strategies used throughout the school, nursery and reception use a range of approaches.

Strategies used across EYFS

- Well planned targeted reading and writing opportunities throughout the environment.
- Quality daily interactions ensure that children hear new language, apply this language to their daily conversations and thus into their long-term memory.
- Books across the whole of the environment and key language to promote early reading skills in a wide range of contexts.
- A range of strategies used to secure pre-writing skills such as play dough disco and gross and fine motor movements in order to support the core muscle strength used for writing.
- **Blank level questioning-** to develop children's verbal reasoning and abstract learning capabilities
- **Vocab flowers and words of the week-** words displayed on tables and on our vocabulary boards to encourage children's use of our new words and phrases
- **Talk for writing-**
- **Early talk Boost is a speech and language communication toolkit that enables teachers to see where children are in their language development and what next steps need to be taken through careful daily intervention in small groups.**
- **Book vote** – each morning, children use counters to vote on the book that they would like to have read to them. They have two opportunities in the day to enjoy this test.
- **WellComm** – A speech and language assessment and intervention toolkit



Nursery

- **RWI** picture sound cards taught in Spring term
- **Helicopter stories**- children begin tell their own stories in Summer term using strategies which follow on from talk for writing.

Reception

- **Daily phonics** – In small groups in order to be able to move children forward to make progress in their early reading skills.
- **Chatter box sessions** which focus on key questions and comprehension skills linked to a key text over a term.
- **One to one phonics**– daily one hour sessions with a key adult to support all children to make expected or better progress over time.
- **Daily reading one to ones** with an adult as part of walking into learning.
- **Language screen assessments**- taken by each child one to one in the Autumn term. This enables teachers to target the bottom 25% as participants of the NELI programme.
- **NELI**- Small group and individual sessions focusing improving children's language and early literacy skills
- The very first set of books (Red books 1-10) read by our children in reception are sent home for the children to keep and enjoy at home. This for many of our children begins their book collection and can be read over again as well as by younger siblings.

Planning and Assessment

Planning

- Each year group has their own medium term planning document with an overview of the curriculum to support the coverage of skills
- RWI is planned separately to English lessons.
- English and guided reading are planned separately and the application of English in other subjects is planned within the foundation subject planning.
- Short term planning is flexible, allowing for assessment for learning after each session/ group of sessions. This planning is uploaded weekly and is used for monitoring along with children's books.

Assessment

- Staff assess pupils' learning during and as part of every session, they adapt their practice accordingly.
- Assessment informs the planning of support and intervention groups as well as informing short term planning.
- Formal assessments of reading comprehension ability are carried out, tracked and monitored termly.
- Reading monitoring grids are used in KS1 and 2 to monitor reading progress and to inform teacher judgments.
- Assessments are analysed by the co-ordinator and Senior Leadership Team and feed into the SIP.
- In school, MAT and LA moderation of reading and writing supports our secure judgements.
- LA assessments in reading are carried out termly and this data is analysed by the teacher, leaders and the LA.

Professional development

- The English leads attend training and reports back to all staff.
- The English lead attends regular meetings with the head teacher to feedback and discuss next steps.

- The local cluster group has an English group which meets throughout the year.
- Staff attend both in school and external moderating sessions.
- Staff are expected to attend relevant courses during the school year.
- Fortnightly masterclasses are run by the RWI lead.
- Training and update meetings are run by the English leads.
- In school training and INSETs run by external trainers.
- Staff observe within school and across the MAT and LA to share good practice and develop specific areas.
- A cycle of monitoring and appraisal enables the Senior Leadership Team to target individual staff support where needed.