

Sutton Veny CofE Primary School

English Policy

Our Vision

At Sutton Veny, we provide the opportunity for every child to reach their full potential through fostering a positive, safe and caring environment. We embrace Christian values of *courage, creativity, peace, trust, forgiveness, justice, thankfulness, compassion, friendship, hope, truthfulness* and *humility* in order to ensure that all children are ready for their next steps.

Our Intent

Our intent is to develop in our pupils the ability to communicate effectively in speech and writing, and to listen with understanding. Embedding these skills will enable our children to succeed in education and future employment, whilst being able to make sense of and to regulate their own well-being. We want our pupils to be able to communicate their ideas and emotions to others effectively. We aim to develop our children into enthusiastic, fluent and responsive readers and writers, who can both learn and gain pleasure from producing and reading the written word, and who are prepared to take creative risks in their attempts to express their own individuality. We strive to provide pupils with opportunities to interrelate, consolidate and reinforce English skills within an integrated, broad and balanced curriculum.

All children deserve:

- to be set appropriate learning challenges;
- equal access and opportunity to be taught well;
- be provided with opportunities to learn in ways that maximise their chances of reaching their full potential and achieving success;
- to have adults working with them to tackle any specific barriers to progress that they face.

We aim for pupils at Sutton Veny CE Primary School to leave Year 6:

- reading and writing with confidence, fluency and understanding, using a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct;
- with an innate love of reading and an intrinsic desire to read for enjoyment;
- with an interest in words and their meanings, where they will be developing a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms;
- understanding a range of different text types, media types and genres;
- able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to different situations and contexts;
- using their developing imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness;
- confidently communicating ideas and knowledge through formal presentations, informal dialogue, debate and demonstrations with others;
- appreciating their own British literacy heritage, whilst placing value on the richness and creative diversity of other global cultures.

Statutory Requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum English Document (2014) and in the Communication and Language and Literacy sections of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2012).

In the Foundation Stage, children are given opportunities to:

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

At Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2), children learn to speak confidently and listen actively to what others have to say. They learn to read and write independently and they learn to use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds. Opportunities for all children to speak and listen permeate throughout all the areas of the curriculum.

At Key Stage Two (Years 3-6), children learn to change the way that they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They read a wide range of texts and respond to the different layers of meaning within them. They explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts, and they learn how the structure of language works at a deeper level.

English Lessons

At Sutton Veny, we use a variety of strategies, such as teacher demonstration, modelling, explanation, questioning, discussion, shared reading and writing and group work, in order to develop our children's confidence, fluency and independence as readers and writers, and in terms of their speaking and listening skills.

We understand that the separate skills of English are best developed through work which integrates and links these skills. We provide activities which are both interesting and motivating and lead to worthwhile outcomes. Such activities provide the best context for increasing children's knowledge of the English language. It is also necessary to focus discretely on aspects of language at times, for example, in regards to handwriting; we ensure that these aspects are taught in a systematic way, and that these skills are then applied and combined with other skills in context, where appropriate.

The National Curriculum for English 2014 promotes assessment for learning, which enables teachers to identify and plan how to address any gaps in skills within the English Programme of Study.

Children learn to make links with other curriculum areas and to recognise how their English skills contribute to their overall development. The focus in the curriculum is on children writing for a variety of audiences and purposes and how to adapt their writing for these appropriately. Progression in writing may include: exploration of the text type through reading, discussion and drama; focussed work on vocabulary, punctuation and grammar linked to the text, as well as peer and self-editing, both for correction and for the up-levelling of content for the reader. Children are encouraged to reflect on and to adapt their work, both independently and with their peers, and they are taught how to do this.

Planning

English lessons are planned using the National Curriculum Programme of Study for English 2014. All class teachers are responsible for weekly planning; medium term plans will be carried out by teachers according to the topics that the children are learning for that term. There are four English lessons per week, as well as a weekly spelling assessment (Years 1-6).

