

# Canonbury Primary School



## English Policy

### 1 Aims and objectives

**1.1** The study of English develops children's abilities to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, so that they can use language to learn and communicate ideas, views and feelings. We aim to develop critical thinking whereby children are encouraged to pose questions that further stretches their ideas and views and therefore Speaking and Listening skills are at the heart of the curriculum. We value and foster the development of children's abilities to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as non-fiction and media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations.

**1.2** The aims of English are:

- to enable children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners;
- to encourage children to listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard;
- to enable children to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands;
- to develop children's abilities to reflect on their own and others' contributions and the language used;
- to enable children to evaluate their own and others' contributions through a range of drama activities;
- to enjoy stories and poetry and respond appropriately to texts that are read to them, expressing their opinions with confidence;
- to develop confident, independent readers through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text-level knowledge;
- to encourage children to become enthusiastic and reflective readers through contact with challenging and lengthy texts;
- to help children enjoy writing and recognise its value and power;
- to enable children to write with accuracy and meaning in narrative and non-fiction;
- to increase children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work.

### 2 Teaching and learning style

**2.1** At Canonbury Primary School we adopt a variety of teaching styles to reflect and respond to the individual learning styles of our children. Our principal aim in English is to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding. Adopting a range of teaching styles and techniques reflects our aim to make the learning of English enjoyable and creative. Techniques such as the use of 'talk-partners', the use of quality texts; the use of film clips; drama activities and role-play and our annual speech competition, all help to provide an enriched and creative English curriculum that our children respond well to.

The organisation of English provision differs in Key Stage One and Key Stage Two.

**In Key Stage One** - Year 1 continues the Foundation Stage model to take account of transition from Foundation Stage curriculum to KS1 curriculum and this is supported by the new Literacy curriculum year 2 whole class teaching.

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English is taught daily as a whole class. During the lesson the children will look at word or sentence level work and there will also be the opportunity for either shared reading or writing. The children will then move on to either independent or group work. Guided Reading takes place outside this English lesson time. The children have a guided Reading session once a week as part of a small group. The children are grouped according to their independent reading levels which we assess using PM Benchmark. These assessments coupled with each teacher's knowledge and expertise ensures that children are placed in a suitable guided reading group.

**In Key Stage Two**, the children are grouped in English lessons according to their ability and have 4 lessons a week focusing on the writing objectives from the National Literacy Framework. The grouping of children in this way enables us to more effectively address the individual needs of the children and so provide them with their 'next steps' to further develop their English skills and succeed. Guided Reading takes place outside these lessons along with Guided Spelling in which the class are differentiated into groups according to their specific spelling and reading needs. This is delivered in addition to all class spelling and spelling homework.

- The children have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts and multimedia to support their work. They are encouraged to understand the importance of editing and re-drafting their work. We use a 'working wall' system, where writing that is going through this process is shared and celebrated.

**2.2** There are children of differing ability in all classes at Canonbury Primary School. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons we do it through differentiated group work, while in other lessons we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use classroom assistants to support some children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

### **3 English curriculum planning**

**3.1** English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the key skills from the National Curriculum along side the on-line Primary Strategy as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English.

**3.2** All teaching staff complete weekly skills map for the teaching of English and all other subjects. This will show the specific key skills the children are covering from the National Curriculum, what subjects these skills feature in, how the children demonstrate these skills and what the end product will look like. These individual plans are kept as a record for the teachers and phase manager as evidence of the skills being covered. The Skills Map are reviewed and discussed on an informal basis throughout the academic year.

**3.3** As well individual class Skill Maps, to coincide with the new primary strategy and topic based delivery of key skills, teachers this year have adopted a 'mind map' approach to their planning. This enables a visual map of the related subjects to the topic being covered. The National Curricular skills are recorded onto this map along with the subject they're to be delivered in. This also benefits as a constant visual reminder to the children of their learning as well as teachers.

### **4 The Foundation Stage**

**4.1** We teach Communication Language and Literacy in Foundation Stage classes as an integral part of the school's work. We relate the CLL aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. We give all children the opportunity to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and extend their range of vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore, enjoy, learn about, and use words/phonic work and stories in a range of situations.

## **5 Teaching English to children with special educational needs**

**5.1** At our school we teach English to all children, whatever their ability. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our English teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels.

**5.2** When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style and differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

**5.3** Intervention through School Action and School Action Plus will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs. The IEP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to English.

**5.4** Teachers provide help with communication and literacy through:

- using texts that children can read and understand;
- using visual and written materials in different formats;
- using ICT, other technological aids and taped materials;
- using alternative communication, such as signs and symbols;
- using translators and amanuenses.

## **6 Assessment and recording**

**6.1** Assessment For Learning (AFL) is at the heart of best practice, and at Canonbury this is embedded in the learning and teaching children experience. Teachers use a traffic-light system or thumbs up/down to monitor children's understanding throughout the lesson as appropriate.

As part of our marking system we use **POET**, where children assess their own work in terms of **P**resentation, lesson **O**bjective and their **E**ffort. The teacher, and on some occasions the children themselves set a **T**arget that is appropriate for their next step. This AFL informs both short-term and medium-term planning.

In both the Autumn term, all classes produce a Record Of Assessment (ROA) for each child. The ROA consists of an English assessment, a Maths assessment and a Science assessment, which have been levelled using National Curriculum Level Descriptors. Most importantly it sets a target in these 3 subjects for that individual child.

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The data from these ROA's is monitored to ensure children are 'on track' to achieve their best. The English Subject Manager is responsible for the monitoring of this data and the strategic response to any issues or areas of concern arising.

Teachers in the Spring term will carry out their own independent assessment to monitor individual child's progress.

In the Autumn and Summer term, a standardised Spelling assessment is also carried out in class which will determine each child's spelling age in reference to their own.

This data again will be monitored by the Literacy Manager who will respond to any arising issues.

Teachers make summative assessments towards the end of the school year, and they use these to track progress against school and national targets. With the help of these long-term assessments, teachers are able to set targets for the next school year and summarize the progress of each child before discussing it with the child's parents. The next teacher also uses these long-term assessments as the basis for planning work for the new school year. These long-term assessments are made using end-of-year tests and teacher assessments. Children undertake the national SATs tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, plus the optional SATs tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5.

## **7 Monitoring and review**

**7.1** Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the English subject manager. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The subject leader gives the headteacher an annual summary report in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, and indicates areas for further improvement. The leader has specially-allocated regular management time in order to enable him/her to review samples of the children's work and undertake lesson observations of English teaching across the school. The named governor responsible for literacy meets regularly with the subject leader in order to review progress.