

Thaxted Primary School

English Policy

Policy Date: September 2019	Review Date: Spring 2023	Responsible Person: Headteacher In Cooperation with: Subject Leader for English
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Thaxted Primary is an inclusive school. We take safeguarding very seriously and all of our policies are developed with a high priority on children's safety and in the light of our safeguarding policy. All of our school policies are interlinked and should be read and informed by all other policies. In particular, the English policy is linked to our WHAT book and the Handwriting, Presentation and Marking & Feedback policies.

Rationale

English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. At Thaxted Primary School, we strive to provide a high-quality education in English which will teach pupils to write and speak fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others, and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. We recognise that all of these skills of language are essential for a child to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually, and in order for them to participate fully as a member of society.

English in the Foundation Stage is taught through the Communication and Language, and Literacy areas of the Early Learning Goals. The children complete the equivalent of a full hour of English each day, with additional guided and individual reading sessions at least three times per week.

Aims

Spoken Language

As exemplified in The National Curriculum for English 2014, the teaching and learning at Thaxted Primary School will:

- ❖ Reflect the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically.
- ❖ Reflect that spoken language fundamentally underpins the development of reading and writing.
- ❖ Ensure the continuing development of pupils' confidence and competence through exposure to high quality and varied language vital for progressing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing.
- ❖ Develop pupils' capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write. As necessary, we assist individuals who benefit from support in clarifying their ideas through discussion and deeper questioning to probe and remedy misconceptions.
- ❖ Teach pupils to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate.
- ❖ Enable all pupils to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama.
- ❖ Provide opportunities for pupils to be able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role.
- ❖ Provide opportunities for pupils to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.

- ❖ In the Foundation Stage, spoken language is developed through providing the children with a wide range of opportunities, such as role play, listening to songs and stories, recounting events and activities to communicate their thoughts, ideas and feelings and to build their relationships with adults and with each other.

Reading

- ❖ As exemplified in The National Curriculum for English 2014, the teaching and learning at Thaxted Primary School focuses on developing pupils' competence in word reading and comprehension (both listening and reading). At Thaxted Primary School everyone is committed to teaching all children to read. Teachers have an excellent knowledge and understanding of the processes involved to help children adopt a love for reading. In addition, we have implemented the Superhero Reading Scheme which rewards reading and sparks the interest of children to read more, collecting bookmarks and meeting superheros along the way both during assemblies and class visits. The ultimate reward could be leaving Thaxted Primary School having designed your very own superhero for the rest of the school to enjoy.

For word reading we:

- ❖ Use synthetic phonics, through the 'Letters and Sounds' 6 phase phonic programme, to teach pupils that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words, and how to use this knowledge to work out the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words, progressing to speedy decoding.
- ❖ Teach children how to blend sounds together to read simple words, like c-a-t, b-o-x and f-r-o-g, and read groups of letters by saying the sound they represent, like ee in f-ee-t and ai in r-ai-n.
- ❖ Progress to teaching them how to apply this learning in their writing and spelling.
- ❖ Teach pupils how to recognise and read familiar printed words at pace and consolidate their learning from the classroom through the 'Phonic Bug' reading books.

For comprehension we:

- ❖ Encourage pupils to read widely, across the curriculum, to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live.
- ❖ Develop pupils' skills through the experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, providing opportunities to improve their linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) when exploring a range of stories, poems and non-fiction.
- ❖ Encourage pupils to read widely to establish an appreciation and love of reading; feed their imaginations; develop a sense of joy and wonder; and to increase their vocabulary as they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech.
- ❖ In the Foundation Stage, reading for meaning and enjoyment is developed by providing the children with an environment that reflects the importance of language through the use of signs, notices and books. Frequent opportunities are offered for book browsing, sharing, listening to fiction and non-fiction and for discussion.

Writing

As exemplified in The National Curriculum for English 2014, the teaching and learning at Thaxted Primary School focuses on developing pupils' competence in transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing).

For transcription we:

- ❖ Teach pupils how to spell words quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words. In developing this skill, children learn to write down ideas with fluency and pace.

