



*At Ashfield Valley we care for and value every child
in a nurturing, inclusive environment.*

*All members of our school community will work
hard to ensure that every pupil achieves their full
potential and has the opportunity to shine.*

English Policy

Reviewed: June 2024

Date of next review: June
2025

Mission statement and school aims

We are proud to be a happy, diverse and inclusive school where everybody matters.

Intent

At Ashfield Valley we are committed to equipping every child with excellent oracy skills in order to communicate effectively when creating friendships, building teams and expressing their own opinions in their everyday life. We aim to inspire a love of reading and writing and an understanding of language through carefully chosen texts, in order to develop fluent readers and creative writers.

Rationale

At Ashfield Valley we recognise that without effective communication, little can be achieved. We know that we have a duty to ensure that English teaching is a priority and we recognise that it has an impact across the curriculum and is a constant through-out school life and beyond. It is part of the 'essential knowledge' 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.' (National Curriculum)

We are an inclusive school. We set high expectations and recognise the importance of accurate and regular assessment in order to support individuals in every part of their learning journey and in varied circumstances. We use one to one support, small groups, mixed ability groupings and cross-phase work to achieve this. We plan teaching opportunities to help those for whom English is an additional language and those with disabilities outlined in the SEN code of practice.

Spoken Language:

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be 'taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently in Standard English' they should:

- Justify ideas with reasons
- 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

Aims

We encourage our pupils to speak clearly and confidently, articulating their views and opinions, whilst respecting those of others.

We know that children need to express themselves orally in an appropriate way, matching their style and response to audience and purpose. Opportunities are given to listen and respond to literature and to give and receive instructions, as well as developing the skills of participating effectively in group discussions.

Ways in which we support this include:

- Activities planned to encourage full and active participation by all children, irrespective of ability
- Children with specific speech and language and auditory problems being identified and specialist help sought, where appropriate
- School Plays
- Class debates
- Class assemblies and productions
- Events within the community
- School Council
- Talk partners
- Library sessions
- Drama / role play
- PSHE and P4C time
- Spelling Bee
- Reading group sessions
- Class lending library sessions

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'. We provide library sessions and encourage parents to join in with reading sessions. Teachers run reading groups throughout the week where fluency is developed through the reading and discussion of a range of texts. In addition all KS2 classes run lending library sessions weekly where pupils have access to a range of quality texts that they can borrow to read at home. Pupils are also given the opportunity to present their opinions and views of the texts they have read.

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 each of 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

- Pupils learn to decode unfamiliar words and read fluently through daily phonics sessions in EYFS and Key Stage One, following the Letters and Sounds Programme.
- Children read with adults in school, reading partners, reading ambassadors, in groups, with the whole class and are encouraged to read with parents at home.
- Pupils are encouraged to read widely, through our use of differing class texts, library visits and high-quality attractive books in classrooms.
- Pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure using reading partners, quiet reading time, listening to an adult read and reading independently.
- Pupils also need to read to find information in all lessons and comprehension is assessed in a formal way every term.
- Pupils are exposed to a range of texts from their literacy heritage during their school career
- As part of our focused reading groups, pupils read with a teacher or teaching assistant twice per week and also engage in whole class reading sessions where comprehension strategies are explicitly taught and practiced.
- In all year groups, children working in the lowest 20% are listened to read by an adult on a daily basis to support them to make accelerated progress towards the attainment of their peers.

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

- From Year 2 onwards, we teach grammar as dedicated sessions, following the whole school GPS long term plan which ensures full coverage of the National Curriculum

- We teach spelling as dedicated lessons, following the school's long-term spelling plans for each year group. These are based on the common exception words for each year group plus the spelling patterns in the National Curriculum.
- We teach handwriting daily/weekly depending on the needs of the cohort. Children begin to learn how to form letters in the Early Years Foundation Stage with the view to the majority of children joining them by the end of Year 3
- We use high quality texts, modelling and shared/ collaborative writing to demonstrate good practice which link to other areas of the curriculum
- We encourage and promote 'talk for writing'
- We provide writing frames to support writing composition
- We provide time for the teaching and independent application of planning, editing and revising
- We follow the phased approach to writing
- We mark extended pieces of work in-depth and provide comments which pupils respond to by editing and revising their work. The marking code is used in the margin where possible to encourage greater independence when pupils are editing and revising.
- We may use success criteria for pupils to self-assess or peer assess, when appropriate so they can evaluate effectively
- We encourage joined handwriting to support spelling and speed in KS2
- We use drama and hot-seating to help pupils to think about another point of view
- We provide support for pupils with learning and motor difficulties in our inclusive classroom environments.

