



Robertswood School English Policy

School Aims and Implementation

Robertswood School aims to enable all children the opportunity to achieve their best academically, emotionally and socially through:

- Providing high quality learning to enable children to acquire the skills, knowledge and concepts relevant to their future;
- Promoting an ethos of care, mutual respect and support, where effort is valued and success celebrated;
- Enabling children to become active, responsible and caring members of the school and wider community.

The school works towards these aims by:

- Promoting high quality learning and exceptional attainment;
- Providing high quality curriculum entitlement and a high quality learning environment;
- Promoting the Robertswood Star Values to enable the children to value themselves and each other;
- Promoting an effective partnership with parents and the wider community.

A. English Policy Introduction

- English is the most important life-skill that we can teach the children at Robertswood School and is often the 'keystone' for other areas of learning.
- English develops children's ability to communicate in spoken and written form. Through developing their knowledge, skills and understanding in English, children learn to appreciate that communication in all forms contributes to their wider understanding of the world in which they live.
- The English curriculum provides breadth and balance, is relevant and engaging and is differentiated to match needs and abilities.

B. Aims

General

To ensure all staff, children, parents/carers and Governors are aware of the aims for learning and teaching English at Robertswood and that these are currently applied.

School Staff

- To promote a confident, positive attitude towards the learning and use of English, making it an enjoyable experience.
- To promote confidence and competence in the skills of speaking and listening; reading and writing.
- To promote the ability to communicate effectively in a variety of forms.
- To promote the skills of communication through speaking and listening in a range of contexts.
- To promote the range of skills required in reading in order for children to read for meaning, understanding and enjoyment.
- To provide opportunities for the development of skills in writing across the whole curriculum.

Children

- To develop an enjoyment of learning through practical activity, exploration and discussion.
- To develop confidence and competence in the skills of speaking and listening, reading and writing.
- To develop the ability to communicate effectively in a variety of forms.
- To develop the skills of communication through speaking and listening in a range of contexts.
- To develop the range of skills required in reading in order for children to read for meaning, understanding and enjoyment.
- To develop a range of skills in writing across the whole curriculum.

Parents and Carers

- To be understanding and supportive of our aims in learning and teaching English.
- To attend and contribute to Teacher Consultation Meetings.

- To support their children with English homework activities (please refer to Homework Policy).
- To praise their children for the good things that they do in English.
- To communicate and work with the school whenever further support is needed to develop their children's English skills and understanding.

Governors

1. The designated link governor will:

- meet with the curriculum Subject Leaders at least once a year to find out about;
 - a) the school's systems for planning work, supporting staff and monitoring progress;
 - b) the allocation, use and adequacy of resources;
 - c) how the standards of achievement are changing over time.
 - Visit School and talk to pupils about their experiences of the curriculum area.
 - Promote and support the positive involvement of parents in the curriculum area.
 - Attend training and other events relating to the particular curriculum area.
 - Report jointly with the Subject Leaders
 - a) for the School Prospectus;
 - b) to the governing body with recommendations, if appropriate, once a year.
2. To be understanding and supportive of our aims in learning and teaching English and review the English Policy regularly.

C. Implementation of the English Policy

1. EYFS organisation

- Children follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. The children have the opportunity to talk and communicate in an increasing range of situations and to practise and extend their range of vocabulary and English skills.
- English is planned and assessed using the criteria from the Early Learning Goals.
- English is taught both as a discrete subject and within the whole Early Years Curriculum to give children opportunities to use their English skills in real life situations.
- In addition to the English teaching there are also daily systematic synthetic phonics sessions using the Local Authority recommended 'Letters and Sounds' framework, which has been developed using the recommendations of the Rose Report.

