



English Policy - December 2017

Together We
Inspire Enjoy Achieve



“English is the language of the future, ... the most important tool you’ll ever need, no matter what career you choose. You have the right to English. Make it your right!”

Benjamin Zephaniah

Introduction

This policy is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of English at Godmanchester Bridge Academy. It will form the basis of the approach to the teaching of English in the school.

Aim

At Godmanchester Bridge Academy we firmly believe that English and literacy are fundamental life skills. Literacy develops children’s ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes. Children are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as of 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 across a range of different situations.

Objectives

We want all our pupils by the end of Year Six to have high standards of English; equipped with a strong command of the written and spoken word and a love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

To enable this, pupils need to be able to:

- Read and write with confidence, fluency, accuracy and understanding
- Orchestrate a full range of reading cues (phonic, graphic, syntactic, contextual) to monitor their reading and correct their mistakes
- Understand the sound and spelling system and use this to read and spell accurately
- Have fluent and legible handwriting and present work to a high standard
- Have an interest in words and their meaning and a growing vocabulary;

- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- Plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing
- Have a wide vocabulary and an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language, so that they can express their ideas, opinions and views with clarity and confidence.
- Be interested in books, read with enjoyment and, evaluate and justify their preferences.

Planning and Organisation

- The English Curriculum at Godmanchester Bridge Academy is planned and delivered using the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and the New National Curriculum (2014) as well as other guidance to enable quality learning and teaching to take place. This provides a broad and balanced curriculum and gives opportunities for a wide range of genres to be covered, and ensures continuity and progression from the Foundation Stage through to the end of Year Six. Pupil provision is related to attainment, not age.
- Planning at Godmanchester Bridge Academy is carried out in three phases: a long-term plan which is the New National Curriculum (2014); a medium-term plan which provides a half-termly overview of the areas and objectives to be covered; and weekly plans which give details of the learning objectives, success criteria, teaching activities, texts used and differentiation. Plans are linked to other areas of the curriculum whenever appropriate. At Godmanchester Bridge Academy, we believe that medium term and weekly plans are working documents that will be amended during the life of a given unit of work, in order to reflect progress and assessment of learning along the way.
- All plans are electronically stored on the shared area of the school's network in order to allow ready access by all members of staff involved in the planning and/or teaching of English.
- At Godmanchester Bridge Academy we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our English lessons in order to meet the needs of all of our pupils. Over the year, each year group will cover a balance of Fiction, Non-fiction and Poetry text types. Lessons are structured to ensure independent learning along with guided, modelled group/class work. The independent learning sessions are differentiated (usually through success criteria) to

meet the needs of the children, with appropriate learning challenges set. Where appropriate groups or individual children are supported by Teaching Assistants.

- Members of the Senior Leadership Team and the English Coordinators, in line with the cycle of monitoring for this subject, will carry out the monitoring of planning & teaching in English.

Teaching and Learning:

We will use a range of learning approaches to promote pupils' knowledge and understanding in English.

At Godmanchester Bridge Academy we believe that children learn best through the following approaches in each area:

Speaking and Listening

We aim to:

- Offer the children opportunities to talk and listen for a range of purposes and communicate effectively with different audiences
- Enable children to express their ideas and opinions confidently and clearly in a wide range of situations
- Involve children in a range of music and drama activities
- Help children express their ideas using standard English, where appropriate, through discussion
- Teach children to listen carefully to each other and to recall accurately ideas and information that they have heard
- Enable the children to listen to each other, question, seek clarification and challenge others with appropriate care and sensitivity.
- Teach children to respect the views and ideas of others, particularly when they differ from their own
- Teach children to respect and appreciate the range and diversity of dialects and accents

Approaches

The four strands of Speaking and Listening: Speaking; Listening; Group Discussion and Interaction; and Drama permeate the whole curriculum. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise reading and writing standards. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life.

The range of strategies may include:

- Providing a range of opportunities to talk and listen in formal and informal settings, e.g. talking partners, hot-seating, role play, puppets, class discussions and debates, recorded media, assemblies and drama productions, 'show and tell', story sacks, and pupil voice meetings.
- Modelling the correct use of standard English and a range of styles of language used in different contexts
- Use of drama and role play to explore real and imagined situations
- Encouraging children to ask and answer questions and problem solve
- Informal discussion with the teacher or with other pupils

Reading

We aim to:

- Encourage children to enjoy books
- Enable children to read for a range of purposes, e.g. for pleasure, to find information, to discover models for own writing, to explore the views and attitudes of others, to support other subject areas etc.
- Ensure that early experiences with reading are carefully structured and monitored whilst remaining fun
- Encourage children to form the habit of voluntary and sustained reading, both for pleasure and for information
- Develop a growing confidence and competence in reading texts with increasing accuracy, fluency and comprehension
- Bring critical thinking skills to reading so that children can predict, compare, evaluate and question texts

- Ensure that all children have access to a wide range of high-quality literature
- Involve parents/carers actively in the support of reading and English activities, thereby developing the home/school partnership.

