



*Inspire Education Trust*  
Together we achieve, individually we grow

# English Policy



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## **1 Purpose of study**

- 1.1** English has a central place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English teaches pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them.

The study of English develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including the communication of their ideas, views and feelings. 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 in spoken language and writing across a range of different contexts.

## **1.2 Aims**

In line with the 2014 Primary National Curriculum, we aim to ensure all children:

- Read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- Acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- Appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- Use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- Are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

## **2 Teaching and Learning**

- 2.1** Across the Inspire Education Trust, English is at the heart of our curriculum. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in spoken language, reading and writing.

## 2.2 Spoken Language

Our curriculum reflects the importance of spoken language in children's development across the whole curriculum - cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing; teaching develops children's vocabulary and grammar, alongside their understanding for reading and writing. Teachers focus on the development of children's confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills. This is done through the integration of purposeful discussions, presentations, debate and drama across all curriculum areas, including English.

## 2.3 Reading

The approach taken to the teaching of reading allows focus on both of the key dimensions needed to become effective readers - word reading and language comprehension.

Word reading - this involves decoding unfamiliar printed words and quick recognition of familiar printed words. The predominant approach to teaching decoding used is phonics. At the Inspire Education Trust, Read Write Inc Phonics is used as the core phonics programme. In Early Years and Key Stage One, this is taught in small focussed ability groups which progress through the programme using its resources and linked texts. Increased emphasis is now given to the application of Phonics skills and knowledge within discrete sessions. For example, further opportunities are given to children to apply a given sound through encoding a single word or by composing a complete sentence. At the end of Year 1 children complete the statutory Phonics Screening Check to assess their ability to decode using phonics. Any children, who do not pass the Phonics Screening Check, have the opportunity to take the screening again at the end of Key Stage 1, in Year 2.

Language comprehension - this draws from linguistic knowledge (both vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills are taught through shared, guided and independent reading. These provide opportunities to deepen comprehension skills through high quality discussions with teachers. Children are given opportunities to develop knowledge of different authors and styles of writing in order to foster a love of reading. The Trust's reading spine is used to underpin the English long-term plan, and ensures a balance of classic, contemporary and well-loved fiction, including British and world authors, and includes classic and modern poetry. Children also read a range of non-fiction books, often linked to wider curriculum themes.

Outside of discrete English lessons, children are taught to read using either the 'Guided Reading Model' or the 'Whole Class Reading Model'. Guided Reading is the main model used to teach word reading and language comprehension. This approach is an instructional approach that involves a teacher working with a small group of students, who demonstrate similar reading behaviours and can all

read similar levels of texts. The text is 'age related,' meaning that it can be read with the teacher's skilful support. The text offers challenges and opportunities for problem solving, but is appropriate enough for children to read with some fluency. The Whole Class Reading Model offers something different: it is an interactive reading experience that occurs when the teacher first models the teaching and learning of a particular reading skill, such as being able to unpick and explore the meaning of vocabulary in context. As the sessions progress, the children are given further opportunities to explore and practise the modelled reading skill.

There are also numerous Opportunities for Reading Enrichment across Inspire. These include taking part in events such as 'World Book Day', 'National Poetry Day', 'Roald Dahl Day', 'National Storytelling Week' or the 'Summer Reading Challenge'.

## **2.4 Writing**

The teaching of writing includes focused teaching of all aspects of writing detailed in the 2014 National Curriculum:

- Transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- Composition
- Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation

Spelling is taught using the Read Write Inc Spelling programme. This is begun in Y2, when children are secure with their knowledge and application of phonics, and continues throughout Key Stage 2. Children take part in three spelling sessions each week, focusing on spelling rules, patterns and conventions as detailed in the 2014 National Curriculum programmes of study and Appendix 1. These sessions also teach strategies for learning statutory word lists for Y2 - Y6. Children take home words to practise in order to consolidate their spelling accuracy.

Handwriting is taught regularly, following the school's handwriting scheme, leading children to the development of a fluent, legible and efficient joined handwriting style. A discrete Handwriting Session of twenty minutes is taught once a week in each Year Group. Following this, children are given further; incidental opportunities to practise the discrete letter formation or modelled handwriting join across the week.

Writing composition includes the teaching of planning, drafting, editing, evaluating and performing. Teachers plan motivating and engaging opportunities for children to write across a variety of genres, and for a range of purposes and audiences. These can be linked to focus texts, and to creative curriculum themes, with increased emphasis on writing for real and authentic audiences such as sending work to relevant authors, the local school community and real-life venues. Children have the opportunity to write at length at least once per

fortnight, providing an opportunity to apply skills they have developed in focused English sessions.