- ❖ Promote the value of presentation and follow our Handwriting Policy through which pupils learn to write using a legible, cursive style in order to foster fluency and speed.

For composition we:

- ❖ Provide pupils with purpose and context for writing, teaching them to write with an awareness of the audience and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar.
- ❖ Follow teaching sequences, such as ‘modelled’ to ‘shared’ to ‘guided’ writing, utilising a range of writing strategies such as Pie Corbett’s ‘Talk for Writing’.
- ❖ Teach pupils how to form, articulate and communicate ideas – to plan; how to organise them coherently for a reader – to draft; how to revisit and review their work to check for errors – to revise; and how to redraft to make improvements – to evaluate.
- ❖ Seize opportunities to enhance pupils’ vocabulary for writing as they arise naturally from reading, showing 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.
- ❖ Teach pupils how to work out and clarify the meanings of unknown words and words with more than one meaning.
- ❖ Educate pupils about how to control their speaking and writing consciously and to use Standard English.
- ❖ Ensure the key elements of spelling, grammar, punctuation and ‘language about language’ are explicitly taught across the school, with pupils learning and using the correct grammatical terms in English.
- ❖ In the Foundation Stage, writing is taught in an environment that encourages children to develop their writing skills in a variety of play and role-play situations that match their interest. They observe adults writing for a purpose and join the adult in scribed writing. They are taught to use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds and to write short sentences in meaningful contexts. They are given the opportunity to regularly practise the correct formation of other letter shapes.

Organisation

At Thaxted Primary School we follow The National Curriculum 2014 and supplement this with additional tools, such as in-house planning exemplars, the Jonathan Bond Planning Tool for English, Cornerstones’ Imaginative Learning Projects and Hamilton planning ideas. The teaching of handwriting is based on the school scheme as outlined in our Handwriting Policy. We have now implemented The No-Nonsense Spelling Scheme across Key Stage 2.

Pupils’ progress and achievements are:

- Monitored by careful observation of their performance and attainment related to the expectations for their year group;
- Moderated through analysis of samples of work by staff both within and across Key Stages;
- Discussed at length at Pupil Progress Meetings;
- Addressed and actioned through the creation of termly Class Action Plans.

Children’s awareness of their individual progress is developed through self-evaluation, discussion, marking and feedback throughout the year. Progress and attainment are logged termly on Target Tracker.

All aspects of English are valued, consolidated and reinforced continuously within the framework of the rest of the curriculum.

Teaching and Learning

At Thaxted Primary School we have both mixed and single-year group classes; as a result, teachers adapt the National Curriculum to ensure that they are covering the content and objectives for both year groups in their class or to meet the needs of the class. There will be times when a year group of children from different classes are put together to focus on a key area of English, for example to address specific grammar learning, or to prepare Year 6 for statutory assessments.

Our creative curriculum follows a three-year cycle in Key Stage 1 and a four-year cycle in Key Stage 2. In delivering the depth and breadth of knowledge for Science and the foundation subjects, teachers may use Cornerstones' Imaginative Learning Projects. Each of these ILPs contains planning for Spoken Language, Reading and Writing related to the topic and, for pupils in Years 1-6, teachers adapt these to run alongside the English content from the National Curriculum for the year group.

From Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 6, pupils complete all of their English learning in an 'English Book' in order to fully demonstrate progression in the key skills of transcription and composition. In the Foundation Stage, evidence of reading and writing completed by the children in child-initiated activities is collated in individual books and via Tapestry. Additionally children move up to their next class with a completed piece of writing indicative of their ability to display in their new English book.

Some of our additional teaching and learning strategies are as follows:

Spoken Language

- ❖ 'Learning Partners' are used within each class to develop constructive paired learning 'talk'. The qualities of a good learning partner are modelled by teachers, discussed with the pupils and regularly revisited. Key Stage 2 children are encouraged to reflect on how effective their learning partner has been and offer suggestions for how they could be even better.

