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English Policy

Downview School: English Policy

Introduction

At Downview Primary School, we believe that literacy and communication are key life skills. Through our English curriculum, the children develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively through spoken language and creatively through written language. We aim to inspire children to enjoy and appreciate literature. Literacy is at the heart of all children's learning enabling them to communicate with others effectively for a variety of purposes and to examine their own and others' experiences, feelings and ideas.

Aims

To encourage children:

- to be effective, good listeners and competent communicators;
- to express opinions, articulate feelings and formulate responses to a range of texts fiction and non-fiction using appropriate technical vocabulary;
- to foster an interest in words and their meanings, and to develop a growing vocabulary in both spoken and written form;
- to enjoy and engage with and understand a range of text types and genres;
- to be able to write in a variety of styles and forms showing awareness of audience and purpose;
- to develop powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness in all areas of literacy;
- to use grammar and punctuation accurately
- to understand spelling patterns and rules
- to use phonic strategies to read and spell
- to produce effective, well-presented written work in fluent and legible handwriting.

Organisation of English within the Curriculum

Explicit Literacy objectives are taught and supported by the use of quality texts, within meaningful and creative contexts.

Teaching and Learning - Strategies for the teaching of Reading

Teachers promote and value reading as an enjoyable activity and a life skill. Teachers plan for a range of comprehension strategies that allow pupils to engage with text in a variety of ways to suit different learning styles. Children are encouraged to read a range of books, genres and texts. Children who need additional support are heard read more regularly by their Teachers and Teaching Assistants.

Phonics

From the EYFS onwards children are taught phonics through the "Song of Sounds" synthetic phonics programme. They are taught letter sounds and digraphs and are then taught to blend these to read real and "alien" words in stages appropriate to their development.

Guided Reading

In Guided Reading the teacher models the reading process to the whole class as an expert reader providing a high level of support. Teaching objectives are pre-planned and sessions are characterised by explicit teaching of specific reading strategies, oral response and collaboration. Quality texts support the theme or topic and allow the teacher to expose the children to rich language, grammar and to genres to support their writing. Children are encouraged to "magpie" phrases and language through shared writing modelled by the teacher. Longer, quality texts are

read to the class, which may be above their own reading ability to immerse the children in a rich and varied reading experience. In KS2, children have regular reading comprehension star assessments to assess individual progress.

Accelerated Reader

The school uses Accelerated Reader (AR) to develop reading comprehension skills and confidence in KS2. Some children will begin their journey on AR in Year 2. Children select texts which are banded according to challenge. The challenge increases as their confidence grows. Their ability is assessed after each book they read, when they complete a reading quiz. They are assessed each term to ensure that they are reading texts appropriate to their ability. Each classroom has a wide range of levelled texts for the children to choose from and ipads and laptops to 'quiz' on. Additional labelled fiction is available in the school library.

Home Reading

Parents are strongly encouraged to read with their child each day at home, and are encouraged to change their child's book once they have read this confidently at home. The children are rewarded for reading at home with a visit to choose a book from the book vending machine after reading 100 times at home. Reading Record Books are used throughout the school and parents are encouraged to record their child's progress and reading experiences in these books. They include a 100 square to work towards the vending machine reward.

Helping Your Child with Reading at Home has been produced and is available on our website. Teachers support parents with home reading in 'Meet the Teacher' meetings and termly 'Drop-Ins'. Parents are invited to a Phonics workshop and a Teaching Your Child to Read and Write workshop.

Reading Scheme-Big Cat Phonics

In KS1, the core reading scheme is Big Cat Phonics which are supplemented with an additional Book Box book changed weekly. The Big Cat books are progressive and linked into the Song of Sounds teaching sequence and are organised according to a Book Banding system. Parents and adults in school change a child's book once they have read this confidently.

Individual Reading Records, for every child, are maintained in school to monitor individual 1:1 reading with an adult during the school day and record next steps and targets. Children who require additional support when learning to read are heard read one to one with an adult more regularly.

Book Boxes

From Year 1, each class has a set of Book Boxes containing quality texts, levelled according to group ability. Teachers will select books to ensure the children are having access to appropriate authors and a variety of genres including: picture books, fiction, non-fiction and poetry. The children are expected to read the books in each box over the period of a half term. All books will be sent home to share as well as reading them daily at school. The importance of re-reading familiar texts is encouraged and children may return to favourite texts.

