



ENGLISH POLICY

Headteacher:

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Reckleford Community School
Policy for English

(Incorporating Communication, Language and Literacy.)

Introduction

Communication, Language and Literacy develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes. It enables children to use language to understand, learn, and communicate ideas, views and feelings across a range of different situations throughout the curriculum.

At Reckleford Community School and Children's centre we work hard to ensure children become literate pupils and our aims are as follows:

Aims:

- To enable children to develop a positive attitude to language and learning.
- To ensure that children leave our school as competent speakers, listeners, readers and writers through a broad and balanced curriculum appropriate to their needs.
- To enable children to listen attentively to others, responding to them appropriately, and respecting their opinions.
- To encourage children to regard themselves as readers for life, not only to read for information, but also to discover the enjoyment of reading for pleasure.
- To help children enjoy writing and recognise its value and purpose;
- To enable children to understand a range of text types and genres and to be able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to their age.
- To develop their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.
- To encourage children to present legible written work, meeting the standards for handwriting, spelling, grammar and punctuation of the National Curriculum.

Speaking, listening, reading and writing are closely inter-related and we recognise that: -

- they rarely occur in isolation
- their development goes hand in hand
- they are the most important means of communicating, thinking and learning.

In our school literacy is an integral part of the curriculum and children work in a supportive environment where each person's ideas are valued, respected and developed.

Statutory Requirements:

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the National Curriculum for English as the basis for implementing statutory requirements. In the Foundation Stage we relate the literacy aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Years Foundation

Stage document.

In the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) children are given opportunities to:

- speak and listen and represent ideas in their activities;
- use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum;
- become immersed in an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication.

At Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2) children are given opportunities to:

- learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say;
- learn to read and write independently and with enthusiasm.
- use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.
- reflect critically on their own and others work, editing and making improvements where appropriate.

Teaching and Learning Strategies:

These are linked to the approaches outlined in our Teaching and Learning Policy. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in literacy. Teaching is planned so that children use and apply their learning in all other areas of the curriculum.

There are children of differing ability in all classes. 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. Lessons are carefully planned to ensure differentiation and deployment of adults to support learning. Classrooms are organised to maximise learning opportunities and arrangements are flexible to allow for a range of learning contexts and styles. Where appropriate, children in Key Stage One are taught in small Literacy groups every day. These sessions provide a structured, cumulative multi-sensory programme in developing all literacy skills. The exact structure of each Literacy session will be closely matched to the needs of the children in that group, and will be designed to ensure they make the maximum progress towards meeting the end of year expectations set out in the National Curriculum.

Children in the Reception Class follow a similar programme of rigorous daily phonics, word work and handwriting, with the Read, Write Inc Programme as the basis for this learning. Nursery children follow the early stages of Letters and Sounds and have opportunities to develop fine motor and early writing skills in group times and through planned activities. As Nursery children progress with their Literacy skills they will begin to be taught elements of the Read, Write Inc programme in order to achieve school readiness.

Children work individually and in a range of groupings - in pairs, small groups, large groups, and whole class activities to promote both collaborative and independent learning. Increased independence is encouraged as children progress through Key Stage One and children are taught the skills necessary to become reflective learners, aware of their own strengths and targets for improvement.

Literacy Curriculum Planning

Literacy is a core subject in the National Curriculum. The National Curriculum is used as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for Literacy. The EYFS guidelines are followed to ensure continuity and progression from the Foundation Stage through to the National Curriculum.

Curriculum planning is carried out in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The National Curriculum for English details what we teach in the long-term and an annual overview for each year group is produced outlining the main areas of study. Our medium-term plans, which we also base on the Curriculum, are linked to our topic planning and give suggestions for class teachers as to which text genres and areas of study may be taught in each term. This is entirely flexible though and deciding which areas are taught when is down to the individual teacher's discretion. Weekly plans are devised according to each individual teachers own preference and include clear learning outcomes, ensuring all children make progress.

Approaches to Speaking and Listening

Reckleford is an accredited school for Primary Talk at the Supportive Level.

This means we provide a communication rich environment throughout the school.

Most members of staff have some training in the use of Somerset Total Communication. This form of communicating brings together signing, the use of gesture, visual symbols and verbal communication. It is used throughout the Foundation Stage and in KS1.

Whole class, group discussion and paired talking opportunities are used regularly as part of teaching methods across the curriculum. All adults model good communication skills and teach children to listen and talk to each other respectfully. Talk is used to aid independent writing, with children taught to rehearse sentences orally before writing.

Children are given more formal opportunities to speak through our weekly assemblies, Christmas shows, termly class assemblies and other special occasions such as Harvest Festival and the Leaver's Assembly.

