

Short English Policy

Intent

Developing key skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening are absolutely key to children achieving in all areas of the curriculum. At Yardley, we aim for children to be read with a high level of fluency and understanding and to be able to communicate effectively both orally and using the written form. The key to this is that all pupils take the next step in their learning when they are ready to do so. This leads to very differentiated lessons where pupils are encountering concepts at their appropriate challenge level for the individual.

At Yardley, our curriculum and progression documents are in line with the National Curriculum statements to enable all children to:

- 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 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 the area of speaking and listening our aims are -

- to enable children to express their ideas logically, coherently and appropriately
- to gain pleasure by talking and listening
- to improve the quality and accuracy of listening
- to encourage the idea that talk is worthwhile, using talk/discussion as a tool for learning
- to help children work with others in a group
- to develop co-operation and self-confidence
- to develop the ability to speak in a variety of situations
- to respond to language diversity in the classroom and to encourage language awareness
- to listen with patience, attention and understanding to other speakers
- to have respect for the languages, accents and dialogues of others and to be able to detect the richness it adds to the language

In the area of reading our aims are to enable pupils

- to read fluently and with understanding a range of different kinds of material including those which reflect our multi-cultural society
- to have confidence in their capacities as readers
- to understand intonation, expression for the variety of grammar in reading, to make them fluent readers out loud and in their own heads
- to find pleasure in and be voluntary users of reading for a variety of purposes
- to see that reading is necessary for their personal lives, for their learning throughout the curriculum and for the requirements of living and working in society

In the area of writing our aims are

- to give children opportunities to write coherently in many varied forms for a range of purposes including computing
- to show children that writing is different from speaking and requires different treatment
- to use spelling, punctuation and syntax accurately and with confidence
- to achieve a working knowledge of its structure and of the variety of ways in which meaning is made
- to foster an enjoyment of writing in all its creative forms
- to enable children to have a clear, fluent style of handwriting in which the letters are joined
- to enable children to write legibly and quickly when required

Implementation - Structure of the curriculum

We predominantly follow the Wordsmith program, adapted to reflect the high abilities of the children. This provides overall coverage of the curriculum. For writing we use the techniques from 'The Write Stuff' method, however this is also adapted to suit the genre of writing (particularly non-fiction) and the other writing activities that are generated from Wordsmith.

Lessons are generally planned in a two-week block, with equal coverage of reading and writing. English planning comes from both the ActiveLearnPrimary website (Wordsmith), where there is a breakdown of lesson objectives and ideas, as well as objectives obtained from the curriculum, or from data analysis of tests. Wordsmith group activities are not often challenging enough to extend the children. They may be good for introductions- but you need to use your professional judgement (which will be checked) to plan challenging activities for the children. The Write Stuff lessons, come from either the Write Stuff units, or adapted using the skills taught in the Write Stuff to whatever writing topic is being done. The grammar and punctuation elements of the curriculum come from Wordsmith and all parts need to be covered. If higher extensions are needed, other resources should be used. Some units of work are generated from looking at extended texts and these include both reading and writing activities.

The teaching of phonics, 15 minutes per day in FS and KS1 and as required in KS2, is also done outside the 'English lesson'.

3-part lesson

Whole class text/speaking & listening work on specific objectives

Differentiated group teaching on specific writing/reading/speaking & listening objectives and independent work based on the 1st part of the lesson

Plenary [review/demonstration of key objectives, what's next]

Reading:

In the FS and KS1 pupils read with an adult each day

In the FS and KS1 pupils read with their class teacher once a fortnight

In KS2 teachers listen to children at least once a fortnight and with SEN children more often

Accelerated Reader 'Star Reading' tests to be carried out once a term.

