

Sprowston Infant School English Statement

Intent

At Sprowston Infant School we believe that all can achieve well in English. We aim to develop the abilities of all children to communicate effectively in language and in writing; to listen with understanding and to become enthusiastic and responsive readers so that they can cope with the language demands in adult life.

At our school, language acquisition is paramount to ensuring children access the whole curriculum effectively. We strive to be good role models as we interact with children and value quality dialogue. The use of first hand experiences and quality texts across the curriculum further develops children's understanding of questioning, language and builds up a purposeful and meaningful vocabulary. We highly value reading as a key life skill, therefore teaching a child to read with confidence is vital and we are dedicated to enabling our pupils to become lifelong readers. We also aim to promote reading for pleasure, and hope to instil this love of reading in all children through the culture of our school.

Reading

We follow the simple view of reading. A systematic approach to teaching phonics and reading ensures children develop fluency and confidence in reading and spelling. Re-reading texts helps children to become familiar with stories and gain in fluency. We use decodable books for early reading and as children become competent with phonics in phase 5 and 6, books will include a wider range of new unknown words.

Reading

- One to one daily reading takes place in Reception and Year 1, and in year 2 for vulnerable readers. This may be with the teacher, teaching assistant or with a reading volunteer.
- Children take part in whole class and guided reading sessions in EYFS and KS1.
- Each classroom has a range of high quality texts, both fiction and non-fiction, linked to our topics.
- We have a library where each class is timetabled to visit, promoting reading for pleasure.
- Texts for English are carefully chosen to ensure children are engaged and that there is progression and challenge across the school.
- Children are read to every day by their class teacher. This is a book recommended by the teacher or chosen by the children.
- Children work through our reading scheme. We class a child who is above white as a free reader.
- We expect families to read at home at least 3 times a week with their children and make comments in their child's reading record.
- Parents in Yr R and Yr 1 are invited to attend some Phonics lessons in the Autumn term
- Videos of phonic enunciation are sent home to parents.
- We have an English meeting at the beginning of the year for Year 1 and 2 to explain Phonics, grammar and spelling.
- We have volunteer readers in every year group. Volunteers are mostly parents and we have a volunteer from the Norfolk Reading Project. They are trained by the English subject leader to ensure they are following our procedures.

Department for Education: “Research shows that when phonics is taught in a structured way - starting with the easiest sounds and progressing through to the most complex – it is the most effective way of teaching young children to read. It is particularly helpful for children aged 5–7. Almost all children who receive good teaching of phonics will learn the skills they need to tackle new words. They can then go on to read any kind of text fluently and confidently, and to read for enjoyment.”

Before teaching Phase 2 phonics we teach oral blending and other phase 1 activities; children are given wordless books so they can learn to tell stories themselves from the illustrations and know how to handle and turn the pages. As soon as the first letters have been taught the children are also taught to blend these graphemes to read words.

Having learnt the first sets of graphemes children are given books closely linked to the phonics they have been taught. Originally in colour-coded bands, the books have been re-arranged and matched to the phonic phases. When children can blend words comfortably a teacher or teaching assistant will hear them read a book at the next level to see if they are ready to move on. As a guide, they should be able to read 95% or more to move up to the next reading colour and be able to answer simple questions.

There is a range of non-fiction books in each class. In Y1 and Y2 this includes books which relate to areas of the curriculum and are used throughout the day in relation to what the children are learning about.

Guided Reading

In Year 1 there is guided reading every day, in Y2 it is 4 days a week, with whole class reading on the fifth day. The children read in ability groups matched closely to the level of books they are reading. The children are encouraged to read individually or in pairs. One group should be reading for pleasure, one group or two groups with a TA, one with a teacher, one group may be doing a reading activity such as a word game or comprehension. The adult supported groups will hear children read and also develop comprehension through deduction, inference, predictions, summarising and inference. If children are very low level readers and cannot manage guided reading they should be playing a phonics game or work with a big book. In year 2 teachers use Sprowston loves Reading prompt cards to help the children identify different types of questions and to develop language through sentence starters. Yr 1 start the beginning of the week with a book hook which is discussed as a whole class. Year 2 do whole class reading on Fridays and will discuss the concepts of a book and focus on a strand of reading, or work on developing comprehension skills. Vocabulary will be clarified, and children will be invited to predict, summarise, infer and make connections.

Reading for Pleasure

Books are selected teachers for a variety of reasons. Teachers will always be aware of widening children's vocabulary and choosing books above the children's reading ability but will also use books that children enjoy joining in with, linked to topics, to promote PSHE understanding, by the same author or based on children's interests. We sometimes invite children to bring books in to share with the class and for the children to make choices about which story is read. We use picture books throughout the school and lean towards chapter books in year 2 when the children can listen for longer.