Vocabulary work and confidence in speaking English is taught and built through 1:1 teaching or small group work out of class, with our EAL pupils.

Approaches to Reading

We aim to enable all pupils to read and comprehend a range of texts fluently and with understanding. Reading is taught in the literacy session and during guided reading sessions using a combination of the following strategies:

Modelled reading sessions, where the teacher will read to the children, allowing for discussion of new vocabulary and discussion of the text through the teacher's careful questioning.

Shared reading, either sharing a book with an adult or peer.

Guided reading, children are grouped according to developmental stage or needs. Strategies for decoding words and discussing aspects of the text will be taught. This will vary according to the levels and needs of the children. Part of each guided session should be reading of the text; children can read silently with the teacher listening to individual children in the group or they

may read aloud as asked or occasionally all read the text together. The teacher will discuss the text and question the children. The children's responses are recorded according to a specific assessment focus on guided reading sheets to build up a picture of how children are performing and to track their reading progress.

Whole class guided reading, this is done more in Year 2, with the whole class sharing one text, reading together or with the teacher leading, turn taking and discussing vocabulary and other elements of the text.

Children will also read their own book banded reading book with an adult at least once a week and have an individual list of Quick Read words to read regularly in order to expand known sight vocabulary. Extra support is given within the school day and through an after school Reading Club, for those children who need more help with reading. At Reckleford we also use volunteers from the community and parents to support children when reading in school.

Home reading is encouraged and rewarded through Reception and Key Stage One through our Reading Rainbow system.

Every class also has a **non-negotiable storytime** every day of a minimum of 10 minutes. This may happen at any point during the school day, according to timetable demands, but **MUST** happen every day. This is because we recognise the crucial importance of story sharing for developing listening skills, concentration, vocabulary and comprehension.

Resources

Each class has a small class library that can be replenished with books from the main library situated in the hall. Big Books are organised in large bookcases in the Library and in the classrooms.

Sets of books by different authors and genres are kept in the corridor on the literacy shelf. Reading scheme books and Guided Reading texts are colour coded and are stored in the corridor. Reading scheme books are sent home daily. Guided Reading texts remain in school. We have access to a wide range of books from Resources for Learning and topic books are delivered every half term to support learning across the curriculum.

Phonics

There is a strong and systematic emphasis on the teaching of phonics and other word level skills. Children have a daily phonics session and are taught to:

- Discriminate between separate sounds in words
- Learn the letter and letter combinations most commonly used to spell those sounds
- Read words by sounding out and blending their separate parts
- Write words by segmenting them and combining spelling patterns of their sounds

At Reckleford we follow The Read, Write Inc. and the Letters and Sounds programmes to support the teaching of phonics.

Approaches to Writing

At Reckleford we endeavour to foster an enjoyment of writing and to provide children with many opportunities for writing, both formally and informally. We aim for children to be confident writers, able to communicate effectively in writing for a variety of audiences.

Phonics and Spelling

As already stated above there should be a strong and systematic emphasis on the teaching of phonics and other word level skills. Children need to be taught conventional spellings within the framework of their continuing language development. Children need to check the correctness of their spelling and to be shown similar letter patterns as part of a structured spelling programme. We encourage our children to produce phonetically plausible spellings when attempting longer multisyllabic words. Tricky Words, as identified in Letters and Sounds handbook are practised daily. We teach the *Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check* strategy and adopt other strategies from the No Nonsense Spelling Scheme where appropriate.

Emergent Writing

Initially this will be writing that may not be decipherable to adults but children can convey what they have written to an adult. As children's knowledge of sounds develop they can add initial sounds to their "words". This then develops as they add end sounds and then other sounds they hear.

At the Foundation stage children are encouraged to write, through providing materials such as clipboards, white boards, an interactive white board, computers, ipads and by providing varied types of writing pencils and pens. These will be available where children are learning through play, for example in the role play area, by large construction equipment, small world activities etc. Correct handwriting and spelling is modelled by adults and taught with a systematic and thorough approach. Peer support is also highly encouraged and valued.

Children should have the opportunity to write recounts, stories, poetry, non-chronological reports, factual writing, instructions, diaries, captions, labels and letters. Narrative writing should be taught, using a variety of stimuli.

Shared Writing

In shared writing the teacher and children write together, for example the teacher may model a sentence thinking her thoughts out loud and modelling for children ideas, spellings and how to form letters. The children then offer improvement suggestions and the teacher adds them to the text. The children may write a sentence on individual whiteboards and their work shared with a talk partner. Together they can suggest ways to improve each other's sentence.