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:

- Weekly vocabulary lessons in KS1 and KS2 to widen the children's vocabulary
- Spelling lists/ key words to take home and learn
- Display of key words linked to topics and subjects
- Using the correct vocabulary orally

- In-depth word-based lessons looking at patterns
- Using dictionaries, thesaurus and similar programmes
- Using whole class and group reading and other texts to explore vocabulary choices and the effect they have
- Carrying out systematic testing and providing feedback to pupils
- Targeted one to one/ small group support, where appropriate
- Working Walls are used to enhance and support children's learning in writing, spelling and grammar.

Planning and Assessment:

Planning:

- Medium term planning is stored centrally for all key stages
- Schemes of work for phonics, grammar and spelling are used to ensure developmental learning building on prior knowledge
- Short term planning is flexible allowing for assessment for learning after each session/ group of sessions

Assessment:

- Staff assess pupils learning during every session, they adapt their practice accordingly
- Formal assessments of Reading Comprehension and GPS are carried out, tracked and monitored termly. Reading Ages are also tracked and monitored two times per year
- Staff attend writing moderating sessions within and across their phases internally and externally
- All termly assessments are analysed by the leadership team and feed into the school SEF, development plan and appraisal
- Writing attainment trackers are updated regularly and inform both teacher and pupils of their required next steps

Professional development:

- The English Leads attends termly training and reports back to all staff
- Staff are expected to attend relevant courses during the school year
- Moderation takes place within the local authority with support from an in-house qualified moderator.

Specific groups:

- Analysis of English achievement is carried out termly
- Pupils entitled to pupil premium are given additional English support and this is monitored for effectiveness termly
- Pupils with EAL are given additional support as required
- Pupils who are more able receive additional support and are always challenged
- Pupils with SEN will have English based targets on their IPM. These are reviewed termly

Cross-curricular links

Maths

Children are expected to use the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening to communicate their understanding. For example, we encourage children to read and interpret problems in order to identify the mathematics involved. The children explain and present their work to others during plenary sessions. Younger children enjoy stories and rhyme that rely on counting and sequencing, and there is a strong emphasis on the use of language stems orally. Older children encounter mathematical vocabulary, graphs and charts when using non-fiction texts.

Science

During science lessons, children are able to use their speaking and listening skills to explain their thought processes and make predictions. Children are also able to use a wide range of written recording methods when completing their Science Investigation Boards in response to experiments. Twice a term, children from Year 1 upwards complete a piece of extended writing linked to their Science work.

Information and communication technology (IT)

Children use IT to retrieve information and type up reports using word processing skills. Children use IT to edit and improve their writing. Children with additional needs benefit from presenting their written work using Word or Clicker.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

Speaking and listening contributes to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. The planned activities that children do with the classroom encourage them to work together and respect each other's views. Children deal with real-life situations and use skills such as debating.

Homework

We recognise that parents make a significant contribution to children's progress in English and encourage this partnership. Children are given homework linked to English such as Reading each night; learning phonics sounds; learning keywords and spelling and grammar activities (see Homework Policy).

Marking

Refer to school policies for marking and setting out of children's work.

Display

Each classroom has an English, spelling and grammar Working Wall which is used daily within the English lesson and in other areas of the curriculum. Phonics charts are displayed in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 classrooms. An additional display of new vocabulary linked to current topic

learning is also displayed in each classroom. Reading and Writing areas are used in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Clearly labelled resources are available for children to independently select to support their learning.

Resources

There are a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries and thesaurus readily accessible in Key Stage 1 and 2. It is the class teacher's responsibility to ensure adequate and suitable resources are available for the children to complete their work to the best of their ability, and to ensure that, by forward planning, all necessary resources are available when required.