The school promotes reading for pleasure in a number of different ways:

Reading corners have been set up in every classroom.

The school is part of a research project on Reading for Pleasure. As part of this, staff have chosen an objective to develop over the year.

In the first term of YR, parents come in at the end of Friday afternoon to read with their children in class.

'Secret reader' happens regularly – parents reading to a class.

Reading cafes take place half termly

Children regularly visit the library and take books home.

A Reading Bug Newsletter is sent home half-termly

We have termly Poetry assemblies.

Children are invited to send in videos of their reading via Tapestry

We have reading displays in the main corridor, including staff modelling reading for pleasure.

We take all children to the library and aim to have each child enrolled with a library card

Our children are encouraged to participate in the local library Summer Reading Challenge

The school dog visits to provide additional impetus to some children to read. They read to him.

Writing

In Reception

At Sprowston Infant School, our Reception classes use story scribing to teach writing. In its simplest form, story scribing lets children dictate their stories which are written down verbatim, exactly as they are told, by an EYFS or Key Stage 1 practitioner. The children then gather around a taped out stage and the stories are acted

The Benefits:

- An inclusive, whole-class approach which values every child's contribution;
- Facilitates high levels of engagement;
- Creates confidence and self-assurance;
- Supports the development of speaking skills as children express and share their ideas;
- Helps to develop accurate, active listening skills and understanding;
- Supports co-operative and collaborative and creative learning;
- Develops positive relationships within a shared storytelling experience;
- Allows children to explore early literacy and the power of words as they see their stories come to life, and develop their ability to use and adapt language to communicate;
- Offers children a bridge into the world of creative writing as they begin to see the links between the oral stories they compose and the words on a page.

Children are taught how to form letters during phonics. The children 'warm up' with dough disco. As children learn new graphemes and common exception words, they are encouraged to write these themselves in their story scribes. They learn to write their name. Adults observe closely how children form letters, so incorrect formation can be identified and correct formation modelled and practised. When children start to blend they will be encouraged to write CVC words. They use Jolly phonics letters and cards to help with spelling. Initially plain paper is used for writing and then in January the children are encouraged to use lined paper. When teachers scribe they model how letters sit on the line. It also helps children to think about letter size.

Children have the opportunity to write at any time during continuous provision. Children can ask for help with writing and adults are observant to catch 'in the moment' opportunities in both the indoor and outdoor setting.

In Key Stage 1

Children are exposed to a wide range of high quality texts throughout the school. In KS1 the basis of their writing is provided by book hooks using the language from high quality texts to improve their writing.

At the start of the week, a hook is always given, creating a context for the children to write and igniting their imagination. This is normally a book hook. The high quality texts have been chosen carefully for two reasons: so that children have a context to apply progressively more complex skills from their year group's National Curriculum objectives in a range of genres and write for a variety of purposes; secondly, the texts are linked to our topics to inspire learning in other areas of the curriculum. Children are immersed into texts through activities such as role play, construction, real life experiences and art, encouraging a greater depth of understanding and engagement in the texts. Books are used as a visual stimulus to develop vocabulary choices and composition. Children write during their topic times as well which ensures that skills taught during the specific writing and grammar sessions are rehearsed and refined independently.

We incorporate the Talk for Writing model into some of our teaching of writing in Key Stage 1. Children are taught writing skills through studying a range of fiction and non-fiction texts, including the use of teacher-produced models for writing. Our writing is enhanced through using resources from The Literacy Shed and Talk for Writing.

Each year group has a medium term plan that changes termly.

Formative assessment of writing is carried out within the lesson and summative assessment is made at the end of a piece of writing. Summative assessments are made termly in October, February and May where children write independently.

Learning focuses will be revisited throughout the year; each time they are revisited should show progression.

Topics throughout the year should be sequenced so as to build on previous learning, thus enabling children to gradually know more and do more. Children need deliberate practice over time and in different contexts to embed understanding of concepts.

There should be opportunities for children to explain their thinking and, therefore be able to hold their sentences for writing.

Handwriting

We have regular focused handwriting session where children are discretely taught letter formation. We use Nelson Handwriting. We do not use a fully cursive style as we believe that children this can be confusing. Cursive lettering does not match what children read in texts. They are not ready initially to join letters in words and it can be easy to use lead ins but then form letters incorrectly.

English grammar, punctuation and spelling is taught throughout English lessons and other areas of the curriculum when children are writing. A weekly focus is planned for in grammar and punctuation but previous skills are consistently revisited, building up to National Curriculum expectations. Spelling is taught as part of phonics, using the revisit, teach, practise, apply format, with Reception, Year 1 and 2.

In year 2 children are taught the four joins and then handwriting each week is linked to the spelling taught that week.