



English Policy

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Aims of the English Curriculum

At Colegrave Primary School we believe that English provides access to the whole curriculum and is the means through which every child can achieve his or her full potential. Pupils who read, write and speak fluently have the foundations for lifelong learning and success.

Across the school, we aim to promote high standards of English by aspiring for all of our pupils to:

- read easily, fluently and with a good understanding of what they have read
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- through an interest in words and their meaning, acquire a wide and varied vocabulary for use in both written and spoken forms
- develop a secure knowledge and understanding of English grammar
- become confident spellers, and write neatly and legibly
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- be competent and confident in the arts of speaking and listening
- want the best for themselves – to have a desire to succeed in English

Overview

Through a rich and engaging English curriculum we aim to develop a love for English, while providing children with the skills they need to become confident and successful learners. In reception and Year 1 we follow the Read Write Inc (RWI) scheme to teach phonics, word recognition, reading, comprehension, spellings and writing. Pupils continue the programme until completion, so RWI may also be followed as a reading and spelling programme in Year 3, as well as for mid-phase admissions in KS2. In years 3-6, reading is taught through daily through 30minute reciprocal reading sessions in small groups, and spellings is taught twice a week using the Babcock No Nonsense Spelling Programme. The Primary English Curriculum is used as the basis for planning a unit of writing I years 2 -6, with a core text linked to the year group topic generally providing the context. During lessons, teachers provide speaking and listening opportunities as we believe these are fundamental to children's development and that confidence in this area is essential to be successful in all areas of English.

At Colegrave Primary School we also seek opportunities to consolidate and reinforce taught English skills across all aspects of the curriculum, with additional speaking, listening, reading and writing opportunities in science and the foundation subjects.

The learning environment

Our aim is to immerse pupils in a language rich environment that promotes all English skills.

Book corners throughout the school contain a selection of books that are displayed attractively in order to stimulate an interest in reading. Books are also used as part of class table displays to encourage interest and reading in the current English unit or topic.

In the Foundation Stage and Year 1 classes have a role-play areas linked to the current topic and a writing area that gives pupils the opportunity to use a range of tools to write independently.

Every class has a 'writing wall' which is interactive and supports learning of the current English unit.

The classroom and school-wide environment celebrates pupils' writing through displays of work. Other examples of writing, such as signs, labels, instructions, explanations and relevant vocabulary linked to other curriculum areas are also displayed.

Planning

Year groups and teachers are responsible for planning all aspects of the English curriculum. All English lessons are to challenge children in their learning and offer support for those who require it, with plans meeting the needs of all pupils in the class. Lesson activities must support the children in meeting the LO and SC, with differentiation taking place in the form of resources, different activities, challenges, extensions or adult support. Where appropriate, differentiation may also take place in the form of outcome.

Reading

We believe in creating a love for reading and a reading culture throughout the school by creating welcoming book corners in all classrooms to encourage browsing and choosing. Children are able to take home books from the book corner and are given reading diaries to keep a record of and record responses to the books they have read. As homework, all children are expected to read at home for at least fifteen minutes every day.

The teaching of reading consists of two dimensions:

- Word reading
- Comprehension

Reading is taught through:

- Daily RWI phonics in reception, Key Stage 1 and for targeted children in KS2
- Reciprocal reading sessions in KS2

- Whole class story time across the school, which develops listening skills, a love of stories and reading for pleasure. This reading is teacher led, with children listening and responding to questions and predictions about the text and where they have the opportunity to discuss the author's vocabulary choices.
- Independent reading (E.R.I.C) – where children can practice their reading skills and read for pleasure.
- In English lessons, teachers use a variety of rich and engaging texts. In year 2-6 these texts have been carefully chosen to support the curriculum topic. Drama is utilised to bring the texts to life.

