



English Policy

Huxley CE Primary School

ENGLISH POLICY

Introduction

The overarching aim for English at Huxley Church of England Primary School is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for 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.

Intent

At Huxley Church of England Primary School, we believe that a quality English curriculum should develop children's love of reading, writing and discussion. It should inspire an appreciation of our rich and varied literary heritage and promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word. We aim to promote a positive attitude to English and engender a life-long love of language and communication by learning about literacy skills through quality children's texts and books that interest, inspire and excite the children.

We want our children to read easily, fluently and with good understanding. We aim to develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information.

We recognise the importance of nurturing a culture where children take pride in their writing and can write clearly, accurately and coherently and adapt their language and style for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.

We want to inspire our children to be confident in the art of speaking and listening, using discussion in order to learn and being able to elaborate and explain their understanding and ideas clearly, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate. We want to ensure that all pupils acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and a knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.

We believe that a secure basis in literacy skills will give our children the tools they need to participate fully as a member of society and enable them to learn and develop their knowledge and skills to their highest potential.

Phonics Intentions

At Huxley we intend to:

Ensure that children progress in their phonic knowledge through:

- Daily phonic sessions.
- Phonics being promoted as a tool to help children decode words to read and spell.
- Children being encouraged to use and apply their phonic knowledge in independent work.
- Ensure children pass the phonics screening check.

Implementation

At Huxley, we teach the expectations from the National Curriculum in writing as set out in our long term plans. We teach through quality texts to inspire and motivate the children.

Firstly, children are immersed in different text types, becoming aware of the different features at word, sentence and text level. Grammar and spelling expectations are interwoven into English lessons as well as being taught discretely. We use strategies that include; modelled writing, shared writing, supported composition and writing partners to support children in their writing.

Secondly, we give a hook and purpose for their writing linked to learning in the other areas of the curriculum that engages them in their independent writing. Before the children write, we have planning tools the children use. After the children have completed their writing, we also use a range of assessment for learning strategies to enable children to improve, review and edit their work.

The skills the children have learnt are then applied across the curriculum where children have the opportunity to practise these skills in different subjects. We see our English lessons as where we learn the skills to write and the foundation subjects as the vehicle to practise and embed these writing skills.

We ensure children are exposed to a breadth of different genres in their reading that gives the children knowledge of how different texts work. Children apply this knowledge into their writing, to produce a range of writing, across a variety of genres, including narrative; (e.g. extended stories, stories by the same author, myths and legends, adventure stories and traditional stories), non-fiction (e.g. persuasive texts, non-chronological reports, information texts, recounts, reports and letters) and poetry (e.g. rhyme, nonsense rhymes, shape poems, acrostic and descriptive poetry).

Throughout each unit, the links between reading and writing are made explicit – we read as writers and we write as readers. The progress throughout each unit of work shows the transition between reading as writers (focusing on structure, characterisation, and language features etc...) to writing as readers (word play, describing, composition, planning, editing, revising etc...).

Good writers at Huxley:

- enjoy writing and find the process creative, enriching and fulfilling;
- read widely, recognise good writing, and understand what makes it good;
- are aware of the key features of different genres and text types;
- learn about the skills of writing from their reading and draw (consciously or unconsciously) upon its models in their own work
- have 'something to say' (a purpose) and know how to say it for the specific audience;
- know how to develop their ideas;
- know how to plan and prepare for writing;
- make informed choices about what they are writing, as they write (for example, about vocabulary, grammar, text structure, etc.);
- understand how to reflect upon, refine and improve their own work;
- can respond to the constructive criticism of others.

Writing is taught in a range of ways:

Modelling Writing

The teacher talks aloud the thought processes as a writer. They model strategies in front of the children, communicating the strategies being used. Teachers may model writing skills such as punctuation, rehearsal, proof reading, editing, word selection, sentence construction and paragraphing.

Shared Writing

This is a collaborative approach in which the pupils contribute their ideas and thoughts for the teacher to write. The teacher models and teaches specific writing skills and there is the opportunity for discussion to choose the most effective or suitable ideas.

Supported Composition

The children work in pairs to provide the next sentence of the text. This may follow from the modelled or the shared writing process.

Guided Writing

Pupils are grouped by writing ability. The teacher (or other adult) works with the group on a carefully selected task appropriate to that group's needs and targets. This will focus on a particular aspect of the writing process rather than writing a complete piece.

Independent Writing

Children are given opportunities to apply their understanding of the text type in their own writing. They are encouraged to plan, draft, write, edit and assess their work, applying the skills they have learnt throughout the unit of work on that particular genre.

The teaching and learning of writing varies across the age range in school. In the early years emergent writing is encouraged through the use of different writing materials, including felt tipped pens, crayons, chalk, sand, magnetic letters, big brushes, water, paint and computers, as well as writing in the role-play areas, such as postcards, menus, invitations, labels etc... Alongside this, children take part in activities to encourage and develop gross and fine motor skills necessary to write in a legible script.

Daily phonics lessons build their phonic and spelling knowledge to enable them to sound out words and spell high frequency words correctly. Children throughout the year groups have spellings to learn relevant to their age, and these focus on high frequency words or a particular spelling pattern.