In planning teachers:

- Ensure coverage of the National Curriculum Programme of Study for English 2014;
- Use the long-term genre planning document to ensure coverage of the different text types for their year group, as well as to revise and improve their manipulation of earlier text types.
- Ensure technical skills are being taught and provide meaningful opportunities through the texts/topics to encourage the appropriate grammar/punctuation to be used for the audience and the purpose in question.
- Identify the appropriate learning strategies required, including aspects of *Talk4Writing* at Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.
- Provide balance, progression and variety within the classroom for content, organisation and learning opportunities.
- Link aspects of the curriculum together when possible, providing meaningful opportunities and links for pupils to practise skills.
- Ensure children have regular opportunities to see high quality, authentic model texts on which to base and inspire their own writing.
- Assess and plan for the specific needs of children within their own class.
- Give opportunities through speaking and listening to develop correct language structures.

Teaching and planning will be monitored by the Head teacher, Deputy Head teachers and English Leader according to the school's agreed policy for the monitoring of teaching and learning.

Reading

At Sutton Veny, we recognise that being able to read fluently and with understanding is critical to every child's overall attainment. The National Curriculum states that *"all pupils must be encouraged to read widely across fictions and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum"*. The curriculum divides reading skills into two dimensions: (i) word reading and; (ii) comprehension. We recognise that both of these elements are essential to success.

Teachers model reading strategies during guided reading and whole class reading sessions according to the learning goals for their year group. Children have further opportunities to develop reading strategies and to discuss texts in detail during individual reading times. Every child will be heard at least once per fortnight, but more regularly where need requires it and for pupils in Year R and Year 1.

Discreet phonics lessons in FS and KS1 enable children to decode efficiently and arm all the children with strategies to decode sounds that they are unsure of with an increased independence. Phonics interventions continue into KS2 where necessary, supported by the systematic *Toe by Toe* intervention program. Inference skills are also developed through the *Reading Between The Lines* intervention programme in upper KS2.

Teaching Partners support reading activities so as to ensure that children have more frequent opportunities to read with adults. We also have a variety of volunteers who visit the school to provide additional opportunities to read for those that need it.

A range of reading schemes are used to support early readers and are banded according to level of difficulty. Children in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 take home a book from school, which parents are encouraged to read with their child and then record how they have got on. This fosters teacher – parent communication. Every child has a home school reading record that teachers and parents can use to share information about a child's reading and which also provides helpful resources for parents. The frequency of home reading is tracked by all classes and regular reading at home is celebrated.

In Key Stage 2 children choose books to take home and read. Teachers assess reading utilising the Sutton Veny *'Being a Reader'* progression document to record progress and to generate individual targets. Throughout the Key Stage, children are encouraged to become more independent in recording and reflecting upon the books that they have read in their reading journals, and the frequency and quality of their comments are monitored, with probing questions or next steps for extension provided where appropriate.

All classrooms have age appropriate reading areas to help foster a love of books and reading in all children.

At Sutton Veny, we recognise the great value of reading aloud to all children, in order to improve their grasp of story language, enthuse them with a love of books and to also inspire them as writers. Book weeks and book fairs are organised annually to further ignite reading for enjoyment and to expose our children to a wider range of authors and genres.

All pupils in Year 1-6 will carry out a formative assessment annually to support and inform teacher assessments.

See 'Teaching Reading' document for further detail.

Writing

Whilst following the English Programme of Study, children are given opportunities to write in a wide range of genres and become familiar with the features of each. Fiction and non-fiction units are evenly balanced for all year groups.

To develop our pupils as writers, we:

- Demonstrate, model, explain, question and discuss how to write effectively;
- Have high expectations of all pupils;
- Ensure teachers model good writing and that there is evidence in books of purposeful, quality writing regularly (at least six extended pieces per term), as well as daily writing opportunities across the curriculum;
- Encourage children to write with interest, commitment and enjoyment through careful, relevant and creative planning.
- Provide children to write independently and regularly for a range of purposes/audiences, such as: stories, poems, reports and letters.

- Provide children with daily opportunities to write effectively for a range of readers, adapting their vocabulary and style as appropriate.
- Provide children with opportunities to see high quality, authentic model texts, on which to base their own writing.
- Show children how to evaluate and improve their own writing.
- Show children how to use punctuation to make meaning clearer to their reader.
- Give children the knowledge and the strategies to become confident and accurate spellers through systematic teaching in context.
- Teach children a fluent and legible style of handwriting, whilst promoting an understanding of how to present work appropriately.
- Provide the opportunity to use ICT for their writing, for example, every child will create and share their own Ebook at least once per year.