2. The New English National Curriculum

- KS1 and KS2 school staff use the objectives from the New English National Curriculum to support their planning for English.
- Teachers use quality texts and a cross-curricular approach to plan for writing.
- Objectives for the short term planning are taken from the global map within the year group road map.
- The short term plan lists specific learning objectives that are to be covered and the steps to success to support both children and adults in assessing their work.
- Teaching and learning is differentiated to best match the needs of the class or set and the individuals within it; within the context of the aspect of English that is being taught.
- If the learning needs of specific children are best met following an alternative structure then this will be discussed by the class teacher with the SLT and senior members of staff.

3. KS1 organisation - General

- Children use English skills daily throughout the whole curriculum.
- In addition to the English teaching, children in KS1 have daily Guided Reading Sessions as well as daily Phonics sessions which both teach and reinforce reading skills.
- Children in KS1 each have reading and writing targets identified on checklists, which are also shared with parents. These identify a focus area for learning in English for that child and are used to personalise and support all children in making progress. They are also used as one of the interventions to support children identified with Special Educational Needs in making progress.

4. KS2 organisation - General

- Children use English skills throughout whole curriculum.
- In addition to the English teaching, children in KS2 have daily Guided Reading Sessions which both teach and reinforce reading skills.
- In Years 5-6 children are normally set for English into ability groups when regular writing lessons are identified and planned.
- Children in KS2 each have reading and writing targets identified on checklists, which are also shared with parents. These identify a focus area for learning in English for that child and are used to personalise and support all children in making progress. They are also used as one of the interventions to support children identified with Special Educational Needs in making progress.

5. Listening

- The development of good Speaking and Listening skills is seen as key to developing good general English skills. As such children are explicitly taught how to be good speakers and good listeners as a discrete aspect of English and also across the full English Curriculum, the full academic curriculum and the wider curriculum.
- There are many and varied opportunities for the direct teaching of Speaking and Listening skills, both explicitly in English related sessions and across the full curriculum. These include:
 - a) focusing children's responses using speaking frames;
 - b) ensuring that each adult and other children provide good role models;
 - c) teaching the children the difference between standard and non-standard forms of spoken English and when each of these can be appropriately used;
 - d) ensuring opportunities and 'scaffolding' for discussion, individually, in pairs and in groups;
 - e) teaching children about how to be a good listener and insisting that children employ these skills at appropriate points during any teaching session and in their interactions with children and adults across the School.

6. Reading

- Reading is a vital life skill. We hope that by teaching the children at Robertswood School to read at age appropriate levels they will be able:
 1. to enjoy books and other written media,
 2. to access information and
 3. to follow written instructions in all curriculum areas and the environment around them.
- There are many and varied opportunities for the teaching of Reading skills, both explicitly in English related sessions and across the full curriculum. These include:
 1. the teaching of Phonics (using the systematic, synthetic phonics framework 'Letters and Sounds');
 2. basic sight vocabulary;
 3. the teaching of Reading in KS1 and KS2 (daily in either class or set groups);
 4. Shared Reading and Guided Reading within other curriculum areas;
 5. reading to the children modelling appropriate Reading skills;
 6. every class being read to by their teacher regularly; either a single story or longer text, which would be read over a period of time;
 7. teaching the children age appropriate skills to be able to read for both comprehension and inference;
 8. using opportunities in all subject areas to teach and apply Reading skills;
 9. hearing children read regularly, either within discrete Reading sessions or across the wider curriculum.
- 10. Children take home a book daily, which they are encouraged to share with their parent/carers; either being read to or reading to the adult concerned. This practice begins in Foundation Stage and continues throughout KS1 and KS2. The teacher monitors this practice through use of the School's Reading Records and uses the information to help inform them out what skills children need to

develop in order to progress through the levels and when to do so. Rewards and incentives, such as Respect Tokens and Certificates, are used to motivate and encourage children to develop a regular reading habit and a love of reading.

