



Trekener School

English Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Assessment Policy, our curriculum overview and our teaching and learning policy.

Intent

At Trekener school we aim to develop children with a love of learning and good learning behaviours and dispositions to enable them to be successful life-long learners. We aim to enable them to develop the confidence to make and learn from mistakes, value collaboration, and strive to be the best they can be. When children leave our school, we want them to be resilient, life-long learners who are armed with the knowledge and skills to be effective local and global citizens within an ever-changing society.

Within English, this involves promoting high standards of language and literacy by equipping children with a strong command of the spoken and written word; developing their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment and developing their key reading skills enabling them to access meaning effectively. This is with the aim of allowing children to communicate effectively through a range of mediums for a range of purposes enabling them to be successful in the adult world.

Implementation

At Trekener our English teaching is informed by the National Curriculum. This aims to ensure that all children:

- 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
- have a sound understanding of spelling, grammar and punctuation rules and are able to apply them.
- 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 explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

In order to develop children's skills across this area. We split our English learning into four key areas.

Spoken language

The National Curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in children's development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that children hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing.

As a result of this we embrace Oracy across the curriculum. Children are given the opportunity to discuss various topics across a range of subjects. They are supported to develop their confidence to articulate themselves clearly, listen attentively to others and develop ideas through dialogic discussion.

In English, we ensure the continual development of children's confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills through adopting the highly successful Pie Corbett's story telling approach (appendix 1) Children are supported to develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write. They are assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others and teachers ensure that children build secure foundations by using discussion to clarify and consolidate their thought processes. Children are also taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate. This is reinforced by high quality modelling by adults and by the use of progressive sentence stems.

All children are enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Children are supported to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role. They have opportunities 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.

Reading

The National Curriculum programmes of study for reading at key stages 1 and 2 consist of two dimensions:

- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading).

The teaching at Trekenner focuses on developing children's competence in both dimensions; different kinds of teaching are needed for each.

Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. Phonics is therefore emphasised in the early teaching of reading to beginners (i.e. unskilled readers) when they start Read, Write Inc (RWI), a proven synthetic phonics programme upon entry to the school. This is

continued throughout key stage one through daily phonics sessions which develop children's understanding of key graphemes and letter sequences, as well as their ability to recognise common exception words which are not phonetically decodable.

Good comprehension is derived from opportunities to read widely, to discuss texts and to develop key reading skills. The teaching of reading at Trekenner follows a reading skills approach consisting of at least three 45-minute lessons each week. These lessons allow children to explore a range of texts through a range of mediums and focus on discretely teaching the key skills that children require to be effective readers:

- Understanding the meaning of words in context.
- Retrieving key ideas from a range of texts.
- Summarising
- Making and justifying inferences.
- Predicting.
- Identifying and understanding authorial technique and how it enhances a text.
- Making comparisons between and within texts.

In addition there is a termly deep dive focus on at least one novel / text that underpins a terms literacy ensures children are deeply engaged in a text the challenges and extends their reading level.

Developing a love of reading is fundamental to our English teaching at Trekenner. Trekenner school complements this by

- Children have a weekly reading for pleasure session in class when they can choose from a range of well stocked reading materials in the classroom and library
- Children are read to daily from: new texts, new authors, favourite books, short stories and poetry
- Encouraging children to develop a love of reading through the use of Accelerated Reader in Years 2-6.
- This is reinforced by a "Brag tag" reward scheme to encourage children to read frequently and deeply ensuring that they can pass Accelerated Reader Quizzes effectively.
- In Key Stage One and foundation stage, children will have a reading tree in their classroom. The reading reward system will involve moving up this tree and achieving certificates for this.

Through these schemes, children are encouraged to read regularly at home and are assessed half termly to ensure that they are reading books which are at the appropriate level to promote optimum progress. Reading widely and often increases children's vocabulary because they encounter words which may not be heard or used in everyday speech. Reading also feeds children's imagination and opens up a treasure-house of wonder and joy for curious young minds.

It is our aim that, by the end of their primary education, all children are able to read fluently, and with confidence, in any subject in their forthcoming secondary education.

Writing

The programmes of study for writing at key stages 1 and 2 also identify two dimensions:

- transcription (spelling and handwriting)

- composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing).

The teaching at Trekenner develops children's competence in these two dimensions. In addition, children are taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. These aspects of writing are incorporated into the National Curriculum programmes of study for composition.

Writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription: that is, on spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the word structure and spelling structure of words. Effective composition involves forming, articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting. To support children in developing a fluent, cursive style of handwriting, teachers model and teach handwriting using the Penpals programme.

Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar, Punctuation

Opportunities for teachers to enhance children's vocabulary arise naturally from their reading and writing. As vocabulary increases, teachers show children 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. They also teach children how to work out and clarify the meanings of unknown words and words with more than one meaning. Additionally, discrete teaching of vocabulary is incorporated into reading skills lessons. Every reading skills lesson has some element of vocabulary teaching to ensure that children are given exposure to a range of new words and that their vocabulary is increased. Through this, a word of the day is identified each day which teachers feed into their teaching across the day. A display is maintained showing the words children have been exposed to across the year and there are regular reviews of these to consolidate their use.

Children are taught to control their speaking and writing consciously and to use Standard English. They are taught to use the elements of spelling, grammar, punctuation and 'language about language' listed in the statutory appendices. These do not constrain or restrict teachers' creativity, but simply provide the structure on which they can construct exciting lessons. The school follows the definitions provided in the non-statutory glossary in the national curriculum. Teachers regularly share engaging ideas to enhance children's grammar, punctuation and spelling.

During the Autumn term of each year, there is a focus on basic skills which is where the key Grammar and Punctuation objectives are delivered through English lessons and discrete GPS starters. Teachers continue to embed these concepts throughout the rest of the year allowing children the opportunity to apply these key concepts in a variety of ways through a variety of mediums. Correct vocabulary is used at all times in teaching and marking to develop children's understanding of the key terms set out in the Glossary.

At Trekenner, we acknowledge the importance of teaching children the correct spelling patterns. Children have a daily discrete spelling lesson lasting 10 minutes. During these lessons, children explore key spelling patterns appropriate for their age. These patterns are explored in a variety of ways to enable children to consolidate and embed the concepts. Children are then required to practise these spellings further at home and are tested weekly to assess progress and identify gaps.

These are then followed up by half termly spelling marathons which are used to track progress and identify gaps to be filled by future lessons.

The Approach to the Teaching of English at Trekenner

We have adopted the National Curriculum programmes of study for English as a basis for our English curriculum. Every class in key stages 1 and 2 have a daily hour of English. Discrete phonics and spelling is taught across a week using the RWI programme. Additional time is also given to handwriting (using the Penpals scheme), individual reading and reading skills. The reception class follows the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

When planning and teaching the English curriculum, the following elements are considered:

- Differentiation to meet the needs of all children including careful planning of work making use of a range of teaching strategies with a balance between audio, visual, and kinaesthetic techniques.
- Learning is given a core purpose e.g. writing to be sent to an author, or to be made into a book.
- ICT and cross-curricular links are made where appropriate.
- The careful marking of children's learning in accordance with the marking policy.
- Using pinpoint marking targets with children to ensure progress is sustained.
- The children in the ARB are taught English on a daily basis using a combination of approaches including RWI and the five-minute box. The learning is highly differentiated to meet the needs of the children with a particular emphasis upon communication skills.

School curriculum

The programmes of study for English are set out year-by-year for key stage 1 and two-yearly for key stage 2.

At Trekenner, English learning is structured around a core high quality text which changes each term. Through interacting with this core text, children explore a range of writing styles (both fiction and non-fiction) and explore a range of vocabulary, sentence structures and literary techniques. Additional elements of the curriculum are taught discretely:

- daily phonics (RWI) in EYFS and KS1
- weekly spelling focus for Year 2 through to Year 6 with daily practice.
- Reading skills sessions three times/week

Our school curriculum for English works on a two year rolling programme and is available on the school website.

Planning

The long-term plan outlines the key texts and objectives that will be covered in each term. It also indicates the cross curricular links and opportunities that will be made between various subjects within the term. Additionally, it outlines a key purpose for learning that the children will work towards throughout the term.

At Trekenner we believe that the focus of planning time should be on creating the most powerful and engaging learning opportunities possible for children. Therefore, formal written planning is not required. Rather, teachers plan their learning through carefully crafted flip chart/ PowerPoints which map out the learning journey and structure the activities that the children will experience across the week. Though formal written plans are not used, teachers are expected to evaluate lessons and

change/ adapt flips as required to ensure they provide the best learning opportunities for the children.

All planning is monitored on a regular basis by the English Subject Leader and the Head Teacher to maintain an overview of the standards in planning being achieved.

Assessment and Recording

Assessment is crucial to the learning process. Children's learning is regularly assessed through observation, discussion, scrutiny of work and evaluating outcomes.

