

English Policy

September 2021

Signed:

Chair of Governors

**Rigby Hall English Policy**

**Aims and Values**

At Rigby Hall School we believe that the development of language and literacy skills is a high priority. Language is the main tool of learning and communication. It is present in all aspects of school life and the world beyond, therefore, we aim to place Literacy at the heart of the curriculum. We aim to enable all children to become literate; to be able to read and write with confidence, using words, symbols and signing. Children should be able to express themselves clearly using a suitable method of communication and know how to listen to others. Children at Rigby Hall School will use their English skills to communicate and work effectively with others to develop as independent learners. We hope that through their literacy skills, they will be able to become active participants in society beyond the school community. This policy aims to clarify the teaching and learning of English at Rigby Hall School, and to provide guidance for teaching staff, parents and governors on agreed practice within the school.

Our aim in the teaching of English is that all children will:

* develop the necessary skills to use the English language confidently
* be able to speak clearly, fluently and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners
* be able to listen to the spoken word attentively with understanding, pleasure and empathy in order to identify the main points they have heard
* be able to read a range of texts fluently and with understanding for enjoyment and for information through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text level knowledge
* be able to write effectively for a range of audiences and purposes using spelling, punctuation and syntax accurately and confidently
* be able to reflect and evaluate on their own and others’ contributions and the language used
* be able to increase children’s ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work.

**Equal opportunities**

We understand that the children have different backgrounds in terms of knowledge, experience, ability and capability. We therefore aim to ensure that English throughout the school is accessible by all pupils regardless of ability, gender, race or belief.

The teaching and learning is to be made relevant to the pupils’ own experience and abilities regardless of barriers to learning.

Children who have been identified as being more able or gifted and talented will have their work differentiated to provide suitable challenge.

**Roles and responsibilities in teaching English**

**Subject leader** - It is the responsibility of the English subject leader to:

* Inspire and motivate colleagues to use the most up-to-date quality texts, teach exciting and innovative lessons
* write and update the curriculum policy for English
* produce and monitor the long-term curriculum map to ensure coverage of the scheme of work for English
* monitor and review medium-term plans for English to ensure progression;
* aid colleagues with the planning and delivery of lessons when required;
* plan and deliver professional development for teachers;
* work as part of a development team to improve key areas of English;
* monitor and review standards of English teaching through e.g. lesson observations, samples of work, book scrutiny;
* audit English resources to ensure that they are deployed appropriately and order resources to enable the delivery of the English curriculum.

**Class teachers** - All class teachers will plan, teach and assess English daily following the National Curriculum, Solar (our assessment package), book band assessments for reading and Bug Club Phonics for Phonics. Teachers will ensure that regular opportunities for assessment are built into the short term/medium term planning.

**Planning for English**

English underpins the whole curriculum as children are both using and reinforcing their skills of speaking and listening, reading and writing in every area of the curriculum. Our sequenced lessons linked to thematic learning allow us to consolidate previous learning in new ways and teach new skills to expand children’s knowledge. The English curriculum at Rigby Hall School has been designed to be broad to enable all teachers to meet the needs of our diverse students.

* The long term plan for English identifies the main genres and some key texts that each year group will focus on each half term throughout the year. This is planned by the English co-ordinator. The long-term plan is then shared with staff for discussion or necessary adaptations.
* Medium term planning for English identifies specific areas of focus. Medium term planning is planned by class teachers. Class teachers identify key texts in partnership with the English co-ordinator to meet the needs and interests of their students. As our children are so diverse, individualised planning is necessary, therefore teachers are responsible for choosing specific objectives for their children.
* Short term planning will identify how the work is to be differentiated to meet the needs of the individual children in each class, setting suitable learning challenges and providing adequate support. Guided reading, phonics and spelling are taught outside of the English lesson.

Key Stage 1 predominantly follows the EYFS curriculum, which then links to the New National Curriculum. Students at Key Stage 2 and 3 are taught following the National Curriculum at the children’s ability level. Teachers will choose texts appropriate to need, ability and interest, whilst also ensuring coverage of the curriculum. Appropriate, personalised interventions are planned and delivered within these classes.

Pupils in KS4 who are following the green pathway (moderate learning needs) and some pupils on the purple pathway (severe learning needs), study towards an appropriate accredited qualification (WJEC Entry Level English). Pupils on the purple and orange pathway (children with more complex needs) develop their English learning through the AQA Unit Award Scheme.  Post 16 pupils on the green pathway continue their English skills through OCNWMR Skills for Living and Work units. Post 16 pupils on purple and orange pathways work towards the ASDAN Towards Independence.

Phonics is focussed on throughout the school. EY, KS1 and KS2 are taught systematically using the government approved Bug Phonics Programme. KS3 are taught targeted phonics. KS4 and KS5 use phonic strategies and support to support children to achieve their accredited qualifications (please see phonics policy).

**Marking and Feedback** - All work is to be marked, using the agreed marking code for the school (see Marking Policy). Teachers are to use next step marking during a teaching sequence so that the children know what they have achieved successfully and be clear about their next steps to improve their work. Children are encouraged to check their own work and/or others work if able, with a clear focus on the success criteria for the session.

**Target setting** - Teachers are responsible for setting group or individual targets for the children in their class for reading, writing, speaking and listening. The children and the teaching assistants that work with them are involved in the target setting process. These targets are visible in children’s books and are reviewed termly at pupil progress meetings.

**Monitoring and assessment procedures** -Teacher assessments in reading and writing are informed using Solar assessment criteria and are moderated each term. The standards of attainment in reading and writing are discussed with the Head teacher and Assistant Head in a progress review meeting each term.

Children who have not been making satisfactory progress are identified and strategies for implementing support for those children are agreed.

The attainment of all children across the school in English is analysed annually in the Summer term by the English leader, in conjunction with the teaching staff. The analysis informs curriculum target setting and the school improvement plan. The main findings are reported to the Head teacher, verbally and in written form. The English leader will also monitor the subject through classroom observations, scrutinies of work and planning.

Reporting progress in English to parents is reported informally through parent consultation evenings and other contact with parents / guardians. A formal written report is presented to parents annually, detailing progress made, indicating areas needing support and giving targets for improvement.

Speaking and Listening/Drama Speaking and Listening forms a key element of the teaching sequence for writing and is incorporated throughout the teaching phases. Talk for writing/ Pie Corbett strategies are used frequently. Drama techniques from the Primary Framework are often used such as ‘hot seating’, ‘role play’ and ‘conscience alley’. These are recorded on the short term planning format, and reviewed alongside the planning by the Literacy Leader.

At Rigby Hall School children are actively encouraged to:

• Make the most of ‘talk for writing’ sessions where they have the opportunity to talk through their ideas before they write, discussing vocabulary choices and impact of language;

• Listen and respond with constructive comments, questions or answers in a variety of speaking and listening activities across the curriculum, developing wide ranging and suitable vocabulary;

• Join in group discussions and interactions, taking different roles in groups, making a range of contributions and working collaboratively;

• Join in drama activities, improving and working in role, scripting and performing, and responding to performances;

• Listen to and follow instructions and to relay messages accurately;

• Develop social skills and good manners, showing courtesy to each other and visitors;

• Talk partners to encourage development of ideas.

**Reading**- Reading is not restricted to the English lesson. Many opportunities are provided for children to practice and extend their reading in other subjects. Reading for pleasure and enjoyment is given a high priority.

**Aims and objectives**

• Children will become independent readers if able to do so. Children to be able to understand and evaluate a variety of reading material

• Most children will be able to read for a variety of purposes and in a variety of forms

• Most children will understand the importance of reading as a means of communication

• Most children will see reading as a purposeful activity

• Most children will find the process of learning to read pleasurable and satisfying.

**Shared Reading**- Shared reading takes place within the English lesson and within other lessons across the curriculum; 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 high levels of collaboration. The children join in, where appropriate with the reading of the text. The texts selected are quality texts, linked to topics and the curriculum, that reflect the teaching objectives.

**Teaching strategies**

• Teachers make reading real by putting reading into meaningful contexts

• Teachers model reading and demonstrate how reading is done

• Whole class teaching, reading groups and individual teaching is practiced, the teacher intervenes sensitively and appropriately with specific teaching points to advance the development in every child

• Each child is heard reading by the class teacher at least once a week

• In all Key Stages reading targets are in place for all children

• We encourage risk taking in reading and support and praise all attempts which display growing knowledge and understanding of reading

• Opportunities for children to read alone and to share books are provided

• We positively encourage reading at home. All children and parents have access to the school library where they are able to borrow reading books at a level they are reading at school. Parents and children are encouraged to make a comment in the child’s home/school reading record book. Online reading support is also available.

The school has a library where children can choose books to take home. Sets of books for guided reading sessions are kept in central areas. These books are graded in difficulty and their colour coding correlates to the book bands and NC levels for reading.

**Writing** - children have personalised writing targets to achieve. Teachers establish the purposes and audiences for writing, promoting the idea of writing for a purpose, and make teaching objectives explicit to children so they know why they are studying a particular text or text type, the kind of writing activities they need to undertake and the intended outcomes.

**Aims and objectives**

* Most children become independent writers
* Most children will be able to write for a variety of purposes and in a variety of genres
* Most children will understand the importance of writing as a means of communication
* Most children see writing as a purposeful activity
* Most children will use spelling, punctuation and syntax accurately and with confidence
* Most children will be given the opportunity to compose, transcribe and refine writing
* Most children will write with confidence and derive pleasure from their ability to do so.

**Shared writing** - Shared writing takes place within the English lesson and within other lessons across the curriculum; the teacher models the writing process to the whole class as an expert writer, articulating the process. Teaching objectives are pre-planned and sessions focus on the explicit teaching of specific writing strategies, oral response and high levels of collaboration. The children join in individually or through partner work, with the writing.

**Guided writing-** Guided writing takes place as part of a guided session. Guided writing takes place with a group of children with similar writing targets/needs. During a guided writing session, the children will write with a teacher or teaching assistant supporting them. It is intended that guided writing provides a forum for children to demonstrate what they have learned about writing and to further develop and extend their writing skills. The teacher or teaching assistant works with carefully selected groups of children according to their current targets or specific needs and plans the content of the session accordingly. They must observe and respond to the needs of individuals within the group to give immediate feedback on success and to discuss further areas for improvement.

**Teaching strategies**

• Teacher plan writing opportunities linked to their topic work and following the National Curriculum

• Quality texts are the starting point for writing and teachers relate written work to texts read and discussed in class

• Teachers make writing real by putting it into meaningful contexts throughout the curriculum

• Children’s early attempts at writing are encouraged, valued and built upon

• Teachers encourage children to write independently from EYFS

• Teachers encourage organised and accurate writing at all times

• Teachers provide children with opportunities for ‘talk for writing’

• Teachers build drama opportunities into their planning for writing

• Teachers plan and teach a wide range of non-fiction, fiction and poetry genres in line with National Curriculum.

**Phonics and spelling**

**Aims and objectives**

• To develop high standards in spelling skills throughout the school

• To develop all children’s sense of responsibility towards the learning/ acquisition of these spelling skills

• To encourage all children to have a positive and confident attitude to spelling

• To teach all children that writing is for a purpose and that correct spelling makes it accessible to all

• All children develop independent strategies for tackling and assessing their own spelling

• Most children learn to use dictionaries, word banks and spell checkers.

Phonics Spelling will be taught regularly, using both synthetic and analytical approaches. In Key Stage 1-Key Stage 2 Bug Club Phonics (government approved programme) is the primary resource used alongside Speech and language strategies for children who cannot access phonics. An extra layer of sight reading activities is planned in all phonics groups to meet the learning needs of our children. Children are encouraged to be as interactive as possible during these sessions. Teachers plan interactive activities outdoors as well as indoors.

Children are assessed termly and regrouped as necessary; children are given weekly spellings based upon their phonic lessons to learn for the following week.

Teachers will encourage independent spelling and editing by children when they are producing written work. Teachers will identify misspelled words in written work. Age appropriate dictionaries, high frequency words and topic words are available.

**SPAG**- We aim to have a consistent approach to the teaching and marking of spelling and subject specific vocabulary. It is important that all teachers teach the vocabulary specific to their subject effectively. Students should be given strategies to learn subject-specific vocabulary and understand the meanings and usage of the main words for each subject. Initial focus should be on the spelling of subject specific key words and the correct use of capital letters, commas and full stops.

**Handwriting**- The teaching of handwriting skills is to be linked to the teaching focus for spelling and in line with the handwriting objectives. Teachers are to demonstrate how to form letters correctly. Most children are expected to develop a handwriting style that is legible.

**Use of ICT in English-** Information Communication Technology will be used in English sessions, wherever possible. The Interactive Whiteboard in each classroom enables teachers to use multi-modal texts and resources from the Internet. ICT helps children learn in English by providing stimuli for their work, allowing time for creativity and thinking. Children are taught to:

* use ICT to develop their ideas and to record their creative work
* communicate with the wider community using e-mail
* develop their research skills and decide what information is appropriate for their work
* begin to question the plausibility and quality of information
* learn how to amend and present their work in different ways.

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