11. The school has a variety of reading scheme books that are classified using 'Book Banding' guidelines. Children move progressively through the levels within the guidelines until they become 'free readers'.
12. Guided reading operates daily in KS1 and KS2. The children are either reading or working on a focussed task with an adult, reading independently or taking part in a wide variety of reading activities such as practising their phonics, playing word games or completing activities based on a book they are reading.

7. Writing

- Writing is a vital life skill. It is often the way judgements are made about an individual e.g. their academic achievements, a job application and when they communicate by letter. Even though there are ever increasing mediums for written communication e.g. text, email etc., it is still necessary for children to be able to communicate using a good standard of written English. We hope that by teaching the children at Robertswood School to write at, at least age appropriate levels they will have the skills to be able:
 1. to understand the importance and purpose of formal and informal written language;
 2. to communicate in standard written form;
 3. to express themselves creatively and encourage reflection about the content of their work; and
 4. to organise their thoughts and ideas logically that are appropriate for their intended audience.
- There are many and varied opportunities for the teaching of Writing skills across the Robertswood curriculum. These include:
 1. the teaching of spelling in line with the New English National Curriculum including the learning of weekly spellings (Years 1-6); understanding how to and being able to use a dictionary; the highlighting and use of subject specific language; and use of children's individual spelling journals;
 2. the teaching of grammar in line with the New English National Curriculum, if appropriate in discrete sessions additional to daily English lessons;
 3. the teaching of punctuation in line with the New English National Curriculum ensuring that the use of appropriate punctuation is insisted upon across the whole curriculum when a written response is required from the children;
 4. using school strategies such as SPACH and VCOP, linked to the national expectations standards, in all writing sessions across the full curriculum in order to help children to be successful and to target and assess improvements in written work by both teachers and children;
 5. the daily modelling of handwriting and regular teaching of/reference to it in English related sessions and across the full curriculum (using the cursive script). Children who are consistently using the cursive script appropriately may use a handwriting pen;
 6. each teacher finding an appropriate stimulus for writing which will engage, motivate and ensure that the children have experiences of writing different genres;
 7. Shared Writing and Guided Writing within English sessions and other curriculum areas as appropriate;
 8. providing a weekly opportunity for the children to write at length independently. Teachers mark this writing thoroughly, feeding back to children about what they did well and how they need to improve. This feedback includes a specific 'Improvement' task which children carry out during planned for 'Respond to marking' time. Every other week, teachers assess these pieces of extended writing using the Robertswood Writing Checklists, designed to incorporate the new National Standards and writing expectations from the Buckinghamshire Learning Ladders. These checklists are used to help inform teacher's judgements when levelling and moderating work.
 9. Children's writing targets are indicated on the writing checklists and used as a self-assessment tool by the child at the end of, and during, each writing session. Children who achieve their personal target within a piece of extended writing are rewarded with a Respect Token;

- 10. the use of Writing Frames, at appropriate times, within all writing sessions across the curriculum;
- 11. teaching the children the difference between standard and non-standard forms of written English and when each of these can be appropriately used;
- 12. regular whole school 'Big Writes' are held in order to provide enjoyable writing opportunities which engage, enthuse and motivate children to produce good quality writing and take part in a whole school shared experience. These pieces of writing are then used by staff in regular writing moderation sessions to ensure consistency in leveling.

8. Planning Formats

- The School uses the New English National Curriculum for long term planning to support staff in planning, delivering and assessing the learning and teaching of English. Teaching staff use these medium term plans to develop their own short term planning using the Robertswood weekly planning format. These plans should include specific Learning Objectives as well as the 'Steps to Success' designed to help the children achieve the desired outcome.