Grammar and punctuation are taught through focused key skills sessions, as well as being embedded within general English teaching; ensuring children develop the linguistic knowledge detailed in the 2014 National Curriculum programmes of study and Appendix 2, alongside understanding of how to use grammar and punctuation to enhance their writing. Where possible, grammatical skills taught are linked to genres and text types, so writing outcomes allow children to demonstrate grammar and punctuation in action.

## **2.5 Curriculum Organisation**

In Year 1, children complete Read Write Inc phonics for three days a week, following the plans provided in the Read Write Inc programme. The final two sessions in the week are based around a whole class writing task linked to core texts or creative curriculum themes.

In Years 2 to 6, children take part in a daily English lesson, working on units of English linked to core texts, narrative genres, poetry and creative curriculum themes. Lessons focus on one aspect of the teaching sequence (reading, key skills, writing), leading to purposeful writing outcomes.

## **3 English Curriculum Planning**

- 3.1** English is a core subject in the 2014 Primary National Curriculum and we use this as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements contained in the programmes of study for English.
- 3.2** English is at the heart of our creative curriculum and as such, planning is linked closely to our curriculum themes. We carry out the curriculum planning in English in two phases (long-term and short-term).
- 3.3** The National Curriculum requirements form the basis for our Long Term English Overview which outlines the narrative, non-narrative and poetry units that will be covered by each year group in each term. Where appropriate, these are linked directly with the creative curriculum themes being taught. This plan defines what we teach, and ensures an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term. The subject leader is responsible for keeping and reviewing this plan.
- 3.4** The short-term planning is in the form of 'Flipchart Planning,' which allows teachers to present their planning in the most effective forms for the children in their classes. This takes the form of a weekly plan which lists the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes for each lesson, and gives details of

how the lessons are to be taught. Each Year Group's plan must reflect rich experiential learning, the impact of which is evident in children's spoken and written language. The teaching sequence for writing must also be well developed and made explicit to the children, throughout the short-term planning phase. This means that the children are given ample opportunities to practice spoken language, key skills and composition before they enter the writing process. This results in more sustained and higher quality pieces of writing, following the drafting and re-drafting process. Planning also includes details of what each group of children will be learning and the role of the TA in supporting learning. The class teacher keeps these individual plans and shares them with any support staff that will be supporting them in the lesson. They are also monitored regularly by the Leadership Team for the purpose of school self-evaluation.

#### **4 The Foundation Stage**

- 4.1** We teach English in the Foundation Stage as an integral part of the school's work. 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 practice and extend their vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore words and texts, to enjoy them, to learn about them, and to use them in various situations.
- 4.2** In the Foundation Stage, learning takes place through active exploration in both directed and self-directed activities. All children are taught to read using the Read Write Inc phonics programme in small and larger groups during the morning sessions. The Foundation Stage teachers plan for daily speaking, listening, reading, writing and role-play activities.

#### **5 Contribution of English to Teaching in other Curriculum Areas**

- 5.1** The skills that children develop in English are linked to, and applied in, every subject of our curriculum. English is at the heart of our creative curriculum and the children's skills in reading, writing, spoken language and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work at school.

##### **5.2 The Creative Curriculum**

The creative curriculum provides children with a context and a purpose for much of their work in English. It offers an opportunity to apply the technical skills of English that have been developed through daily English sessions in a meaningful and interesting context.

### **5.3 Mathematics**

The teaching of English contributes significantly to children's mathematical understanding, in a variety of ways. Children in the Foundation Stage develop their understanding of number, pattern, shape and space by talking about these matters with adults and other children. Children in Key Stage 1 meet stories and rhymes that involve counting and sequencing. Children in Key Stage 2 are encouraged to read and interpret problems, in order to identify the mathematics involved. They explain and present their work to others during plenary sessions, and they communicate mathematically through the developing use of precise mathematical language.

### **5.4 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship**

English contributes to the teaching of PSHE and citizenship by encouraging children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues. Older children frequently research and discuss relevant problems and events. They discuss lifestyle choices, and meet and talk with visitors who work within the school community. Planned activities within the classroom also encourage children to work together and to respect each other's views.

### **5.5 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

The teaching of English develops skills through which our children can offer critical responses to the moral questions they meet in their work. Their understanding and appreciation of a range of texts brings them into contact with their own literary heritage and with texts from a diverse range of cultures. The organisation of our lessons allows children to work together, and gives them the chance to discuss their ideas and results.