Speaking and Listening

We believe it is essential children have the opportunity to engage in speaking and listening activities in response to texts they have listened to or read, and therefore teachers plan practical lessons, including drama activities, as part of every writing unit. In addition, speaking frames are used by all teachers across the curriculum to support the children in effectively articulating their ideas. Further to this, P4C (Philosophy for Children) lessons take place termly. These provide pupils with the opportunity to engage with structured, whole discussions on a range of topics.

Writing

At Colegrave Primary School we believe that writing is a creative/developmental process both at a functional and imaginative level. All attempts at writing are valued and we know that all children have the potential to be successful writers. Children should be consistently praised for their work and all writing should be celebrated in the form of class and communal displays.

The teaching of writing consists of three dimensions:

- 1) Transcription (handwriting and spellings)
- 2) Composition (articulating ideas and structuring them into speech and writing)
- 3) Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation

Handwriting

At Colegrave Primary School, we follow the Penpals Scheme for handwriting. Dedicated time is allocated to the teaching of this skill. Teachers model and demonstrate how to orientate, form, and, when appropriate, join letters correctly. Children then have the opportunity to practice what they have been taught, and through self and peer-assessment and discussions, evaluate their work. Children requiring additional support in handwriting are identified and provided for in terms of grips, guided work, additional homework or short interventions to enable them to make rapid progress. Children are expected to apply their handwriting skills when writing across the curriculum. Excellent presentation of work is emphasised at all times.

Children in KS2 earn the right to use a pen when they receive their 'pen-licence'. They receive this by consistently presenting their work neatly, and correctly forming and joining their handwriting. It is the expectation that all children will receive their pen license by the end of Year 4.

Spellings

Pupils in reception and KS1 classes are taught to spell by following the RWI programme. This involves the systematic teaching of phonics, spelling patterns and word recognition. Teachers set weekly spelling homework of up to five words based on the word lists provided in the current RWI unit.

Pupils in KS2 are taught spellings using the Babcock No Nonsense Spelling Programme. The word lists build on the phonic knowledge that pupils have acquired in reception and KS1. The Babcock teaching sequence is as follows: revise → teach → practice → apply. Spellings are sent home during each 'practice' phase.

To further improve spellings and develop vocabulary, class word banks linked to the current English unit or the foundation subjects are displayed on the writing wall, around the classroom and on communal displays.

Writing Composition

In reception, pupils have the opportunity to build on their daily phonics through English lessons linked to the topic. In all areas of the EYFS curriculum pupils are encouraged to mark-make using a range of writing tools, and emergent writing is celebrated.

In the primary phase, pupils are taught to write a range of age appropriate fiction and non-fiction text types. In KS1, teachers develop each unit of the RWI programme to plan a sequence of writing lessons. In KS2, a core text provides the stimulus for each unit.

All teachers follow Colegrave's whole school approach to teaching fiction and non-fiction writing. This has been specifically devised to ensure progression of skills (see separate document).

An interactive writing wall supports teaching and learning of the current English unit and reflects the stages of the writing process.

Writing composition is taught in different ways:

Modelled Writing

Pupils read and explore examples of the focus text type, identifying features, type of language and the style the author has used, making links to purpose and audience. This provides them with an understanding of the text type they will be expected to write. In subsequent lessons, the teacher then acts as the 'expert' to demonstrate the writing process, thereby providing children with a model of how to include the identified features within a different context.

Shared Writing

The teacher involves the pupils in composition by structuring discussions which support them in generating their own thoughts and ideas for writing. The teacher may ask the children to write their ideas/s on sugar paper/whiteboards/post-it notes, before asking children to assess the effectiveness of the idea they have written. The teacher takes these ideas and refines them before scribing.

Supported Composition

Supported composition may involve the children working in pairs to either discuss ideas, plan, compose or edit a piece of writing, or working independently with the support of writing frames, which help to scaffold the children's ideas.

Guided Writing

Guided writing is an essential part of the writing curriculum, providing an additional supported step towards independent writing. During this time, teachers work with carefully selected groups of children according to their targets or specific needs. Groups are flexible; as learning is not linear, so children with similar abilities or levels of attainment will not necessarily have the same needs at a particular time. Teachers therefore identify which pupils to work with based on assessment of work within that unit or their knowledge of the children.