9. Resources

- English resources are used by children and staff in many ways including;
 - a) demonstration or modelling skills through using a range of differing genre;
 - b) enabling children to write through using a range of visual and real life situations;
 - c) providing a context for the application and skills in reading through a range of texts.
- Whole School Resources include;
 - a) an extensive range of books, both fiction and non-fiction, available to use for shared reading to support the teaching of English and other curriculum areas;
 - b) Group reading books which are located in all shared areas;
 - c) Book Banded books, a small selection of which are located in every classroom for children to change their books and take home daily, and further boxes of books in shared areas to ensure variety, refreshing class boxes regularly;
 - d) Whole class sets of reading texts for use in KS2 which are located in the Top Shared Area.
- Classroom Resources include;
 - a) Class sets of dictionaries and thesauruses at age and ability appropriate levels;
 - b) Visualisers in each classroom;
 - c) Wide range of age related non-fiction and fiction books located in each classroom.

10. Homework (please refer to the School's Homework Policy)

- Homework is set for children in Years 1-6 each week.
- Homework provides opportunities for children to;
 - a) practise and consolidate their skills and knowledge;
 - b) develop and extend their techniques and strategies;
 - c) prepare for their future learning through out of class activities and homework.
- In addition to specific English homework tasks, children are expected to carry out ability-related activities to support English such daily reading with parent/carers, learning phonics, learning tricky words and spellings.

11. Parents/Carers

- The School aims to involve parents/carers in their children's learning as much as possible and to inform them regularly of their child's progress in English.
- Parents/carers have the opportunity to meet with child's class/set teachers at least twice a year at Parent Teacher Consultation Meetings. They also receive a written end of year report at the end of the Summer term.
- Information about their child's standards, achievements and targets in English are shared with parents/carers at these times as well as ways that parents/carers may be able to assist with their child's learning.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to support their children with homework and to attend Parent Teacher Consultation Meetings.

- Parent/carers are encouraged to read with their child daily; either sharing a book with the child or hearing the child read, and to record this within their child's Reading Record. This is a further opportunity for communication between home and school.

12. Subject Leaders

- The role of the English Subject Leaders is to provide professional leadership and management for a subject in order to secure high quality teaching, effective use of resources and high standards of learning and achievement for all pupils. English is divided into three areas with separate leaders: Reading, Writing/Spelling and Phonics.
- They will achieve this by affecting the following key areas:
 - a) Strategic direction and development.
 - b) Learning and teaching.
 - c) Leading and managing staff.
 - d) Efficient and effective deployment of staff and resources.
- The role of the Subject Leader is detailed further in the Subject Leader Job Profile.
- The Subject Leader has regular discussions with the Head teacher and other senior leaders about learning and teaching in English and provides an annual summary report about their work as Subject Leader and an evaluation of the strengths and areas for development for the subject.
- During the academic year the Subject Leader is allocated curriculum time for subject related activities.
- Regularly monitor various aspects of the English curriculum being taught within the school, including planning, lesson observations, assessment, marking and pupil interviews.

D. The English Lesson: Good Practice

1. The Learning and Teaching Policy

- The Learning and Teaching Policy identifies the aims, principles and strategies for promoting effective learning and teaching at Robertswood School. These apply to learning and teaching in English as well as every other curriculum subject area.

2. English Lesson

- Within each English session there will be the following elements:
 - a) a clear Learning Goal with focused Steps to Success which is used by both the teacher and the children to assess the lesson's work;
 - b) an element of Speaking and Listening which is well modelled by the teacher; e.g. the use of speaking frames to encourage the children to respond appropriately in full sentences;
 - c) each class, from years 1-6 (with FS having appropriately adapted VCOP/SPACH displays), will have an appropriately placed VCOP/SPACH displays which are referred to in writing sessions across the whole curriculum;
 - d) teachers model reading and/or writing at a level which is appropriate to the needs of the children within their class or set;
 - e) children will be told by their teacher to refer to their 'Improvement tasks' and/or writing checklists which have personalised writing targets that may be separate from the lesson's objective;
 - f) links are explicitly made between the three major strands of English; Speaking and Listening; Reading and Writing;
 - g) a plenary or series of mini plenaries are used throughout the lesson to reinforce the Learning Objective, address misconceptions, refer back to the Steps to Success or to move the children's learning on further;

E. English across the Curriculum

- Children are taught a wide range of English skills that are necessary to access the whole curriculum. English is seen as the 'keystone' which enables children to access other areas of the curriculum and to function effectively as developing citizens.

