

Rakegate Primary School



English Policy

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1. Introduction

This policy outlines the teaching, organisation and management of English, including reading and writing, at Rakegate Primary School from EYFS to Year 6.

2. Vision Statement

At Rakegate Primary school we believe that:

‘all children can reach their full potential by equipping them with the skills and knowledge required for a rapidly changing world.’

We recognise the importance of English, as a subject in its own right, and as the most cohesive area of learning. Gaining and using skills in language not only affects our children’s progress in school, but will have a profound influence upon the course of his or her later life. We aim to offer high quality teaching and learning experiences where children can “work together to achieve their best” and reach high standards in the core subject area of English and in their use of literacy across the curriculum.

3. Curriculum Intent, Implementation and Impact

The overarching intent of English in the National Curriculum is to promote high standards of Literacy, equipping pupils with a strong command of the written and spoken word and developing their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

All teachers at Rakegate have a responsibility to develop pupils’ competence in reading, writing and speaking and listening to ensure that pupils become competent users of language and can achieve their potential.

The development of literacy skills and knowledge will be implemented according to the following guidelines;

- ✓ Pupils will receive daily English lessons following National Curriculum guidelines.
- ✓ Staff will follow whole school policies on English and marking.

- ✓ Pupils highlighted as not making sufficient progress will be highlighted and receive appropriate intervention support as highlighted within the school intervention map.
- ✓ Opportunities will be given across a broad and balanced curriculum to allow for opportunities to consolidate and reinforce taught literacy skills in all curriculum areas.

As a school, we recognise that sound Literacy skills are essential for progress across all areas of the curriculum and to enable students to achieve their potential.

The impact of our English curriculum aims to ensure that pupils will leave Rakegate Primary school in year 6:

- ✓ reading and writing with confidence, fluency and understanding, using a range of independent strategies to take responsibility for their own learning including self-monitoring and correcting their own errors;
- ✓ with a love of reading and a desire to read for both enjoyment and information;
- ✓ with an interest in words and their meanings; developing a growing vocabulary in relation to grammatical terminology;
- ✓ understanding a range of text types, media types and genres;
- ✓ able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the situation;
- ✓ using their developing creativity, imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness;
- ✓ having a suitable technical vocabulary to respectfully articulate their responses in any discussion.

4. Teaching and Learning

We use a variety of contexts for learning as appropriate;

- Whole-class/group shared and guided writing
- Whole-class/group reading skills lessons
- Phonics lessons
- Targeted intervention for children within mixed ability class-based groups.

Teaching approaches, whilst being referenced to the National Curriculum, are developed by individuals to suit their own classes' needs and abilities. The following generic strategies are seen as particularly effective:

- ✓ Sharing lesson objectives, success criteria, targets, and outcomes with children during lessons.
- ✓ Explanation
- ✓ Demonstrating and modelling (an 'I do, We do, You do' approach involving collaborative tasks leading to independent learning)
- ✓ Questioning
- ✓ Discussion – (paired or group)
- ✓ Encouraging review through read and respond and self-assessment and peer marking.

Learners are most engaged when activities are:

- ✓ Interactive and interesting
- ✓ Appropriate and adaptive according to age and ability
- ✓ Planned with purpose and audience in mind
- ✓ Varied and tightly timed - including opportunities for thinking and discussing.
- ✓ Planned and developed over a number of sessions, so that the issue/text is explored well and built upon progressively.
- ✓ Based around a whole 'good quality' text as well as model extracts.

5. Reading guidelines

Whilst the National Curriculum for English provides guidelines and strategies for the teaching of reading, we are also mindful of the need to support and practice mastery in the skills of reading.

Therefore, as a school we promote;

- ✓ Individualised reading using appropriately challenging texts (colour banded books for early readers). Each pupil is given a reading book to take home.
- ✓ An expectation that children should read at least 3 times per week at home, with use of reading rewards to highlight this

- ✓ An aim for staff to listen to all children read once a week - with those children who are in the bottom 20% of readers in each class being heard more than once a week individually. Listening to children reading will include individual reading, choral reading and echo reading as a class/group embedded across all lessons within the curriculum. Staff aim to use these opportunities to ensure children are confident in their skills in the identified reading domains and are fluent and confident readers.
- ✓ Reading buddies between classes to promote peer support and an ethos and love of reading in all children.
- ✓ Daily reading skills lessons for children in years 2-6 to promote in-depth discussion about a book and to develop key comprehension techniques and skills alongside their teacher.
- ✓ A dedicated story time (including the use of fiction, non-fiction, and poetry text) across the whole school to promote a love of good quality literature. This will form part of the reading promise for EYFS children to have access to 'five a day' including stories, songs, nursery rhymes and poems.
- ✓ Dedicated library sessions across **all** key stages and regular lunchtime sessions for KS2 where children can 'borrow' books and/or use a quiet space to share books with one another or enjoy whole class story time to broaden their knowledge and enjoyment of literature.
- ✓ A dedicated reading corner/area within each classroom offering a wide range of fiction and non-fiction (including magazines and newspapers) texts for children to access and enjoy.
- ✓ Regular parent workshops and information sessions related to reading to support parents/carers with promoting the importance of reading for pleasure and the benefits of reading regularly at home.