Grammar

It is essential that children acquire a solid knowledge and understanding of the rules and conventions of English grammar as it gives them more conscious control over the language they use. At Colegrave Primary School we believe that this is best achieved when pupils learn about grammar within the context of reading and writing, as this provides a model of how grammatical structures are applied. For this reason, grammar is taught within English, rather than as a discrete subject. The objectives are taken from the vocabulary, grammar and punctuation section of the Primary English Curriculum, and contextualised within the current genre being taught.

Assessment and Target Setting

Teachers in reception carry out on-going assessment of pupils against the Early Learning Goals for Communication & Language and English. Teacher assessment informs the next steps for each pupil.

In the primary phase, assessment is carried out as follows:

Reading

In reception and KS1, progress and attainment is recorded using RWI. In KS2, assessments are made against banded reading target sheets. On-going assessments are predominantly carried out during reciprocal reading sessions, however teachers should also make assessments during English and, where appropriate, the extended curriculum. Puma reading tests are given at the end of each term. These tests support teacher assessment.

Writing

Pupils' extended writing is assessed at the end of every unit using the banded writing target sheets, which are stuck in pupil books. At the end of every term, teachers make a best fit judgement based on these on-going assessments.

Monitoring of planning, teaching and learning

Monitoring enables the English co-ordinator to check that the highest possible standards in the planning, teaching and learning of English are consistently being met across the school. In addition, it ensures that outstanding practice is identified and shared, and that areas for staff CPD are identified and planned for.

The English co-ordinator monitors planning, teaching and learning on a regular basis. The focus of the monitoring may stem from the School Development Plan (SDP), target areas identified in a previous monitoring cycle, the implementation of a new initiative or CPD given in a particular area. Verbal and

written feedback against the monitoring focus is given to teachers/year groups. Where necessary, support and/or targets will be given to teachers/year groups, and reviewed in the next monitoring cycle.

Monitoring of pupil progress

In addition to the monitoring of pupil work within the monitoring cycle, the assistant head teacher for English monitors and evaluates data resulting from teachers' summative assessment of pupil progress and attainment. Termly pupil progress meetings are held with SLT so that teachers can discuss individual, group and class achievement, and to identify and action strategies which aim to reduce cases of underachievement. The English co-ordinator shares data and any subsequent analysis and/or actions taken via reports and/or presentations to stakeholders.

Ultimately, the purpose of all aspects of monitoring is to examine whether the English curriculum across the school is having an impact on pupil progress, and to enable a review the curriculum as a matter of course.

Teachers' Professional development

Throughout the academic year, the assistant head teacher for English works with year groups and individual teachers in order to develop their English teaching. This can involve: support with planning, model lessons, team teaching, support with marking and feedback, support with assessment, modelling expectations for presentation of work, and/or any other area the assistant head teacher identifies as an area for development for each year group/teacher. Teachers are expected to reflect on their own practice at all times, and implement what the assistant head teacher has modelled.

Excellence and Enjoyment

We believe that pupil enjoyment is fundamental if excellence is to be achieved, and so a range of English enrichment activities are planned across the year. These include themed days or whole weeks devoted to either speaking & listening/drama, reading and writing. During these times, the school works with a range of outside agencies (including theatre companies or published authors) and plans educational visits. A regular Book Fair is also held.

Involvement of parents/carers and governors

We encourage our parents/carers to share our high aspirations for their children and to support the school in helping them to make progress. Parents' evenings are held termly and a detailed annual report on their child's progress is provided at the end of the school year.

The assistant head teacher for English corresponds with parents/carers to inform them of any upcoming initiatives or events.

In reception and KS1 parents/carers are invited to come into the classroom once a week to read with their children. In addition, workshops may be held to inform parents about phonics, reading and writing.

Governors are invited to observe all aspects of English in the school.