Handwriting

See Handwriting Policy

GPS and Spelling

Spelling

Foundation Stage and KS1 use *Letters and Sounds* as a guide for graphemes and phonemes being taught through discrete phonics sessions. Spelling jingles and rhymes support the children in embedding their phonetical acquisition of new sounds and provide continuity through these year groups. Feasible phonetical attempts by individual children are celebrated to raise self-esteem and confidence. A range of activities help the younger children embed spelling patterns, including 'rainbow writing' and practical outdoor learning activities. 'Chopping hands' and 'dots and dashes' are used across Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 to support the children in developing their ability to segment and blend. KS2 coverage includes explicit teaching of spelling patterns, and strategies to be utilized, informed by the National Curriculum for English. Weekly spelling assessments take place across Years 1-6. Children take their spellings to practice at home in order to reinforce school learning. Personalized word lists, based on the children's individual spelling errors, also form part of their spelling program. The focus spelling rules for each class are reinforced during Early Morning Work activities, allowing the children to become more fluent and confident in their application of these spelling patterns.

Grammar and Punctuation

All English planning includes grammar and punctuation objectives for each week. Grammar and punctuation skills are linked to the text type being taught, so that skills can be embedded and applied through whole class teaching, and in the children's writing, in a meaningful way that focuses on audience and purpose. Grammar and punctuation learning is reinforced during Early Morning Work activities, allowing the children to become more fluent and confident in their application of these elements.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary is of high importance during English lessons. The linking of reading and writing supports the children in using an increasingly broad range of vocabulary, which is relevant to the audience and purpose of their own writing. In whole class reading sessions, inference skills are developed, which, in turn, supports the acquisition of vocabulary and vice versa. Class discussions during story times or class novel sessions provide opportunities to broaden vocabulary still further. High quality fiction and non-fiction texts are utilised. Vocabulary is taught explicitly and children can be reminded of the words generated and discussed on a vocabulary board in every classroom. A cross-curricular approach to planning and teaching facilitates repeated use of vocabulary, including technical vocabulary, to embed meaning and which helps to build each child's cultural capital.

Speaking and Listening

To develop our pupils as speakers and listeners we:

- Give them opportunities to express their ideas to a range of audiences;
- Give them opportunities to take part in group discussions and drama activities;
- Encourage them to actively listen to and respond appropriately to others;

- Help them to understand the need to adapt their speech to different situations;
- Give them opportunities to evaluate and reflect on their own speech;
- Encourage them to use the vocabulary and grammar of Standard English whenever appropriate.

Teachers provide opportunities for children to talk, both formally and informally, within the classroom, across the whole curriculum. Children are taught that different modes of expression, as well as language, may be appropriate in different situations. Opportunities are given for children to carry out different types of speaking, including the opportunity to present their work to the whole school and their parent(s)/carer(s) at a Celebration Assembly once per year.

Feedback and Assessment

Feedback will be given regularly and in accordance with the school's Marking and Feedback policy.

In the short term, teachers will carry out continuous assessment of children's progress in all aspects of the English Curriculum. Children who have/have not met the learning objectives will be noted and this, as well as the nature of any misconceptions or lack of application, will be used to inform future planning, strategies and interventions as appropriate.

Teachers will mark at least six pieces of extended writing every term against the descriptors for 'working towards the expected level', 'working at the expected level' or 'exceeding the expected level' for their year group – this builds a thorough picture of every child's successes and target areas. In addition to work-based assessment, other evidence will be triangulated to form a more detailed picture of every child's strengths and areas for development (ie. interventions/ Teaching Partners' observations/ formative assessments).

Children are given frequent opportunities to evaluate and reflect on their own work in order that they may develop their own sense of achievement. Teachers give clear feedback to children, both verbal and written, so that they know if they have achieved their next steps and in order to inform their targets for their next piece of writing.