- Opportunities are used for English experiences through a range of activities in other subjects to enable children to apply and use English in real life and academic contexts.
- Within other lessons across the curriculum it is also necessary to incorporate the good practice seen within English lessons as follows;
 - a) insisting on, and having high expectations of, children's handwriting;
 - b) identifying, highlighting and correcting the poor use of punctuation such as capital letters and full stops;
 - c) using speaking frames and modeling good speaking to encourage the children to respond appropriately in full sentences;
 - d) referring back to the VCOP and SPACH displays in order that the children are consistently writing at their appropriate level.

F. Assessment, Record Keeping and Reporting (please refer to the School's Assessment and Teaching and Learning Policies)

- Children's standards and achievements in English are assessed in line with the School's Assessment Policy. Assessment in English for years 1-6 includes:
 1. On-going Assessment for Learning (AfL) practices within class and group sessions, including the sharing of and reference being made to Learning Goals and Steps to Success and self and peer assessments of understanding, outcomes and progress.
 2. Marking of children's work; against the Learning Objective and for accuracy of answer (for all written work) and diagnostically (regularly in line with School expectations).
 3. A variety of assessment tools (eg Benchmarking, Peira, Salford, Schonell, Rising Stars) used to supplement Teacher's ongoing assessments. These help teachers decide on a 'judgement' for a child at regular intervals throughout the year, and these are recorded onto SIMS by class teachers. Children are classified as either Emerging, Developing or Secure in their year group's curriculum (or an earlier year group in the case of lower achieving children).
 4. Formal national assessments which refer to the National Standard expectations. The expectations are set according to the age of the children and classified as 'Working Towards' age-related expectations, 'Working At' age-related expectations or 'Working at Age related expectations showing greater depth.
- Children's standards and achievements in English in the Foundation Stage are assessed in line with the School's Foundation Stage Policy. Assessment in Foundation Stage includes both on-going assessment and marking of children's work as noted above but at an age appropriate level. The Foundation Stage Profile is used to assess children throughout and at the end of the academic year.
- Assessments are used diagnostically by teachers to evaluate learning and inform teaching and by teachers and senior leaders within the Accountability Process to evaluate individual and groups of children's standards and achievements and provision and to inform future provision and school development.
- All children in years 1-6 have individual assessment targets both in terms of National Expectations and within on-going AFL and diagnostic marking practices. Progress against these targets is reviewed regularly by the class teacher, Subject Leader and other senior Leaders. This information is used by each of these to affect provision and potentially school development.
- Assessment information for English; both standards and achievements, are shared with parents/carers at Teacher Consultation Meetings. English is reported on in detail during the school year at parent teacher consultation meetings; which includes information about the next steps for learning in the subject as well as in an end of year report which outlines each child's progress and effort within English.

G. Inclusion

- Inclusion is about every child having educational needs that are special and the School meeting these diverse needs in order to ensure the active participation and progress of all children in their learning.

- Successful inclusive provision at Robertswood is seen as the responsibility of the whole school community, permeating all aspects of school life and applicable to all our pupils. It is in this way that we will turn the rhetoric into reality.
- Inclusive practice in English should enable all children to achieve their best possible standard; whatever their ability, and irrespective of gender, ethnic, social or cultural background, home language or any other aspect that could affect their participation in, or progress in their learning.

Monitoring and Review

- The Head teacher and English Subject Leaders will monitor the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis. The Head teacher and English Subject Leaders will report to the governing body on the effectiveness of the policy annually and, if necessary, makes recommendations for further improvements.

Agreed by
Curriculum Committee: Date:

Signed by
Headteacher Date:

Next review – February 2019