### **5.6 ICT**

The use of information and communication technology, with clear learning objectives, will promote, enhance and support the teaching of English. It also offers ways of impacting on learning which are not possible with traditional methods, for example interactive and non-linear stories. ICT is used at whole-class, group and independent level. The screen projection of text enables it to be read and shared. The use of interactive whiteboards and visualisers allow opportunities for children to peer-assess writing and for teachers to effectively model the writing process. Through the development of keyboard skills and the use of computers, children learn how to edit and revise text. They have the opportunity to develop their writing skills by communicating with people over the Internet, and they are able to join in discussions with other children throughout the world. They learn how to improve the presentation of their work by using publishing and presenting software.

## 6 English and Inclusion

- 6.1 At our school we teach English to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our English teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good or better progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. For further details see separate policies: Inclusion, Special Educational Needs; Able, Gifted and Talented; English as an Additional Language (EAL).
- 6.2 When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors - classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, and differentiation - so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. Careful assessment allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against age-related expectations; this ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.
- 6.3 Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are created for children with special educational needs. IEPs may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to English.
- 6.4 For children whose attainment is just below age-related expectations a range of short term intervention programmes may be used. These are delivered in small groups and focus on identified areas in order to address gaps in children's knowledge and understanding. Pupils receiving these extra programmes might not be deemed to have Special Educational Needs.
- 6.5 We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning English. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom (a theatre trip, for example) we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.
- 6.6 Teachers provide help by using:
- texts that children can more easily read and understand;
  - visual and written materials in different formats;
  - ICT, other technological aids and recorded materials;
  - alternative communication, such as signs and symbols;
  - translators and amanuenses;
  - personalised learning support mats and prompts.

## **7 Assessment**

- 7.1** Teachers assess children's work in English using different assessment strategies: day to day assessments, termly assessments and end of Key Stage assessments.
- 7.2** Day to day assessments that teachers make as part of every lesson, help them to adjust their daily plans. These assessments involve the teacher or practitioner focusing on how learning is progressing during the lesson. They provide a wide range of evidence of learning, in specific contexts, which shapes immediate next steps. Written or verbal feedback is given to help guide children's progress. Older children are given regular opportunities to peer- and self-assess work and they are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own work, evaluate their progress against their personalised targets and develop a list of points for action. Children recognise their next steps in learning and know their targets.
- 7.3** Termly assessments give a clear profile of children's achievement across all aspects of English, including Reading and Writing. Assessments inform and shape future planning and targets for improvement. Assessments are made in relation to age-related expectations, in line with the 2014 National Curriculum. Children are judged to be working at, working towards or working above age-related expectations. A range of assessment tools are used to support teachers in making well- reasoned and accurate assessment judgements. These include a 'Personalised Inspire English Assessment System', which clearly allows teacher to track the progress of their children and judge 'age relatedness' on a term by term basis. Statutory materials, reading tests and whole school assessment tasks are also used to further inform Reading and Writing Judgements.
- 7.4** In Year 2 and Year 6, teachers complete statutory assessments in English, in accordance with national policy. Children complete tests and teacher assessments and teachers make summative judgements as to children's attainment in relation to age-related expectations.
- 7.5** Children's attainment and progress in all areas of English is discussed with parents/carers during termly parent's evenings and achievements in reading, writing and speaking and listening are reported in the child's end of year report. Informal discussions may happen at any time.

## **8 Resources**

- 8.1** There is a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries and a variety of age-appropriate small apparatus. Foundation Stage classrooms have a speaking and listening area, with recording and listening equipment and a number of audio texts. All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts. Children have access to the Internet through their classroom computer, laptops and i-pads.
- 8.2** All classrooms have a selection of fiction, non-fiction and poetry texts. The libraries in both key stage one and two contain a wide range of books to support children's individual research. Whole class sets of key reading texts and smaller sets of differentiated group texts are also available for use in whole class teaching or guided group sessions.

## **9 Training, Monitoring and Review**

- 9.1** Monitoring of the standards of children's work and the quality of teaching in English is the joint responsibility of the subject leader and standards leaders within different phases of the school. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in their teaching, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for English in the school. The subject leader gives the headteacher an annual summary report evaluating the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, and indicating areas for further improvement. The leader has specially-allocated regular management time in which to review samples of the children's work and to undertake lesson observations of English teaching across the school. Curriculum governors are kept up-to-date with developments in the subject at regular points during the school year.
- 9.2** This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.

Date of approval:

Signature: Head Teacher

Signature: Chair of Local Governing Body

Renewal Date: