



Subject Philosophy: English



Rationale

Our English curriculum at Essendine Primary provides a rich learning experience with children's literature at the heart of it. High quality texts and multimedia clips for all children stimulate the pupils' interest and inspire them to find their authorial voice. Through a love of reading embedded within the school, we strive to help children to enjoy and appreciate literature and its rich opportunities. At our school, we believe that literacy and communication are key life skills and that it is our role, through the English curriculum, to help children develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively with the world at large, through spoken and written language. At Essendine Primary, there is no ceiling to achievement. All children benefit each day from a purposeful English lesson that builds on from the last, creating a motivated, and language rich environment.

Intent

As a school, we aim to promote high standards of language and literacy by empowering children with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through wide reading across the curriculum and at home. As a school, we aim to ensure all pupils:

- 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 style and voice for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences. Purposeful writing experiences encourage their strong authorial voices.
- Are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, participating in debates and performing for an audience.

We intend our English curriculum to develop the whole child by encouraging the attitudes for learning that are displayed through:

- A resilience and resourcefulness in learning, where all children are confident to make mistakes and try new approaches.



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- An active contribution in lessons, by posing questions, evaluating their findings and sharing resources, ideas and thoughts.
- Showing respect and consideration towards others and the learning environment.
- Working happily and productively on their own or with wider group of pupils.

Implementation

Our English curriculum supports and supplements the delivery of the national curriculum, by providing a topic-based subject for learning. At each key stage, a detailed programme of study sets out what should be taught.

The programme of study for reading at Key Stage One and Two consists of two aspects:

- Word reading
- Comprehension (both listening and reading)

The programme of study for writing at Key Stage One and Two also consist of two aspects:

- Transcription (spelling and handwriting.)
- Composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing.)

Spelling, grammar and vocabulary are embedded within our two week English units. Opportunities to encourage and foster rich vocabulary from our pupils are derived from high quality literature and the expertise and effective building blocks put in place by the class teachers.

Teaching English

The time allocated for teaching English is in line with national recommendations for Key Stage One and Two. All children enjoy a daily English lesson, lasting one hour. This English lesson is part of a broader unit, lasting approximately two weeks. As well as this, in Years 2 to 6 pupils will have four whole class reading lessons across a teaching week. Year 1 children begin the year with daily phonics and a focused guided reading session. By the spring term, Year 1 pupils are taught whole class using a quality picture book whole class, with a continued focus on guided reading after this session to embed their phonological



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awareness. Essendine's reading targets, aligned with the national reading objectives, ensure children are taught a balance of reading skills throughout a number of sessions. As a school, fiction and non-fiction reading takes place across the curriculum, to embed skills taught in English lessons, and to ensure that children can gain key knowledge in a topic lesson. Reading thus becomes the gateway to future knowledge at Essendine.

Teaching strategies in English

- Daily English lesson - Year 1 to Year 6, minimum of 1 hour. Children learn a genre of writing (for instance newspapers) with a preferable link to the topic that they are learning. Within the fortnightly units, there is an embedded grammar lesson and a series of writing sessions leading up to their finished, published piece.
- Continuous cursive handwriting taught in Key Stage One and embedded in Key Stage Two.
- Flexible interventions to support readers who are reading at below age-related expectations - deployment of key support staff to offer this.
- Reduced class sizes for KS1 and upper KS2 – Mixed ability.
- EYFS and KS1 daily phonics session using Letters and Sounds.
- KS2 weekly spelling tests taken from the National Curriculum appendices.
- Presentation opportunities build into all topics, including performances.
- Daily Whole Class Reading session of 30 minutes in KS1 and KS2.
- Pre-reading prior to Whole Class Reading session in KS2 for children who are performing below age related expectations.
- Banded home readers in KS1 and LKS2 for daily reading.
- 'Free reader' age appropriate home readers for KS2. The majority of the children are free readers in UKS2 where they self-select their chosen chapter book.
- Specific age appropriate Barrington Stoke books used for children in UKS2 whose reading age is below age related expectations.
- Storytime takes place 15 minutes per day at the end of the school day.
- Children have a free reading session for 30 minutes per week where they read a text of their choice. The Reading Den, our bespoke reading area, is used to facilitate this.
- Shared planning time for teachers.
- Quality marking for next steps in learning.
- All classes display an English learning wall with appropriate vocabulary.
- All classes equipped with high quality resources to scaffold and support pupils learning.
- Embedding English skills into other curriculum areas



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Subject content

Key Stage 1 -		
Subjects	Year 1/2 Aspect	Genres
Spoken Language	Adult modelled language Pose and respond to questions Talking about observations Express likes and dislikes Presenting and performing	Stories Instructions Recounts (fact and fiction) Information texts Non-chronological reports Poetry
Reading	Daily session of synthetic phonics – Letters and Sounds High frequency words Read from a banded scheme Class story Key texts for study Comprehension skills taught in Whole Class Reading	
Writing	Letter formation Pencil grip Link between spoken word and written word Technical vocabulary Grammar and punctuation	

Key Stage 2 -		
Subjects	Year 3/ 4 Aspect	Genres
Spoken Language	Adult modelled language Pose and respond to questions Talking about observations Debates Presenting and performing	Stories Playscripts Letters Recounts Reports (magazines and newspapers) Instructions Information texts Explanation texts Persuasive texts Poetry
Reading	Whole Class Reading taught 30 mins per day 'Free reader' Home Readers. Some learners read from a banded scheme Class story Key texts for study	