5a. Reading Comprehension

School recognises the importance of children being able to both decode and comprehend a text in order to fully understand what is read. To continue the phonic skills built upon through RWI, children in years 2-6 are exposed to daily reading skills lessons. The lessons will focus on one of the following reading domains:

- Give/Explain the meaning of words in context
- Retrieve and record information
- Summarise main ideas
- Make inferences from the text/explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text
- Predict what might happen from details stated and implied
- Identify/explain how information is related and contributes to meaning.
- Identify/explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of words and phrases
- Make comparisons within the text

Each week, teachers will plan for opportunities for modelling, practice and application of skills through the context of the quality text being used in English lessons. Children are continually exposed to a variety of fiction, non-fiction and poetry genres to support this learning too.

6. Read, write, Inc. phonics

School recognises the importance of a clear, methodical, synthetic phonic scheme and uses Read Write Inc for which all staff have received training.

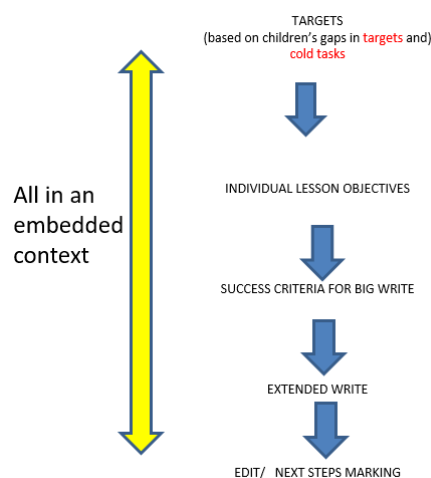
Within school, children are introduced to early sound work within family group sessions in nursery. RWI sessions are carried out four times per week in Reception where children are ability grouped and focus on hearing sounds and practising the skills of segmenting and blending.

Year 1 children receive five half hour sessions of RWI per week in ability groups. RWI groups for years 2 and 3 children, who have not yet mastered skills in phonics and require further support with their reading are timetabled as a daily intervention too. Children in years 4-6, who are considered early readers and need support with using their sounds to decode unfamiliar words, will receive appropriate phonics intervention (Freshstart) at least three times weekly. Regular assessment of groups is used to ensure rapid progression.

All classrooms within school contain teaching aids from RWI including speed sound posters and visual prompts to support the development of phonics throughout school. These are referred to during teaching across the curriculum in order to embed those skills being taught.

7. Writing guidelines

Writing opportunities are planned for within English lessons with ‘pockets of writing’ to practise application of skills building up to more extended pieces. Working walls/displays, which focus on the genre of text being covered alongside age-appropriate grammar and punctuation skills being taught, can be found within each classroom, and are aimed at supporting children to become independent and confident writers. They are referred to when children plan, draft and write during each unit of work. Children receive grammar and punctuation skills lessons, based around the quality text, to support their writing. Teachers and staff are also aware of the importance of cross-curricular writing and children are provided with opportunities to write across a wide range of curriculum areas. Units of English work broadly follow the structure of:



7a. Talk for Writing

At Rakegate, teachers and staff have adopted a ‘Talk for Writing’ approach to the teaching of skills related to writing. Talk for Writing is an approach based on the understanding that children cannot write words until they have spoken them and read them. It involves children being exposed to ‘good quality’ example texts to introduce children to different text types/genres, which they learn off by heart and scrutinise through discussion and reading.

There are 3 main stages to ‘Talk for Writing’:

- **Imitation** - the children learn a model text using actions and story maps. The key to success for the children is that they internalise the text type through repetition and rehearsal
- **Innovation** - the teacher and the children begin to change aspects of the model text using their own ideas. They explore the text using different characters, settings or events and new ideas for descriptive language whilst sticking closely to the underlying structure.
- **Invention** - the children plan and write their own story based on the text type they have been learning. They experiment with the ideas and begin to explore their own style of writing using sentence types from the model text.

7b. Handwriting and Spelling

At school, we feel that, to develop a pupil's writing, they should be taught to be able to form letters correctly and confidently moving to a joined, legible style where the children can write fluidly and at speed. Children are taught to use a cursive script through the 'Happy Handwriting' scheme. They are introduced to the correct letter formations in EYFS, moving on to preparation for joining when ready. Handwriting joins are used from Year 2 onwards. Children in years 1-6 are taught handwriting through two discrete lessons each week and children are encouraged to apply these letter formations and joins across all areas of the curriculum.

As a pupil's knowledge of vocabulary develops through reading in school, they are exposed to new spelling patterns and key vocabulary, related to each year group's expectations. They are taught within discrete spelling lessons through our 'Spelling Shed' scheme and these spelling patterns and vocabulary are reinforced throughout work in all areas of the curriculum. Children are given spellings to learn each week based on the spelling pattern which has been taught and these are tested on Fridays. In accordance with marking guidelines, staff will highlight misconceptions and plan for targeted intervention related to spelling errors as they see necessary throughout all curriculum areas.

8. Speaking and listening guidelines

Oracy is vital to language development thus it is essential that school creates contexts for pupils to rehearse and participate in many speaking and listening activities, including role play and drama.

Speaking and listening activities should be planned for both within and beyond English lessons.

All children are given opportunities to talk to: each other, partners, a group of children, the whole class, teachers, and visitors to school.

9. Early years

Children within Nursery are introduced to stories and the first stages of hearing sounds within words. Working within their family groups, they are introduced to the school reading scheme and characters and begin to look at the first set of sounds within RWI. Children within reception are divided into RWI groups according to ability and work on set 1 sounds and blending and segmenting words. They receive 4 lessons of RWI per week. School also recognises the importance of providing children within foundation stage with a print rich environment, which stimulates children's love of literature and therefore foundation stage outdoor area and classrooms all reflect the importance of this within their organisation.

10. Planning

Planning formats for English reflect the recommendations of the 2014 National Curriculum. Teachers and support staff plan in year groups. All proformas are available electronically on the school's learning platform. To guide planning all staff are reminded of the importance of the following aspects of teaching and learning;

- Clear objectives – shared and understood.
- Appropriate age-related targets – shared and in focus.
- Direct teaching to move learners towards the target.
- Safeguarding time for practising new learning – including oral rehearsal.
- Plenaries and reviews that move the learning on.

- Opportunities for challenging all abilities and extending the learning further.
- On-going assessment through observation and questioning.
- Previewing where the learning is going next.

Planning is reviewed as part of the monitoring cycle by the English Lead and the Senior Leadership team on a regular basis.

All staff are required to complete a LTP, MTP and weekly English plans which are uploaded on to the learning platform.

11. Marking, assessment and monitoring

Marking is undertaken in accordance with the school marking policy.

Assessments and tracking in reading and writing is based on half-termly assessments/ tasks. Children are assessed towards ARE (Age related expectations) in years 1,3,4,5, levels for end of year SATs in years 2,6 and ELG Early Learning Goals in Foundation Stage. Regular moderation across year groups and phases is completed to inform accurate assessments.

Twice yearly reading tests to determine reading ages are carried out.

End of year reports for parents provide a summative assessment for reading, writing and speaking and listening and parents are informed of children's progress in termly parents evenings.

Monitoring of teaching and learning in English consists of the following as outlined in the School Monitoring plan.

- ✓ Planning trawls
- ✓ Learning walks considering displays, resources, learning prompts.
- ✓ Book trawls
- ✓ Discussion in staff and year group teams – on going professional dialogue.
- ✓ Lesson observations, including peer review.
- ✓ Pupil voice surveys.

12. The Learning Environment

Teachers and staff provide stimulating contexts for learning by displays, resources, seating arrangements and routines.

All classrooms contain an English working wall and 'washing line' containing age-related grammar and punctuation prompts with links to current learning, the writing genre and focus text. Speed sound posters are also displayed across all classrooms. To support our love of reading, all classrooms contain a designated reading area/corner for regular use by the children. They contain a well-resourced set of age appropriate books/magazines/newspapers and stimulating set of key question prompts to develop an understanding of reading.

13. Homework

Parents are informed of our approach to reading and writing during the '*Introduction to school*' meeting, regular curriculum mornings and termly parents' evenings/meetings where their support at home is continually encouraged.

Homework activities, in line with the homework policy include:

Foundation- learn to recognise sounds and words, early reading games and reading at home 3 times per week.

KS1- Reading at home 3 times per week, weekly spellings at appropriate RWI level and an on-going English activity (based on their current topic) for the children to complete across the half term.

KS2- reading practice, at least 3 times per week, weekly spellings and an on-going English activity (based on their current topic) for the children to complete across the half term.

Updated May 2023

Subject Leader for English:

Miss M. Causer

Signed: _____ Head teacher

Signed: _____ Governor