



Mundy C of E Junior School

English Policy

‘Let love and kindness be the motivation behind all that you do.’ (1 Corinthians 16:14)

POLICY STATEMENT - ENGLISH

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This document is a statement of the aims, principles, strategies, and procedures for English at Mundy Church of England Junior School.

At Mundy Church of England Junior School we provide the opportunity for every child to reach their full potential through a positive and caring environment. We embrace Christian values and ensure all children are ready for their next steps. We believe that English is an essential skill, underpinning achievement across the curriculum. We aim to cultivate an enjoyment of reading and writing and develop our children's oral communication skills in order to equip them for every aspect of their future in education, work and for life.

As stated in the National Curriculum 2013, the overarching aim for English in primary schools 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. It aims to ensure that all pupils:

- 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 clearly explain their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others, and participating in debate.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

English at Mundy Church of England Junior School is taught through a variety of approaches. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, understanding and enthusiasm for the subject. As part of our creative curriculum, we often use subject knowledge gained from other subjects, for example History, Geography or Science, as a hook for writing and provide children with real-life contexts for their work. We use a variety of resources to support children's work, including multimedia resources where it enhances their learning. Children have the opportunity to experience a wide range of high-quality texts to engage them in their learning and encourage them to understand what makes a good writer.

In our school, we believe that teachers should work together to plan, deliver, and moderate the teaching of English in order to ensure that expectations are high, and all our children are able to achieve to the best of their ability. The structure of English teaching is based upon the English National Curriculum 2013 guidelines and covers all of the recommended objectives to ensure that a broad and balanced English curriculum is taught to all pupils at Mundy Church of England Junior School.

We use a variety of teaching strategies such as: teacher modelling, explanation, questioning, discussion, guided and shared reading, guided and shared writing and group work to develop children's confidence, fluency and independence as readers and writers, and in speaking and listening. We do this through dedicated daily English and Guided Reading lessons through whole-class and group teaching. The English skills our children develop are also embedded in other areas of the curriculum. For example, instruction writing in Science lessons.

Opportunities for extra reading and extended writing are planned when appropriate.

ENGLISH CURRICULUM

WRITING

We use the learning objectives from the National Curriculum Programme of Study for English 2013 as the basis for implementing the English curriculum across a range of genres, appropriate to each age group. Text composition is taught as a writing process, allowing the children to use the skills of planning, writing, editing, and redrafting their work in many contexts. This takes place in the English lessons as well as through other curriculum areas. Children are supported in the application of their skills through the use of modelled, guided, and shared writing. Age-appropriate grammar objectives are also included within these sessions to teach the specific skills relevant to different text types. Access to high-quality texts that are relevant to topics taught in other curriculum areas are also a key part of our creative curriculum. These are mapped out in termly medium-term plans.

'I always have a story in my mind – at the back of my head ready to write down. Writing lets me express my feelings and explore my creativity' Year 6 girl (MJS 2021).

All plans are kept centrally on our whole school database, and the English subject leader is responsible for reviewing these plans regularly. The English subject leader and classroom teachers work collaboratively to devise the long, medium, and short-term English plans to ensure coverage of objectives and to plan writing tasks to show progress within the whole school.

In planning teachers:

- Ensure coverage of the National Curriculum Programme of Study for English 2013.
- Identify the appropriate learning strategies required.
- Provide balance, progression, and variety within the classroom for content, organisation and learning opportunities.
- Assess and plan for the specific needs of children within their own class, along with ongoing evaluation and next steps.
- Provide carefully differentiated activities which challenge the children.
- Give opportunities through speaking and listening to develop correct language structures.

Handwriting

There is an agreement set by the main feeder infant schools for Mundy Church of England Junior School, that the expected standard for handwriting is that all children can join by the end of year 2. At Mundy Church of England Junior School, we value the importance of good quality presentation and encourage neat, joined, and legible handwriting as it is an essential life skill; it is fast, efficient and communicates effectively. The use of neat and controlled cursive handwriting is consolidated by discrete modelling and, if necessary, lessons to practise the correct joining of letters in Years 3 and 4. By Years 5 and 6, children are expected to be developing speed and

fluency and beginning to write in their own style of handwriting. Children use pencil in Year 3 and 4 but can choose to use either pen or pencil for writing in Year 5 and 6. The 2013 English National Curriculum states that in Years 5 and 6 children should be 'choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task'. This encourages 'ownership' of their own handwriting for all children and exposure to writing with a pen to develop their skills. Improved handwriting is rewarded throughout the school, to encourage all children to develop their handwriting skills and build their confidence.

Writing assessment

The assessments that teachers make as part of every lesson help them to adjust their daily, weekly, and medium-term plans.

Formal assessments in the form of independent writing, grammar and spelling tests, and SATS, are also used to inform staff on pupil progress.

