



# English Policy

## Philosophy

We believe that all children have the right to experience and enjoy a wide range of books and be encouraged to communicate their ideas and opinions, both orally and by using the written word. We believe that parents should be actively involved at all stages and that we, as teachers, have a role to encourage this. We recognise that language is an integral part of all curriculum areas and is of great importance in the development of all life skills.

## Aims

- 1) To enable children to become literate
- 2) To develop the ability of pupils to express themselves clearly and accurately, both orally and in writing
- 3) To promote an interest in the English language and its literature
- 4) To develop the potential of every child to access all areas of the curriculum, by developing their literacy and oral skills.

## Early Years

Children in Nursery and Reception classes follow the requirements of the EYFS curriculum that specifies the Early Learning Goals. Their Communication, Language and Literacy are developed through structured activities and play. They are taught letter sounds using phonic methods, using 'Letters and Sounds' and Jolly Phonics. All Early Years children have the opportunity to take library books home to enjoy with an adult, and all Reception and some Nursery age children take home reading scheme books at their own level. The learning environment includes outdoor areas for writing.

## Reading

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose and be encouraged to read for pleasure.

The 2014 Curriculum divides reading skills into two dimensions:

- Word reading/ decoding
- Comprehension

We recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods. We recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, writing, grammar and vocabulary. We also understand that reading is a developmental process and part of life-long learning and we encourage and praise children at every stage of it. Pupils learn to read easily and fluently through daily phonics in EYFS and Key Stage 1, regular reading to adults in school, reading partners and parents are encouraged to read daily with children at home. In Key Stage 2 children take part in daily guided reading for twenty minutes a day.

Pupils develop their comprehension skills during guided reading and in studying a range of books from the Power of Reading scheme. We have adapted this to meet the needs of our pupils. In essence, pupils study a book, related to their half termly topic, where possible. They often study books, which are more challenging than those, which they might be able to read



independently. They will use this book as the basis for reading, writing, speaking and listening tasks.

Reading for pleasure is promoted throughout the school through classroom reading corners, whole class texts; library visits and guided reading sessions. Priority readers are identified through the RAG readers' scheme, ensuring that those that need the most support are given it.

### **Library**

In the school library there are a variety of reference and fiction books available to support the children in their learning and enjoyment of books. In EYFS and Key Stage 1, the library is used at story time by individual classes on a rota basis. Children in Key Stage 2 are able to borrow books from the library to read at home.

Each classroom has its own collection of books carefully selected to be suited to the abilities and interests of the children in that class. The P.T.A. provides an annual budget part of which is used to update and maintain the reading resources for both Key Stages. The classroom and library collections should also be supplemented through use of the School Library Service.

### **Writing**

The National Curriculum states that pupils should:

- Develop the stamina and skills to write at length.
- Use accurate spelling and punctuation.
- Be grammatically correct.
- Write in a range of ways and purposes including narratives, explanations, descriptions, comparisons, summaries and evaluations.
- Write to support their understanding and consolidation of what they have heard or read.

The 2014 Curriculum divides writing skills into two dimensions:

- Transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- Composition (articulating ideas in speech and writing)

We recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods. We recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, reading, grammar and vocabulary.

### **Transcription**

#### Spelling

Spelling is an essential part of the English teaching at Ruislip Gardens. In the EYFS up to Year 3 discrete Synthetic Phonics lessons are taught. These lessons give children the tools to be able to spell words by segmenting them and then blending them. Children receive weekly spellings in line with the national curriculum appendix for spelling, these are assessed each week.

#### Grammar

Grammar is embedded throughout the curriculum in both key stages. In Key Stage 1, children are taught grammar in the form of games and activities in English lessons. In Key Stage 2



children partake in weekly discrete grammar lessons; these sessions are in line with the curriculum expectations for grammar.

### Handwriting

Handwriting is a skill that is taught across the school. From the EYFS children practise letter formation and fine motor skills. In Key Stages 1 and 2 children further develop these skills including joined handwriting during a weekly handwriting lesson. There is also a high focus on presentation. Children are given extra support for handwriting if required.

### **Composition**

At Ruislip Gardens, we believe that children should be given opportunities to express themselves both orally and in written form. Using the Power of Reading scheme as a basis, teachers endeavour to teach high quality English lessons to scaffold children's talk and writing. High quality talk leads to outstanding work, teachers spend time modelling talking for writing and provide children with opportunities to acquire new vocabulary. We use high quality texts, modelling and shared writing to demonstrate good practice. Drama and role play are essential parts of English teaching in our school, helping children to talk before writing and developing a deeper understanding. Written tasks are differentiated to support those that need it and to stretch the more able. Children are provided with success criteria and set targets to aim for in their writing. Classes are encouraged to become editors, finding ways of self and peer assessing their work.

### **Planning**

In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 teachers plan together using the new National Curriculum framework. All aspects of English are covered in the planned lessons including reading, writing, poetry, speaking and listening, drama, role play and a love of reading is promoted through the use of 'Reading for Pleasure'. Children in Key Stage 2 will be taught a discrete Grammar, Spelling and Punctuation lesson weekly.

All teachers complete a half termly overview and then complete weekly plans. All teachers have access to the Power of Reading scheme, which provides key texts and accompanied planning. This scheme provides the basis for planning but requires teachers to edit as appropriate. An overview of books covered can be obtained from yearly curriculum maps.

Teachers in EYFS and Key Stage 1 use the guided reading schemes Rigby Stars and Bug Club and in Key Stage 2 teachers use Bug Club. These sessions are supplemented through the planning of grammar activities and independent tasks.

### **Marking**

Teachers provide high quality next steps marking which provides constructive feedback to children and helps them to know where to improve. Children respond to these comments where appropriate. It is expected that teachers will provide next steps after extended pieces of writing, not in every lesson.

### **Literacy Events**

Throughout the year children take part in various events to support the English curriculum. Each year book fairs are held to provide access to affordable books and encourage parents to engage with the reading process. Children in year 5 and 6 take part in an annual Shakespeare workshop and see the play being performed in the theatre.



### **Assessment**

All children in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 will be assessed half termly using the assessment procedures in school. Children will be assessed against the key performance indicators for their year group. Teachers will give children a score out of three for each of these performance indicators.

These numbers are used as follows:

- 1 – The child has not achieved the key performance indicator.
- 2 – The child is working at the level of the key performance indicator.
- 3 – The child is working above the level of the key performance indicator.

Reading and writing will both be assessed. Teachers will use the evidence gathered from guided reading, class observations and reading tests to make their judgement. Children will produce pieces of unaided writing throughout the year, which will contribute towards the teachers' judgement of writing ability.

### **Parents and Homework**

We recognise that parents make a significant difference to children's progress in English and encourage this partnership. The homework policy and individual class homework leaflets outline how parents can support their child's learning. English homework is set once a week for all children in KS1 and KS2 with an expectation that children also read at least 5 times a week.

January 2015