SEN and Inclusion

We will ensure that:

- The Class Teacher, SENCO and the English Leader liaise to ensure that the individual needs of children are met and that appropriate targets are set and regularly reviewed.
- Teachers set high expectations and appropriate targets are reviewed regularly;
- Teachers differentiate questions and activities to allow all children access to learning;
- Children with learning difficulties are diagnosed and provision is made for individual needs;
- Where necessary, outside agencies are involved (see SEN Policy);
- Parents are kept informed and are encouraged to support their child's learning through homework activities, home reading and termly targets;
- Adult support is used in school to support groups/individual children to best effect.

We recognise the need for all pupils to speak, read and write Standard English fluently and accurately, while acknowledging that a pupil's own dialect, or other language is of prime importance.

Gifted children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

The teaching of English develops skills through which are children can give critical responses to the moral questions that they meet in their work. Their understanding and appreciation of a range of texts and experiences brings them into contact with their own literary heritage and texts from a wide variety of other cultures. The organisation of lessons allows children to work together and provides them with a chance to discuss their ideas and results. Therefore, at Sutton Veny, we recognise and value the opportunities provided through the study of all strands of English in every child's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Entitlement and Equal Opportunities

The school has an Equal Opportunities Policy, which all teachers will abide by as they plan and teach all strands of English. In addition to applying this, we will ensure that:

- All children cover the content made statutory by the programmes of study within the National Curriculum for English;
- Children access the curriculum at the appropriate level, thus ensuring progression and differentiation;
- Suitable resources and learning environments are made available.

Our curriculum includes a wide range of texts and other resources which represent the diversity and backgrounds of all our children, whilst improving the cultural capital for all.

Parental Involvement

We aim to involve parents in the life of the school as much as possible, which impacts directly on the development of their child's skills, knowledge and understanding in English. Parents are involved in hearing children read, and are encouraged to discuss books with them. Parents are also welcomed into school to support reading in the classroom, subject to a satisfactory DBS check. There are opportunities each term for parents to discuss their child's/ children's progress with their class teacher(s).

Post Lockdown English Curriculum

We understand the importance of diagnostic assessments in establishing a secure understanding of need and steering decisions about how teachers support pupils; we understand that curriculum adaptations will be key. We will support our pupils to re-establish their skills as independent learners (ie. encouraging the use of jingles, word banks and dictionaries) and we will support children in making links with previous learning (ie. *Which memory triggers of learning are relevant here?*)

We will discuss high expectations, in regards to quality, presentation, focus. etc. We will encourage our pupils to focus on quality, not quantity. Where possible, we will minimise cognitive load, so that the children can focus on demonstrating what they have learned and remembered, rather than working memory being taken up by complex task design. We will return to the familiar, in order to boost confidence, and we will take a 'little and often' approach to consolidating and embedding key skills. We will quickly establish starting points by asking hinge questions.

We recognise that, for some children, spoken language skills, on return to school, had significantly weakened. Disadvantaged learners may have had less exposure to good quality talk. We will, therefore, look for additional opportunities to re-establish spoken language and rich dialogic talk, including opportunities for debate and drama activities. All adults will correct grammar rapidly and consistently.

We will support children in taking pleasure from books again and reigniting with that a love of reading. Our teachers will choose stories that they themselves love and that they know will be loved by their class. There will be plenty of opportunities to talk around a wide range of books before sharing thoughts and ideas. We will generate plenty of opportunities to read to, read with and read beside children. Teacher will regularly model reading aloud as a reminder for using expression and intonation. Teachers will ask open ended questions in order to deepen thinking and to identify gaps in comprehension.

We will prioritise children's well-being in our approach to bridging the gaps that may have emerged as a result of two national lockdowns. We will ensure that all pupils – particularly disadvantaged, SEND and vulnerable pupils – are given the support needed to make good progress.

Role of the English Leader

The English Leader is responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through:

- monitoring and evaluating English (pupil progress, provision of English, the quality of the Learning Environment);
- taking the lead in policy development;
- auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD;

- purchasing and organising resources as required;
- providing annual subject action plans, including costings and priorities, which will, in turn, help to inform the school development plan;
- keeping up to date with recent English developments.

Subject Leader: Leah Gee

Date: July 2021 (LG)

Next Review: October 2022 (LG)