Children's individual progress in writing is assessed using MJS year group writing assessment grids, linked to the National Curriculum Programme of Study for English 2013. A portfolio of independent writing is assessed, with written work produced at least twice a term.

Class teachers assess phonics abilities at the start of Year 3 and will discuss each child's specific needs with the English subject leader and SENCO. The ensuing phonics support is individualised to the child.

Assessments are analysed by the English subject leader and Headteacher at the end of each term and kept centrally. Children working below the expected levels for their age are identified and specific interventions are put in place to aid their progress.

At important points during the writing progress, pupils use self and peer assessment methods, so that they can assess the quality of their own and each other's writing against targets, or the success criteria of the task. Time for pupil reviewing is allocated, with children using Purple 'Polishing' Pens to respond to feedback.

Each classroom has an interactive 'English Learning Wall', where the processes of questioning, planning, writing, and reviewing are displayed to help support the children's understanding.

Marking

Teachers use marking as a tool in daily/weekly assessment. There is an agreed system of marking throughout the school, which provides a code for the children to understand when reviewing and amending their writing (see school *Marking Policy*).

All staff use the 'green for good' and 'pink for think' marking system. This is used to highlight areas of success and areas for improvement. Children respond to this by making changes, commenting on their progress, and working with the teacher to identify their own targets and next steps. Purple 'Polishing' Pens are used by the children to respond to feedback and make comments.

Marking relates back to the learning objective (MyLO).

READING

At Mundy Church of England Junior School, children are actively encouraged to read and various opportunities to read for pleasure are given throughout the school day.

'The kind of books I like to read are fantasy stories because it makes you feel like you are there'

Year 6 boy (MJS 2021).

'I like reading adventure books – I get lost in them' Year 5 girl (MJS 2021).

'You can read to calm yourself down, or to excite yourself – it depends what mood you are in' Year 4 boy (MJS 2021).

We want to encourage our children to read as often and as widely as possible. Reading is a vital skill! We want to encourage every child to read more often, to read more widely, and to find something they love reading. To encourage our children to read more often, we have a 'School Reading Challenge', which awards certificates and 'bookworm badges'.

Evidence suggests that reading for pleasure leads to increased attainment. Clark and DeZoya (2011) found a significant positive relationship between enjoyment and attainment indicating that pupils who read more are also better readers. (DfE Education standards research team 2012).

High-quality texts are central to the teaching of reading at Mundy Junior School. We believe that laying the foundations for a life-long love of reading is core to the happiness of our children and we therefore promote this across all curriculum areas.

The acquisition of vocabulary is fundamental to our approach to the teaching of reading, and as a support to develop reading comprehension and inference skills. It is also the foundation for encouraging reading for pleasure.

Regular whole class guided reading lessons focus on promoting pupils' phonics knowledge and decoding at word level, reading for enjoyment, developing reading stamina, and exploring texts to improve comprehension skills. Children are engaged in reading a variety of carefully selected books within a group setting or a whole class setting. Groups are assigned books matched to their reading ability.

Whole class reading sessions mean that children of all attainment bands are immersed in the same high-quality literature and the discussions that these texts promote. The whole class can share the enjoyment of a particular text and learn from one another as well as the adults in the room on a daily basis. Children work in mixed-ability pairs to allow for paired discussion, and collaboration in the acquisition of new skills.

Whole class reading lessons across the school follow a weekly structure:

- The class book is used as the text for guided reading discussions, allowing children to immerse themselves in these (often longer) stories. One chapter will be read each week. Follow up tasks may be used to support the learning.
- On the Monday and Tuesday, we explore the background context of the class book to build up the children's knowledge which aids their comprehension and ability to build a 'mental model'. Word-level vocabulary and dictionary work also takes place, focusing on words from the next chapter of the class book, allowing children to build up a repertoire of language that they can use to decipher texts.
- On the Wednesday, the children have the pages of the text (one chapter) read to them. Extra meaning can be transferred through the (adult) reader's expression, and the reader can stop to clarify the meaning or summarise, so no child is left behind in their understanding of what has just happened in the story.
- On the Thursday, the children write a short summary of what was read to them the previous day.
- On the Friday, children engage with questions/activities/tasks based on the chapter that was read to them on Wednesday.

Reading assessment

Reading Comprehension

Comprehension is an important skill that is taught to all children. Discussions about books and the skills needed to comprehend texts (deduction, inference, literal understanding, sequencing, making predictions, forming an opinion) take place within English and guided reading lessons. Reading is currently assessed using Pearson's reading comprehension assessments at the end of each full term. Class assessments of reading comprehension progress is submitted termly to the Headteacher and this is also reviewed by the English subject leader so that overall success in reading throughout the school can be monitored.

Individual reading

Children read individually to teaching staff at regular intervals until they have reached a high level of fluency and comprehension. The frequency that they are heard individually is dependent on the year group they are in, and the stage they are at.