Approaches

From their earliest years we want our children to see books as a source of enjoyment and information. The ability to read fluently, and with understanding and enjoyment should be the goal of all of our children. As teachers, we must be enthusiastic about books ourselves and use a variety of strategies to promote books and reading.

These may include:

- Reading aloud to the children
- Having welcoming book areas and library with a selection of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, plays and current topic books
- Attractive book displays, which promote high-quality texts, and guide and inform the reader
- Whole class reading; texts or big books
- Shared reading
- Paired reading
- Guided reading
- Individual reading (both at school and home)
- Book week/day and activities
- Using audio books following a story/text
- Books made by children
- Library usage
- Encouraging children to take books home and share them

The importance of reading is such that extra time is given to it outside the English sessions.

In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 there is a strong and systematic emphasis on the teaching of phonics and other word level skills. Children are taught to: discriminate between the different sounds in word; learn the letters and letter combinations most commonly used to spell those sounds; read words by sounding out and blending their separate parts; and write words by combining spelling patterns of their sounds. These are taught in a variety of ways, and involve the use of multi-sensory activities to capture their interest, sustain motivation and reinforce learning. The children progress through books from the Collins Big Cat scheme. Parents are involved through the use of a home-reading book partnership and information meetings on reading. Children take part in guided reading lessons when appropriate.

In Key Stage 2, as the pupils gain fluency, the forms of teaching emphasise advanced reading and composition skills at text level. Reading is taught discretely, in the English lesson, and during guided reading sessions. The Accelerated Reader scheme plays a vital part within the school and allows for personalised learning through the use of Star tests to provide levelled reading ranges and individual target setting. Within the Accelerated Reading Programme, Home Connect allows parents to be involved with the reading progress of their child. Reading comprehension is taught weekly.

Writing

We aim to:

- Teach children that writing is an effective means of communication
- Recognise that writing has a clear purpose
- Enable children to write in English that is accurate as well as appropriate to the task and audience, be it standard, non-standard, formal or informal
- Value and display children's writing, encourage a high standard of presentation
- Encourage children to experiment with a wide range of written forms using specific features
- Establish a supportive environment in which children collaborate using the full range of their linguistic diversity
- Develop children's skills in peer and self assessment using learning objectives and success criteria as measurements
- Develop drafting, planning and editing skills
- Allow the children to learn using different techniques, including pictorial plans (graphic organisers) and mind-mapping

- Teaching grammar, punctuation and spelling in line with National Curriculum guidelines

Approaches

The development of writing is taught daily during either English lessons or across the curriculum.

We promote a stimulating and language-enriched environment with opportunities to write for a variety of purposes:

- Emergent writing encouraged in Foundation stage and Year 1
- Opportunities in role play
- Shared, guided and modeled writing
- Independent writing
- Different media
- Display of quality writing
- Extended writing sessions
- ICT
- Response partners
- Genre frames
- Drafting
- Proof reading and editing skills
- Intervention programmes
- Booster programme
- Regular tests/assessments to inform planning and target setting

Handwriting

We believe it is important for children to develop a fluent, legible handwriting style so that they are able to communicate effectively, have a high self esteem, develop automatic motor control of spelling patterns, and write without conscious thought regarding handwriting

We aim to:

- Teach children that the correct posture, paper position and pencil/pen hold facilitates correct letter formation, leading to a clear, legible and fluent cursive style

Approaches:

- Giving children practice in hand movements which will help them to form letters correctly
- Teaching children to form their letters correctly
- Teaching children how to join letters and giving them regular opportunities to practice
- Encouraging children to join writing as soon as they have developed a high enough level of motor control
- Giving children the opportunity to redraft their work so that they can concentrate on handwriting
- Handwriting competitions, focusing on a variety of aspects in handwriting to promote good handwriting; achievements celebrated and quality handwriting displayed
- Teachers and TAs model joined handwriting to encourage correct letter formation and handwriting fluency
- Using triangular pencils or pencil grips for all children in Foundation and Year 1, and for those children with poor pencil grip
- Slopes supplied to those children who would benefit from them to aid writing style
- Left-handed writers sat on the left-hand side of the table

In Foundation Stage children are given the opportunity to develop fine motor control through painting, salt/sand trays, tracing handwriting patterns, tracing/copying/writing their name (with joining flicks). They are taught the schools agreed letter formation (see school Handwriting Policy). Children are given the opportunity to write for a variety of purposes in play situations and have available a wide range of writing material.

In Key Stage 1 children continue to develop their fine motor control through some of the Foundation Stage activities. They have weekly handwriting practice and joined handwriting is introduced by Year 2.

In Key Stage 2 handwriting practice continues on a weekly basis. Children's own styles are allowed to develop once they have become fluent writers. Children write on lined paper in books or with line guides and pens are introduced when the children are ready.