Reading

- ❖ Across EYFS and Key Stage 1, pupils are grouped according to which Phase of Letters and Sounds that they are currently working on. These children benefit from a weekly longer session in these groups at the start of the week with shorter daily sessions after.
- ❖ Key Stage 2 children are encouraged to respond to their reading when they finish a book, or for more competent readers at the end of a chapter, using question stems as a stimulus for written reflection where appropriate.
- ❖ Children are buddied up for weekly reading sessions with another class across the school.

Writing

- ❖ English is supported by Computing through the use of moving images and text on SMART boards, laptops and ipads. This use of technology is maximised for the visual benefits it provides; from the shared analysis of a literary text, through the use of online games to practise spelling rules, to composing, editing and redrafting on screen for different purposes and for different audiences.

Children with SEND

Support and extension for pupils with special educational needs is provided by the teacher through differentiated work or structured tasks which address targets specific to each child. These may be coordinated with class work or may be provided by learning support staff for those children for whom this is necessary.

Assessment and Record keeping Procedures

Throughout a term teachers make ongoing formative assessments about a pupil's knowledge and skills, as outlined in the National Curriculum for English; these assessments inform next lessons and future planning.

Our assessment tool, 'Not As We Know It' by Clive Davies (known amongst staff as 'CLIVE'), is used by teachers to record ongoing assessments in reading and writing in line with expectations for the year group that a child is in. From these observations and assessments, teachers use their professional judgement to decide whether a pupil is 'Beginning' (B), 'Working within' (W) or 'Secure' (S) in the expectations for attainment in the National Curriculum for a year group. This information is stored within a central database and passed on to the next class teacher.

White booklets called 'Phonics and Spelling Records' are used in EYFS to record individual children's attainment in reading and spelling. These white booklets also contain assessment sheets for phonics and tricky words in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, teachers hold word lists for Years 3 & 4 and 5 & 6 and keep a record of children's progress in reading and spelling these words.

Mid-way through the year, a child's attainment in English is reported to parents in their annual report and achievements against targets summarised at the end of the year.

In Foundation Stage, children are assessed continuously throughout the year in line with the EYFS Framework using observations of child-initiated activities and professional judgement against the age bands of the EYFS curriculum. At the end of the year pupils are assessed whether they are working at an emerging, expected or exceeding level with the Early Learning Goals.

A Foundation Stage child's attainment in English is reported to parents in their annual report at the end of a school year.

The Role of the Subject leader

The English Subject Leader has responsibility for **promoting professional leadership and management** for English in the school, to secure high quality teaching, effective use of resources and the highest standards of learning, achievement and enjoyment for all pupils.

The English Subject Leader is responsible for **the strategic development of English** through co-ordination of all English work within the school, developing the vision and action plans for English and holding responsibility for the English policy and all other relevant policies in consultation with the Headteacher, staff and governors.

The English Subject Leader is responsible for the **teaching, learning and the curriculum** through coordinating the monitoring and evaluation of pupil progress and achievement in English, identifying clear targets for improvement, and reporting to meetings of the governing body on matters related to the provision and development of English within the school curriculum.

The English Subject Leader is responsible for **leading and managing staff** through working with staff to ensure the outstanding teaching of English across the curriculum, leading by example, and modelling lessons where relevant.

The English Subject Leader is responsible for **assessment and resources** through analysing and interpreting performance data to set targets for improvement in English throughout the school, and evaluating, requisitioning, maintaining, controlling and developing appropriate resources, materials and equipment for the teaching of English within the confines of the school budget.

Health and Safety

At Thaxted Primary School, English is taught and promoted in line with the Health and Safety and Child Protection procedures in place across the school. Risk assessments are completed, for example when children visit the local library.

Equal Opportunities

The school is committed to providing equal opportunities for all, regardless of race, faith, gender or capability in all aspects of school. We promote self and mutual respect and a caring and non-judgmental attitude throughout the school.

Links to other policies or guidance

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- WHAT book
- Inclusion/SEND Policy
- The National Curriculum for English 2014

Review Procedure

This policy will be reviewed in line with the school Policy Schedule. See table at beginning of policy for review date.