Children who are making progress below the expected level for their age continue to be heard regularly by teaching staff for as long as it is deemed necessary. Reading intervention programmes are provided for those children who need extra support with reading skills, this may take place in a small group or 1:1 sessions.

Reading Scheme

Our school reading scheme consists of a variety of both fiction and non-fiction books. These include books from 'Oxford University Press', 'Songbirds', and 'Scholastic'. All books are colour banded. Children's progress is recorded on a reading record until they move onto our 'free-reader' section.

Each class is able to visit our school library regularly, where they can take out fiction or non-fiction books from our core reading scheme, or 'free-readers' can choose from our extensive range of (non-reading scheme) books. When appropriate, visits to our local community library are also encouraged.

Parents are encouraged to hear their child read *aloud*, in order to check fluency and understanding, as well as to encourage discussion. They are also asked to record reading done by their child other than reading from books provided by school. This gives the teacher a broader picture of the child's reading experience and preferences, as well as information on progress. E-books are also available for children to read at home using Activelearn.

SPELLING AND GRAMMAR

We use the Super Spellings scheme, which has a personalised approach to spellings, meaning every child in the school has an individualised set of weekly spellings to support their current ability. Spellings booklets are sent home or are available on the school website for home support and spellings are tested on a regular basis.

This works alongside age-related spelling coverage within English lessons.

Where possible, children are encouraged to identify their own spelling errors and edit accordingly and check spellings. The effective use of a dictionary is taught to find words beyond the initial letter and the use of a thesaurus is taught and encouraged to expand children's vocabulary awareness and choice.

Age-appropriate grammar objectives are included within our daily English lessons. 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.

PHONICS

We are strongly committed to high-quality phonics and any child who has not reached the expected standard at the end of KS1 will continue to receive support in phonics in KS2. Class teachers assess phonics abilities at the start of Year 3 and will discuss each child's specific needs with the English subject leader and SENCO. The ensuing phonics support is individualised to the child. TA time and intervention strategies are timetabled during the day/week to develop each child. These may take place in a small group or a 1:1 session. Our school reading scheme contains phonically decodable books that match to the 'Phase' the children are working in.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Speaking and listening is developed throughout all lessons across the curriculum. Opportunities are made throughout the curriculum to ensure that children use language to work together effectively, ensuring links are made between spoken language, learning and development. High-quality spoken language is modelled from teachers to the children. Children also have the opportunity to speak in front of peers in group work, sharing ideas, explaining thoughts and processes, discussions and debates. The quality of spoken language that children hear is vital for their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding of reading and writing. Opportunities for speaking and listening may involve drama, hot seating, debate, taking part in a collective worship, participation in school plays or religious services, and storytelling.

ENTITLEMENT AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The school has an *Equal Opportunities Policy*, and 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 available.

SEND AND INCLUSION

The school has a *SEND Policy*, and will ensure that:

- The class teacher, SENCO and the English subject leader liaise to ensure that individual needs of pupils are met and appropriate targets are set and regularly reviewed.
- Teachers set high expectations and appropriate targets which are also 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.
- Parents are kept informed and are encouraged to support their child's learning through home activities and termly targets.
- Adult support is used in school to support groups or individual children.

RESOURCES

We have a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. The classrooms have age-appropriate Dictionaries and Thesauruses for reference. Access to the Internet is also available in each classroom via an interactive SMART board, and iPads and laptops are timetabled for each class throughout the week. We subscribe to Pearson's Bug Club, Grammar & Spelling Bug and Wordsmith. Children have a personal 'Pupil World' where they are encouraged to read and play educational games, to consolidate their learning. This is accessible at home and school.

At Mundy Church of England Junior School, we are very proud of our school library. There is an extensive selection of high-quality literature for the children to read and enjoy. Our library also contains a large selection of books for reference to support children's learning. We have aimed to make our library a place that the children want to visit; with relaxing music, reading areas, informative displays, and book recommendations.

A library within a school embeds the joy of reading in our young people - building self-awareness, articulate self-expression, confidence, validating their life and culture - and leads to social and emotional literacy... it creates equal access to materials for all... Reading is the activity that enables you to think and feel at the same time. A book is a life raft to cling to. A book is a friend to turn to, a book is a cave you crawl into, a book is a white-knuckle roller-coaster ride, a book is a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas, a book is a delight. You can lose yourself in a book. (Theresa Breslin, Great School Libraries, March 2021).

SUBJECT MONITORING AND REVIEW

Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the Headteacher and the English Subject Team. The work of the English Subject Team also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, by being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.

An English Action Plan is drawn up yearly which is reviewed termly by the English Subject Leader and discussed with the Headteacher.

The English subject leader has specially allocated management time. This enables them to review planning and policies, look at samples of children's work and carry out pupil interviews, undertake learning walks observing and supporting English teaching across the school, and develop their own CPD which can be used to train other members of staff.

Staff meeting times are allocated to develop points from the English Action Plan and for staff CPD in areas of English.