Guided Writing

Guided writing is a key step between whole-class teaching and independent writing. It is during the guided writing session that children are supported to improve their writing and to work with increasing independence. During guided writing, teachers work with carefully selected groups of children according to their current targets or specific needs in groups no larger than six.

Independent Writing

When children write independently, they are given the opportunity to demonstrate what they know and can achieve by applying phonic knowledge and using their acquired skills. Children should be encouraged to be independent writers. Common Exception words and phonic spelling patterns are displayed on the wall or on an A4 piece of laminated paper so that children can easily use them in their writing. Specialist words linked to a topic or theme can also be given to children to support their writing. Words banks are generated to introduce new vocabulary. We encourage children to have a go at unfamiliar spellings and praise good phonetically plausible attempts at longer polysyllabic words.

Handwriting

Children in Reception are taught letter formation in line with the Read, Write Inc scheme. In Key Stage One we follow the handwriting formation as shown in the 'Letters and Sounds' document. As children progress through Key Stage One they are taught pre-cursive and cursive script, as the class teacher deems appropriate.

The Use of ICT

Opportunities to use ICT to support teaching and learning in literacy will be planned for and used as appropriate. All classes have a bank of materials to support Literacy. Children use ICT in literacy where it enhances their learning, to explore how words and images are combined to convey meaning, to draft work, to perform specific tasks and to share texts altogether as a class.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

See Marking and feedback policy.

The best effective feedback to children is done verbally, and when success criteria are shared with children.

Children's individual Literacy targets are discussed with the child and are displayed in the classrooms. They are regularly discussed and reviewed with the child and as targets are achieved, new ones are set. Targets are shared with parents formally during parent teacher meetings and through written end of year reports.

Parents will have the opportunity to discuss their children's progress in all subject areas, including literacy, in October and February.

Summative Assessment of children's writing

Independent written work is completed in Progress books each half term across the school as a minimum, with other pieces of independent writing completed as the class teacher deems necessary. The work is assessed against National Expected Standards for each year group and the progress of all children is tracked half termly to ensure progress.

Throughout the Reception year the Foundation Stage curriculum is taught and the EYFS Profile completed. All children are tracked and assessed against the Early Learning Goals.

The Statutory Phonics Check is completed at the end of Year One.

End of Key Stage 1 Statutory Assessment Tasks and Tests are administered during May to all Year 2 pupils. These help to inform the teachers assessment of the child against the Expected Standards.

Other Assessments and Record Keeping

Other assessments such as phonics, spelling and word reading are carried out in line with the school's Assessment Policy.

Inclusion and Special Education Needs

We aim to provide for all children so they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment. Teachers will provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties, taking into account the targets set for individual children in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs). For the more able children and those who are 'gifted' they plan the curriculum with differentiated learning activities according to their needs.

Equal Opportunities

The ethos of the school promotes a commitment to a broad and balanced curriculum for all. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

Role of Subject Leader

Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality of teaching in Literacy is the responsibility of the Headteacher and Literacy coordinator. The work of the coordinator also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of Literacy, 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 subject leader in order to review progress. The Literacy coordinator is also responsible for facilitating the purchasing of and overseeing resources; keeping library areas tidy and attractive, and ensuring all reading books and resources are stored in the correctly labelled boxes.

Parental Involvement

We value the support parents give and endeavour to keep them fully informed in their child's progress through written reports, parent's evenings and on other more informal occasions as the need arise. Parents are invited into school at regular intervals to enjoy school productions, plays and festivals. This allows children to perform to an audience. We aim to display children's written work attractively for parents and visitors to see when they come into school. This helps to build the child's self - esteem, set high standards and celebrate success.

Parents are invited in to join their child's Literacy lesson once a year and Reading and Spelling workshops are held once a year to ensure that parents have a range of strategies, and understand the teaching methods used, so that they can fully support their child at home.

Home Reading

Parental involvement in reading for all children is vital. Reading workshops are held each year to support parents and develop understanding of how they can help their child with reading at home. Children are given a Reading Record book and parents are asked to sign and comment when they have read with their child. All parents are made aware of our Reading Rainbow and every time a child reads ten times at home, they move along the rainbow, towards becoming a school Reading Ambassador. Each colour a child achieves is rewarded with a Reading Certificate and Ambassadors receive a badge and special privileges within school.

The Governing Body

Regular reports are made to the governors on the progress in Literacy. The Literacy Governor meets with the subject leader and is involved in lesson observations.

This policy will be reviewed every two years or in the light of changes to legal requirements.

Signed

Chair of Curriculum Committee

Date