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Writing	Cursive style – pen license in Year 3 Link between spoken word and written word Note taking Technical vocabulary Grammar and punctuation Manipulating texts Emphasis on creativity through text exposure and effective teacher modelling	
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Key Stage 2 -		
Subjects	Year 5/6 Aspect	Genres
Spoken Language	Adult modelled language Pose and respond to questions Giving explanations about observations Presenting and performing Developing vocabulary	Stories Playscripts Letters Recounts Reports (magazines and newspapers)
Reading	Whole Class Reading 'Free reader' home readers. Some learners read from a banded scheme in Y5/6 Taught comprehension Class story Key texts for study Point, Evidence and Explanation technique taught	Instructions Information texts Explanation texts Persuasive texts Poetry Film narrative Plays Biographies Persuasive writing
Writing	Cursive style – pen license Link between spoken word and written word Technical vocabulary Grammar and punctuation Manipulating texts – complex structures Note taking and precise Emphasis on creativity through text exposure and effective teacher modelling	Argument writing Journalistic writing Poetry



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Early Reading

At Essendine, we teach the DfES Letters and Sounds phonics programme, which teaches children to read with synthetic Phonics. Daily Phonics sessions are taught from Nursery to Year 1. During this time, they learn the sounds that the letters make and how these sounds are blended together to read. At the end of Year 1, they undertake the DFE Phonics Screening Check. In Year 2, the children continue to have daily phonics lessons where the shift from learning to read to reading to learn takes place. They then begin to read for information and for pleasure.

Grammar and Punctuation

At Essendine Primary School, we recognise the importance of the explicit teaching of grammar for all children as it allows more conscious control and choice in spoken and written language. We believe that building this knowledge is best achieved through a focus on grammar being embedded relevantly within the teaching of an English genre. Children are explicitly taught a grammar concept or skill which is in turn practised and embedded in context. It is also understood that key concepts introduced in earlier years will be further embedded and consolidated. Children are taught, guided and given feedback, resulting in a published piece of work that they are proud of.

Handwriting and Presentation

We practise and teach the cursive script throughout school. Pupils are taught and encouraged to form lower and upper case letters correctly from their first days at school and, as they develop, to write in a joined style. Throughout all year groups, pupils are taught to use a comfortable and correct pen or pencil grip. Pupils are also given opportunities to present their work on word processors. Excellent presentation of all written pieces is expected across the curriculum.

Assessment and expectation

We are committed to the belief that the nature of open ended tasks allows pupils to be driven by their own curiosity, deepens their understanding and enables all children to fulfil their potential leading to greater performance.

At Essendine, there is no ceiling to achievement. We believe that all children have the entitlement to be taught to their absolute potential. Our expectation is that all pupils will at



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least meet age related expectations as prescribed in the new national curriculum and many will be challenged to achieve greater depth within the age expected standard.

Where pupils are not fulfilling their potential, strategies will be undertaken to raise performance including: differentiation in planning, use of key/target questioning, small group work and teacher intervention. These strategies encourage all pupils to achieve what they deserve and they allow pupils gain in confidence and share ideas with each other.

Assessment of English

A range of assessment evidence will be collected to support teachers' assessment judgements and to inform their next steps in planning. The evidence will include:

- Photographs
- Records
- Pupils' written work in English and reading books
- Day-to-day assessment in lessons through questioning, observation and marking of books.
- Pupils' voice and consultation
- Performance outcomes
- Statutory tests
- Assessments for spelling and reading ages

Monitoring

The Phase leader will liaise with the subject leader to ensure monitoring is being undertaken and recorded.

The Subject leader will:

- Monitor English writing and reading books termly
- Provide verbal or written feedback and support.
- Read with children across the school, termly. Reading logs and reading exercise books are monitored.
- Talk to children about their reading.
- Monitor that pupils' reading books are appropriate for their reading age.
- Provide training sessions to ensure subject knowledge is accurate.
- Attend CPD courses to widen their knowledge of best practice.
- Monitor the budget and order resources where required.



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A link governor will liaise with the English subject leader to support improvement planning processes and be aware of standards.

Partnerships

Beanstalk Reading

Essendine Primary has a long-standing relationship with the Beanstalk reading charity. This partnership has brought the school contact with a number of award-winning authors, such as Piers Torday, Abi Elphinstone (our 'Author in Residence' for three years) and Ross Montgomery.

Children's Book Project

Essendine has linked up with a children's book charity to create a 'Free Little Library' in the school playground. Parents and children are welcome to select a used book to read together at home. All we ask is that the books are returned so that there is a regular supply and thus a culture for reading.

Maida Vale Library

All children at Essendine Primary have a library card that can be used across the tri-borough (Westminster, Hammersmith and Kensington and Chelsea.) A library representative regularly visits EYFS and KS1 to bring books for them to loan. Every year, our school gets involved with the Summer Reading Challenge which promotes summer reading. All children have access to the library during the holiday time.

Parents

Essendine positively promotes and encourages parents to support the work of the school in developing a love of literature. This can be done by inviting parents into book events, parental workshops and home school learning. An outline of the English curriculum to be studied in a term is also detailed in the Parent's Information meeting.

Patron of Reading

Essendine Primary values the importance of reading and exposing children to high quality literature. As well as regular author visits, Essendine has a partnership with the Patron of Reading. For the academic year 2018/19, popular children's author Ross Montgomery



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visited Essendine and delivered workshops to our children. Going forward, Ross Montgomery will continue to link with our school for one-off events.

Travelling Book Fair

Essendine Primary hosts two book fairs at our school for children and parents to buy the latest recommended reading books. An incentive of the scheme is that the school receives commission based on the amount raised by the book sales. Essendine uses the money raised to purchase new books for the school library.

Wider community links

Essendine has access to a range of providers linked to the topic that will enrich provision, for example theatre and drama workshops, storytelling and themed days.