School Library

In addition to reading the books selected by their teacher the children visit the school library regularly, with some children choosing Accelerated Reader books from the library. In each KS2, classroom, books are labelled and organised within the Accelerated Reader bands. The children are encouraged to read and then complete a quiz to track their progress. The fiction books are

organised in the School Library according to the Accelerated Reader and are catalogued according to the content and level of challenge. Non-fiction books are organised using the Dewey System in line with County Libraries.

Reading in the School Environment

Each class also has age appropriate dictionaries, thesaurus and word banks and a rich collection of texts and books in class book corners. There are signs, labels, captions, displays and writing on notice boards around the classrooms, corridors and hall. Each classroom has a working wall for writing used to model shared grammar, writing and vocabulary as each Literacy Tree unit is taught.

Teaching & Learning - Strategies for the teaching of Writing

At Downview, we believe that cross-curricular and first-hand experiences enhance the teaching and learning of English. Visitors are regularly welcomed into the school such as authors, storytellers, librarians, Hayling Island Book Shop and drama groups such as the Rainbow Theatre Company. Visits to places that are linked to topics encourage empathy and inspire creative writing ideas. Topic days and drama activities also motivate children as speakers and writers.

Literacy Tree

At Downview we teach writing through the Literacy Tree. Each unit is taught through a quality text. Teachers have access to planning and all children are introduced to each text as a class. Punctuation, Grammar and Spelling are taught through the Literacy Tree in a spiral curriculum which revisits key learning objectives throughout the year.

Planning

The National Curriculum 2014 forms the basis of teaching and learning. At Downview, teachers assess and plan against progressive KPIs, based on the National Curriculum objectives. Year group objectives are delivered through and supported by the use of quality texts.

The whole school follows the Literacy Tree Writing Scheme. Teachers work towards independent learning and differentiate, when required, to ensure access for all the children. Children practise the skills they learn independently to build on their confidence. Teachers employ a range of multi-sensory teaching strategies to support and make learning memorable.

Speaking and Listening

At Downview we believe that children need to have the opportunity to 'talk it' before they 'write it'. Teachers and all adults in school model speaking clearly, using Standard English and all children are encouraged to participate in pairs, small groups and class discussions. Listening is also modelled, as is the appropriate use of non-verbal communication, respecting the views of others.

Learning takes place in a variety of situations and group settings. For example, these could include reading aloud as an individual, working collaboratively on an investigation, reporting findings as a newscaster, interviewing people as part of a research project, acting as a guide for a visitor to school or responding to a text in shared or guided reading.

Our children will build language experiences from: recounting events, participating in discussion and debate, retelling stories and poems, expressing opinions and justifying ideas, listening to stories read aloud, presenting ideas to different audiences, taking part in school performances, responding to different kinds of texts, listening to ideas and opinions of adults and peers, role-play and other drama activities across the curriculum.

The Writing Process

To ensure high standards of teaching and learning in Writing, we implement a curriculum that is progressive throughout the whole school. Throughout Downview, children learn to write to inform, entertain, persuade and discuss. Children learn to; plan, draft, revise, proofread, edit and publish in different pieces of writing. Lessons always include elements of grammar, punctuation and spelling. Children in Reception and KS1 have daily phonics lessons, taught through the Song of Sounds scheme. Writing is celebrated in assemblies, on our website, displayed around the school and shared with parents.

Teachers promote writing and look for ways to inspire and motivate pupils so that they see themselves as 'writers'. ICT is used where it enhances, extends and complements literacy teaching and learning.

Handwriting

Our aim is to encourage children to form letters correctly and write legibly, neatly, fluently and with increasing speed. At Downview, we follow the Nelson Handwriting Scheme. Teachers and Teaching Assistants use the Nelson Handwriting Scheme to model good handwriting at all times, e.g. when writing on the whiteboard and labels for displays and when marking books.

Handwriting is taught explicitly, in short frequent sessions and wherever possible, alongside phonics and spellings. It is modelled by the teacher and children practise by carefully copying and repeating. In Year 2 children are taught how to begin to join. By the end of Year 6 children are expected to maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed, and will begin to develop their own handwriting style.

We follow the guidelines and expectations of the National Curriculum for Handwriting 2014: Throughout the Foundation Stage, children are provided with a wide range of activities and opportunities to develop fine motor control and hand-eye coordination.

Spelling:

In Reception, Years 1 and 2 children have daily phonics lessons following the Song of Sounds scheme. Children use a multi sensory approach to recognise the phonemes and digraphs and read and sort words containing different phonemes.