- End of year targets are set for each year group
- Half-termly Pupil Progress Meetings are used to track the progress of each child in reading and writing across the year and to identify provision for each child in the next half-term. Children's progress towards their end of year target is considered at this point. Children identified as making slow progress are supported through additional interventions at this time.
- Formal assessments for GPS and reading are used three times per year as an additional means of tracking progress; these assessments are monitored by the English leader and the Senior Leadership Team.
- A progress book is kept throughout the children's time at school to track progress both within and across years. An independent piece 'at a distance' writing is recorded in this book once per term and assessed against the writing assessment framework. These are monitored by the English leader and the Senior Leadership Team.

Formative Assessment

Teacher assessment is an integral part of good practice. Assessment is carried out as an ongoing part of daily practice. (see Appendix 2 for more detail) It involves identifying children's progress against teaching objectives and targets, determining which children have achieved, and moving them on to the next stage of learning. Where appropriate, additional support and interventions are identified for children not making the expected progress.

Summative Assessment

This includes:

- Baseline and end of year attainment in EYFS
- Phonics screen in Year 1
- Phonics screen in Year 2 for those not achieving in Year 1
- KS1 SATS with judgements gathered through teacher assessment.
- KS2 SATS completed in the summer term of Year 6.
- Baseline, mid-year and end of year assessments each year.

Recording

- Tracking in reading and writing against National Curriculum age related expectations.
- Phonics check through RWI assessments, spelling and reading
- Reading records
- Teacher assessments made in progress writes.
- Recordings of all formal assessments.

Marking

Marking in English is part of the assessment process. For further detail, refer to the Marking Policy. Teachers recognise achievements and set next steps for children through the marking process.

Resourcing

The English Subject Leader, with the Headteacher, is responsible for the ordering, costing and allocation of resources to support the teaching of English.

A review of resources is carried out periodically which leads to a prioritised list of requirements. This is funded within the school's budget plan for the financial year.

Reporting to Parents

Parents receive regular informal or verbal feedback as to their children's progress in English. This is facilitated through our open-door policy where parents have regular access to teachers. Each child also has a reading diary book to record progress in reading at home and school. Additionally, a half termly progress check is sent home to parents to report on children's progress. Spelling lists are given as a regular home learning activity as appropriate. In addition, parents also have the opportunity twice a year to meet formally with the staff to discuss progress and view children's learning.

Parents receive an annual written report at the end of the school year. This includes details of their children's progress and areas for development. Where appropriate, the national test results are reported.

Further details on our assessment and reporting procedures can be found in our marking policy which is available on our website.

Monitoring and Evaluation

In order to monitor attainment and progress the following systems are in place:

- Each teacher meets with the Headteacher six times a year to discuss progress in reading and writing. Particular attention is paid to children working below age related expectations, children with SEN, children eligible for Pupil Premium and pupils who are able, gifted or talented.
- The Headteacher monitors English through a range of activities which includes: analysis of tracking data for reading and writing, lesson observations, scrutiny of books, review of planning and pupil conferencing.
- Staff meet at least three times a year to scrutinise and level writing across the school
- SEN children are assessed regularly by the class teacher and the SENDCO. Steps are taken to provide additional support where appropriate.
- The school's English action plan is part of the whole school improvement action plan and is updated annually by the English Subject Leader and Headteacher.
- A school portfolio of age-related expectation outcomes is being developed: this enables accuracy of judgements to be monitored and standardised.

Impact

We measure the impact of our English curriculum through a range of mechanisms mentioned above. We have formal quantitative outcomes through Head start assessments which enable us to carefully track children's progress across the year. This is triangulated with a range of qualitative outcomes such as observations of our children as learners and social beings, responses from daily activities and writing outcomes, regular reviews of books, regular consideration of child voice through termly conferencing and anecdotal evidence from stakeholders.

Based on such information gathering we know that:

- *Our children enjoy their English learning*
- *Our children are on track to be successful in National Curriculum Assessments*
- *Our children make good progress in developing skills, attitudes and dispositions that equip them for life*
- *Our children are able to write successfully for a range of purposes.*
- *Our children enjoy reading and engage with a range of texts.*
- *Children read accurately and AR scores show an average reading accuracy of over 80%*
- *The read write inc programme facilitates accelerated progress and children move through the programme quickly.*
- *Our children are developing a growing understanding of various components of the English language, key skills in reading and writing and how to implement these for a range of purposes.*
- *Our children know how to be independent learners, and yet seek help when necessary*

Review

Policy written by Marc Wheeler (Headteacher) November 2020

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the English Subject Leader.