Accelerated Reader quizzes taken after every book read

Miscue analysis carried out once a term in KS1

Phonics assessments once a term in KS1

Reading and writing units

In class the AfL learning cycle needs to be completed, starting with making the purpose relevant. Open and closed questions to be asked by both teacher and students. During a reading lesson the teacher will be looking at effective examples of the style or type of writing focusing on the structure, grammar, technical vocabulary and punctuation as the success criteria. This is displayed clearly in class or in books. Wordsmith texts are to be used and relevant reading objectives actively taught, using a variety of sources. Discreet reading skills such as inference, retrieval, comparison etc. are to be taught. Children then use this to further analyse styles or texts or to do SRA (which is done twice weekly by each group for 20 minutes). Drama as well as speaking and listening to be incorporated into the lesson to develop appropriate language and explore creative ideas within the unit. Groups are differentiated and the teacher is to work with one group per lesson. In the plenary the teacher closes the learning loop by clearing up any misconceptions or issues that arose during the lesson, success criteria re-established and peer or self assessment is done.

In a writing lesson, the learning cycle starts with using the success criteria to share write, group write or model write in sections, the genre or style of writing. Using the Write Stuff model, writing will be modelled in chunks, teaching sentence structure and using powerful appropriate vocabulary; children to then emulate this with their own ideas. An 'experience' activity is to be built in, in order to immerse the children in the genre. Grammar, punctuation, effect and purpose are demonstrated. The 'FANTASTICS' and 'BOOMTASTICS' are to be explicitly taught and then used in the writing chunks. Open and closed questions to be asked by both teacher and students. Groups to be differentiated and the teacher works with one group. Drama, speech and language is to be developed appropriately. The children are given adequate time to plan their own independent write, using the skills taught in the previous writing sessions. Where appropriate, the Write Stuff writing graph should be used in planning, to include plot, techniques and vocabulary. In the plenary the teacher closes the learning loop by clearing up any misconceptions or issues that arose during the lesson, re-establishing success criteria and peer or self assessment. Children given the opportunity to edit and improve work following teacher, self or peer assessment. Where appropriate the Write Stuff model of editing is to be used, allowing the children time to edit for: sense, structure, grammar, vocabulary improvement or adding in detail.

In a unit the following is core and MUST be covered:

- Core Wordsmith text to be read each week (both reading and writing comes from these)
- Guided reading of core Wordsmith book or other appropriate text with teacher to teach READING skills
- Core comprehension book (Collins comprehension) X1 (Each session lasting 40 mins or longer)
- Other comprehension X1 (Session lasting 40 mins or longer)
- SRA (20 mins each) X2 on separate days
- Grammar using the Wordsmith units
- Spelling using the spelling scheme
- An independent writing task using skills taught in the lessons, but is the pupils own ideas and plan

Other activities may include the following and should be done where/when necessary each half term:

- Reading for understanding

- Cloze procedure
- Reading of other examples of writing genre to teach writing skills
- Grammar exercises for improving writing standards
- Phonics activities
- Spelling rules following the Yardley spelling scheme
- Chunk writing using the Write Stuff model of writing
- Speaking and Listening and drama where needed
- A period of silent reading to themselves- in the juniors only

Marking

- AfL comment marking to improve learning must be done – positively for encouragement
- Targets for future learning must be given
- Pupils must be aware of their levels and targets
- Assessment of writing to be done termly
- Edited and improved work should be evident in the books

General

- Writing walls outside classrooms must be up-to-date and display work of an excellent standard for the child and exemplify good writing. This needs to be changed after every writing unit is completed (average 2-3 weeks).
- Spellings are taken from the Yardley spelling scheme and the spelling rule is taught. In KS1 8-10 words are given and KS2 10-20 words given to learn at home. A bonus 2-5 words using the same rule but not on the word list are given and a reward (sticker- KS1 or merit – KS2) given if they can apply the learned spelling rule.
- Spelling tests are done weekly – poor effort can result in pupils attending work club to practice.
- Handwriting is practiced daily in KS1 and at least weekly in KS2 and as often as is required for pupils to achieve a good level of cursive writing. Teachers are encouraged to use the groups spelling for handwriting practice occasionally, as this also aids the learning of spelling patterns.
- When a child's handwriting is neat, appropriately joined, correct size and letter formation is accurate, the teacher must reward this by giving a child a Berol pen. This encourages and motivates neatness and accuracy. Once the child is writing using the Berol pen accurately, the child can see the head teacher in order to be assessed to get a proper ink handwriting pen.
- The re-writing of work is expected of any pupil that falls below their own standard of work – e.g. punctuation, handwriting or fit for purpose in any form of writing.