Children are taught a range of approaches to learn to spell common exception words (CEW) and patterns in words. A multi-sensory approach to spelling is used to cater for a range of learning styles: visual, auditory and kinaesthetic. Games and investigations are also used to reinforce, explore and practise spellings. Dictation and handwriting sessions are sometimes used to embed spelling and phonics. Weekly spellings and words that children have learnt are displayed and referred to in classrooms. Teachers rigorously encourage children to proof read their writing for taught spelling patterns and CEW, referring to working walls and word banks in class. Weekly spellings are set throughout KS1 and KS2 to support home –school learning.

KS1 - Five spellings per week. Lower KS2 – Five to 10 spellings per week and Upper KS2 –10 spellings per week

Grammar and Punctuation:

Through reading quality texts the teaching of grammar (including grammatical terminology) and punctuation is embedded within Writing lessons using the Literacy Tree planning to ensure a rigorous approach. Through proof-reading the children are encouraged with their teachers, peers and when working independently, to gain an increased knowledge of the English language and to check their writing in line with this. CGP books are used to reinforce the teaching of Spelling and Grammar in Year 6.

English Subject Co-ordinators

The role of the English co-ordinators team is to:

- Support colleagues in teaching the subject content and developing their skills in planning, teaching, moderating and assessing writing and reading across the school.
- Renew, update and oversee the audit of resources needed to deliver the curriculum
- Monitor and evaluate the learning and teaching of writing and reading.
- Develop assessment and record keeping ensuring progression and continuity
- Keep abreast of developments in the teaching and learning of writing and reading

Assessment:

National Testing

Children in The Foundation Stage are continuously assessed on the objectives in the Early Learning Goals. This includes Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening.

Currently in Year 1 children are required to take part in a phonics test in the summer term. This is repeated in Year 2 if the children do not reach the expected standard.

In Year 6, the children take part in the SAT Reading, and GPS, Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling tests and are assessed against the Year 6 expectations. Reading and GPS tests are externally marked.

Assessment of reading:

Teachers keep individual records of children's achievements, progress and targets. Progress is measured against KPIs each term. Star Assessment tests and AR reading quizzes are used to assess attainment in KS2. In KS1 and EYFS teachers track children's progress in learning to read Phase1 -5 sounds. Additional support and intervention is planned when progress is slower or more rapid than expected.

Progress is tracked and monitored on Insight and this is used to identify groups and individuals who may need additional support in a termly progress review meeting with the DHT.

Assessment of writing:

The majority of feedback takes place verbally within lessons directly with pupils both individually and within groups. Work is marked and feedback given in books in accordance with our marking policy. Marking is progressive and encourages the children to edit the content and quality of their writing and proof-read their writing for spelling and punctuation.

Progress is tracked and monitored on Insight and this is used to identify groups and individuals who may need additional support in a termly progress review meeting with the DHT.

Writing is moderated by all members of the teaching staff in year group meetings and at termly moderation meetings with locality schools. We use Assessing Primary Writing/No More Marking, a national moderation exercise, once a year for every year group. The teaching staff across the whole school take part in this process and the data produced forms part of our Insight tracking.

SEN

All children receive quality first teaching on a daily basis and activities are differentiated. In addition, where identified pupils are considered to require targeted support, to enable them to work towards age appropriate objectives, focused interventions are put in place in order for all children to achieve. Teachers plan programmes, including Precision Teaching, and monitor progress of pupils on ILP's with the teaching assistants and SENCO.

Equal Opportunities

All pupils at Downview have equal access to the facilities available, regardless of gender or nationality. When working in groups the teacher ensures that children take turns and share the equipment fairly. Teachers also give pupils opportunities to work individually to complete tasks by themselves.

Professional Development

Training needs are identified as a result of whole school monitoring and evaluation, analysis of data and identified priorities. This forms the basis for any monitoring activities and will clearly identify when, who and what is to be monitored and how this will take place e.g. classroom observation, planning scrutiny, work sampling, model lessons, coaching etc. These will be reflected in the School Development Plan, which includes the Writing and Reading Action Plans.

The Reading and Writing Co-ordinators and Senior Leaders will arrange for relevant advice and information, such as feedback from courses and newsletters, to be disseminated and Reading or Writing Co-ordinators and UPS groups organise and lead school based training.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The effectiveness of this English policy is monitored by:

- Monitoring and evaluating of teaching and learning by Senior Leaders and Reading and Writing Co-ordinators
- Book scrutiny: Sampling of children's work
- Pupil interviews/ pupil voice
- Visits from the inspectorate or Local Authority advisory team, consultation with staff.

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