As children progress throughout the school, they are given many opportunities to write independently and to apply the skills they have learnt and practised in shared and guided writing. Wherever possible, writing is made meaningful by being planned for a specific purpose or in response to a particular experience.

Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation is planned and taught as an integral part of each unit of work. The objectives are carefully matched to the unit of work to enable them to be taught and learnt within a meaningful context.

Handwriting

We use kinetic letters handwriting. This is modelled to the children and they have opportunities to practise their handwriting as a standalone activity and whenever writing is expected within a lesson.

Phonics

Planning

At Huxley we follow 'Letters and Sounds.' This is taught from Reception upwards. We have a four part lesson; revisit, teach, practise and apply which follow a consistent routine to support maximisation of learning. Children work through the phases as well as the vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and spelling expectations from the National Curriculum. Once children have completed the phases they start SPAG sessions.

Teaching

All children (Reception - Year 2) have a daily phonics session of 20 minutes. In EYFS as children enter the school they are assessed as to their phonemic awareness. In EYFS a focus on developing children's phonic awareness and Phase One and Two skills are also taught within the daily provision during continuous provision. During the sessions from Reception upwards the four part lesson is delivered. This includes a real focus on applying what they have learnt into their writing. We also involve the children in as many exciting games and activities to make phonics fun! Phonics is also practised at home.

Cross Curricular Links

We do not see phonics as a standalone subject. In school we recognise the impact good phonics teaching can have on children learning to read and write, but we see it as part of a rich literacy curriculum. Children are exposed to a wide variety of books and texts to encourage their love of reading. During literacy sessions we encourage children to apply their phonic knowledge to read and write. In Early Years children are given the opportunity to develop their mark making into early writing through setting exciting contexts for writing for a purpose using their phonic knowledge.

Equal Opportunities / Inclusion

Gifted and talented children are identified to progress at a faster pace than the rest of the class. Children with SEN either work in a group but with a Teaching Assistant to provide additional support on top of their daily phonic session, or they work individually on their phonic targets, depending on their needs. Children that do not pass the Year one phonics screening test in Year One have the opportunity to repeat the test when they are in Year 2. We acknowledge that for most children regular Synthetic Phonics lessons are the best way to learn, but some children require a different approach or a combination of different phonic strategies.

Reading

At Huxley, we endeavour to provide outstanding reading experiences with exciting and inspiring learning opportunities that promote the importance of this lifelong skill.

We use a number of different strategies to promote a child's love of books and encourage them to become confident, independent readers. The children are provided with many opportunities to read, enjoy and share books as well as being exposed to a language rich environment. Throughout the school day, children are provided with many opportunities to engage in various activities to develop and strengthen their reading skills. These include guided and shared reading sessions, story times and reading for pleasure opportunities.

Children take home a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books which are carefully selected to match their current reading level and interests. Parents are requested to listen to their children read and provide comments in their individual reading record book. Once they become independent readers, children select their own reading material and they continue to read each night with a family member.

Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar

Opportunities for teachers to enhance pupils' vocabulary arise naturally from their reading and writing. It is also developed explicitly by drawing attention to unfamiliar words on a vocabulary wall. As vocabulary increases, teachers show pupils how to understand the relationships between words, how to understand nuances in meaning, and how to develop their understanding of, and ability to use figurative language. They also teach pupils how to work out and clarify the meanings of unknown words and words with more than one meaning.

Throughout the programmes of study, teachers teach pupils the vocabulary they need to discuss their reading, writing and spoken language. Pupils learn the correct grammatical terms in English and these terms are integrated within teaching.

Impact

Assessment:

Early Years /Reception

Early Years Outcomes from Baseline Assessment- tracked 3 times a year
(Communication and Language, Reading and Writing)

Phonics

Summative Assessment is carried out once every half term to assess the children's knowledge as well as progress towards the phonics screening check. This information is used to identify areas that need to be revised or repeated. We use phonics play assessments for this.

Formative Assessment is carried out on a daily basis during the session through questioning and writing on whiteboards, providing instant assessment. Groups are fluid to ensure children can be placed in the group that is appropriate for them. The results of the summative assessments are reported back to the HT.

From Year 1, children have a weekly spelling test to assess their knowledge of the sounds they have been learning that week. They have ten words with the phoneme in focus and one tricky word from that particular phase.

KS1

Reading:

PM benchmark

Phonics play assessments

Spelling:

Tricky words assessed in phonics sessions.

Weekly tests

Writing:

Regular independent writing tasks within each unit

Ongoing teacher assessments following each writing unit – recorded using Literacy Company Grids

KS2:

Reading:

Literacy company grids

Reading comprehension weekly task

Termly assessments

Teacher assessment in Guided Reading sessions

Speed Reader Assessments

Spelling:

Weekly spelling tests linked to National Curriculum spelling objectives
Termly spelling test based on the words learned

Writing:

Regular independent writing tasks within each unit
Ongoing teacher assessments following each writing unit – recorded using Literacy
Company Grids

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