

Keston Primary School English Policy

Aims and objectives

The study of English develops children's abilities to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes; to use language to learn and communicate ideas, views and feelings. It enables children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as non-fiction and media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations.

The aims of English are:

- to enable children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners;
- to encourage children to listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard;
- to enable children to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands;
- to develop children's abilities to reflect on their own and others' contributions and the language used;
- to enable children to evaluate their own and others' contributions through a range of drama activities;
- to develop confident, independent readers through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text-level knowledge;
- to encourage children to become enthusiastic and reflective readers through contact with increasingly challenging texts;
- to help children enjoy writing and recognise its value;
- to enable children to write with accuracy and meaning in narrative and non-fiction;
- to increase the children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work.

Teaching and learning styles

At Keston Primary School we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English lessons, as recommended by the National Literacy Strategy. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in English. We do this through a daily lesson that has a high proportion of whole-class and group teaching. During these lessons children experience a whole-class shared reading or writing activity, a whole-class focused word or sentence activity, a guided group or independent activity and a whole-class session to review progress and learning. They have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts and use a range of resources such as dictionaries, thesauruses etc. to support their work. Children use ICT in English lessons where it enhances their learning, as in drafting their work and using multimedia to study how words and images are combined to convey meaning. Wherever possible we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

There are children of differing ability in all classes at Keston Primary School. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this

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through a range of strategies. In some lessons we do it through differentiated group work, while in other lessons we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use classroom assistants to support some children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

English curriculum planning

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the National Literacy Strategy and the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English.

We carry out the curriculum planning in English in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The National Literacy Strategy Framework for Teaching and the Guidance for the Foundation Stage details what we teach in the long-term.

Our medium-term plans, which we also base on the Framework and Guidance, 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 English co-ordinator is responsible for keeping and reviewing these plans.

Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan for the teaching of English. This lists the specific learning objectives for each week and gives details of how the lessons are to be taught. It also includes details of what the children will be learning. The class teacher keeps these individual plans and a copy is given to the English co-ordinator.

The Foundation Stage

We teach English in reception classes as an integral part of the school's work. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the English aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. We give all children the opportunity to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and extend their range of vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore, enjoy, learn about, and use words and text in a range of situations. The format of the Literacy Hour lesson is introduced at the beginning of the Summer Term.

Cross-curricular links

The skills that children develop in English are linked to, and applied in, every subject of our curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work in school. Where possible we take the opportunity to fulfil the English teaching objectives through other curriculum areas.

Information and communication technology (ICT)

The use of ICT enables children to use and apply their developing skills in English in a variety of ways. Children can use ICT as a way of practising and reinforcing skills. They can use the Internet when searching for information or they can develop their word processing skills. We encourage all children to use ICT as a resource for learning, whenever appropriate.

Equal Opportunities

At Keston Primary School we believe that all children are entitled to develop as learners in an environment where diversity is valued, respected and celebrated. We aim to promote equality and challenge bias in all aspects of our English curriculum and actively promote race equality. (See Race Equality Policy)

Teaching English to children with special needs

At Keston Primary School we believe that all children regardless of ability should have equal access to all aspects of the English curriculum. English forms part of the school curriculum policy and we aim to provide a broad and balanced education for all children.

S.E.N./E.M.A.

Teachers provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of all children. Children with special educational needs will be identified and provided for in line with the school's SEN policy. E.M.A . children will be supported in the classroom by their class teacher and/or teaching assistant. Some children may require additional support from the E.M.A.S teacher either in the classroom, in a small group or individually.

Teachers provide help with communication and literacy through:

- using texts that children can read and understand;
- using visual and written materials in different formats;
- using ICT, other technological aids and taped materials;
- using alternative communication such as signs and symbols;
- using translators and amanuenses.

Gifted and Talented

High achieving children will be identified in line with the school's Gifted and Talented policy. Planning will identify extension activities for these children where appropriate.

Assessment and recording

Teachers assess children's work in English in three phases. The short-term assessments that teachers make as part of every lesson help teachers to adjust their daily plans. Teachers match these short-term assessments closely to the teaching objectives. They use medium-term assessments to measure progress against the key objectives, and to help them plan for the next unit of work. Teachers make long-term assessments towards the end of the school year, and they use these to assess progress against school and national targets. With the help of these long-term assessments, teachers are able to set targets for the next school year and summarize the progress of each child before discussing it

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with the child's parents. The next teacher also uses these long-term assessments as the basis for planning work for the new school year. These long-term assessments are made using end-of-year tests, as appropriate and teacher assessments. Children undertake the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, plus the optional national tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5. Teachers also make annual assessments of children's progress using the level descriptions of the National Curriculum.

The co-ordinator keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio. This illustrates the range of achievement within each level. Teachers meet regularly to review individual examples of work against the national exemplification material produced by the QCA and the DfES.

Target setting

Target setting is part of the assessment cycle. As a school we set yearly targets for reading and writing. These targets are broken down into half-termly targets and displayed in the classroom. Children are encouraged to check their work in relation to their targets. Teachers mark children's work in line with their targets and record whether a particular target has been met. Teachers encourage self-assessment using WILF and a Traffic Light System. They will regularly write a comment identifying the next step for that child. Children are also set an individual writing target in their blue writing book. These targets are set three times a year - after each half term.

Targets are shared with the parents at the Autumn Term Parents Evening and individual targets are discussed at the Spring Term Parents Evening. Targets are written in the end of year report in the Summer Term.

Resources

There is a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts, dictionaries, word games and a range of support materials. Up to Year 4 each classroom has a speaking and listening area with a tape recorder and a range of audio texts. Children have access to the Internet through their classroom computer. Access to the Internet is also available in the library area. Audio-visual aids are also available from the central storage area. The library contains a range of books to support children's individual research.

Monitoring and review

Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the English co-ordinator. The work of the co-ordinator also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.

The named governor responsible for literacy meets regularly with the English co-ordinator in order to review progress.