Phonics and Spelling

We aim to:

- Ensure that young children are well-placed to read and spell words with fluency and confidence by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 1
- Develop children's confidence in their ability to write/spell
- Enable children to become effective communicators of writing
- Create within children an informed interest in words
- Teach children strategies to spell unknown words correctly
- Enable children to identify their own misspellings
- Teach children spelling systematically

Approaches

- Talk to children about the letters that represent the sounds they hear
- Demonstrate writing so that children can see spelling in action
- Demonstrate how to segment phonemes in words
- Demonstrate how sounds are represented by graphemes
- Support and scaffold individual children's writing as necessary
- Provide word banks
- Provide regular systematic synthetic phonics sessions
- Regular assessments of phonological awareness and spelling strategies to inform teaching

- Plan multi-sensory phonics activities that capture children’s interests, sustain motivation and reinforce learning
- Phonics and spelling schemes (Letters and Sounds, Splash Phonics, Collins spelling, Word Blaze)
- Look, say, cover, write, check spelling strategies
- Use of dictionaries and thesauruses
- Phonics/spelling homework

Spelling is taught discretely and in conjunction with other subjects in the curriculum.

In Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 children engage in discrete 20 minute Letters and Sounds sessions, following the letters and sounds structure of review, teach, practice and apply. National Curriculum spellings and spelling patterns are also taught in KS1. This continues for those children who need further Letters and Sounds intervention in Key Stage 2.

In Key Stage 2 dedicated time is allocated for teaching and investigating spelling, as well as word level work linking to a related text in the main English session. Each week, children are taught National Curriculum spellings and patterns appropriate for their year group as well as differentiated for their ability.

Cross-curricular English Opportunities

At Godmanchester Bridge Academy we seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links, in which the children can practice and apply skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

We also aim to provide extra-curricular opportunities to enhance English, e.g. drama workshops, visiting authors, special book day activities, reading clubs, film clubs etc.

Use of ICT

We aim to ensure that all children are primary IT literate by the time they leave Key Stage 2. We believe that computers and other forms of IT can play a key role in enhancing the learning experience and support effective teaching of English.

All classrooms are equipped with an interactive whiteboard and computers. Each class has the opportunity to use laptops and iPads during English lessons as well as timetabled ICT lessons.

English and inclusion

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English, according to their individual abilities. English lessons, tasks and materials are differentiated by the class teacher to meet the needs of individual children.

By means of on-going assessments and tracking we can highlight a difficulty or identify which individuals or groups are under-achieving and for what reasons, and will take steps to improve their attainment.

Likewise, able and gifted children are identified and suitable learning challenges provided including participation in county led English challenges.

All children will be given opportunities to participate on equal terms in all English activities. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

A variety of assessment strategies are used, based on a range of evidence for such judgements, including oral contributions, reading fluency and comprehension, and written material.

Children are formally assessed at Year 1 with the National Phonics Screening, and at Year 2 and Year 6 according to SATs tests, tasks and teacher assessments.

In addition to ongoing assessments made and noted against planning records, assessments are also made in reading and writing three times a year, according to the Assessment Schedule. The outcomes of these assessments are recorded on Assessment tracking sheets, and are used to inform the updating of the Target Tracker data program. As a result of this, targets will be set for all children, individuals or groups may be identified for further targeted support, and progress will be monitored for all pupils. Accurate information will then be reported to parents and the child's next teacher.

Regular review and discussions are held with children to discuss their targets to enable them to move to the next stage in their reading and writing.

Parents are made aware of the ongoing progress their child is making via two parental consultations and a written report each academic year.

At Godmanchester Bridge Academy, we will respond to pupils' work by:

- Checking that the children have understood the learning objectives
- Checking that the children know how/when they have achieved them
- Encouraging them to identify, and subsequently work to, agreed success criteria (at an age appropriate level)
- Observing the children at work, listening and discussing with them
- Asking pupils to comment/reflect upon their progress; offering constructive comments on the progress made
- Marking and annotating work in line with the school's Marking Policy and providing opportunities for children to respond to the comments made on their own work

Roles and Responsibilities

The Head of School and Assistant Head of School will:

- Provide support by encouraging staff and praising good practice
- Monitor learning and teaching through lesson observations
- Monitor planning and reviews
- Give feedback to teachers following lesson observations
- Support staff development through in service training and provision of resources

The English subject leader will:

- Monitor and evaluate English: pupil progress, provision of English (including Intervention and Support programmes), and the quality of the learning environment e.g. through lesson observations, curriculum walks, and the scrutiny of children's work, teacher's planning, assessments and evaluations
- Taking the lead in policy development
- Auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD
- Purchasing and organising resources
- Keeping up to date with recent English developments

The Class teacher will:

- Be responsible for the teaching of English as set out in the policy
- Provide planning and reviews for the head teacher and English co-ordinator to have access to.
- Provide samples of English work to the English co-ordinator.
- Assess children's work regularly, and use to inform future planning.

Conclusion

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Handwriting Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Marking Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- ICT Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Homework Policy

Written by Tess Fielden, English Subject Leader, December 2017

The staff discussed and considered this policy in December 2017

The Policy is to be monitored and amended on a yearly basis and fully reviewed in Dec 2019

Policy Details

Date

Name

Policy approved by Senior Management:

Policy approved by Senior Governor

Date of next review: **December 2019**

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