



English Policy

Updated: November 2021

Review: April 2022

“Literacy is the single most significant skill needed to function effectively in school, in the workplace, and in society...it is vital to a successful education, career and quality of life”

Anon

Intent

At Toner Avenue Primary School we recognise the importance of studying English. We want the children at our school to be confident, successful readers, speakers and writers. We want the children to leave us with solid literacy skills which will positively impact the rest of their lives.

We aim to develop pupils’ skills in spoken language, reading and writing. The children will be given opportunities to consolidate and reinforce their English skills across the curriculum.

We intend for the pupils to be able to:

- Be exposed to a range of high quality texts which develop within children an interest in books, reading for pleasure or for information
- Read with confidence, fluency and understanding
- Have an interest in words and their meanings – increasing and developing their vocabulary
- Have the skills to write clearly and coherently, adapting their writing style for a range of genres, purposes and audiences.
- Use their speaking and listening skills to elaborate and clearly explain their ideas

Implementation

From Nursery to Year 6, the children are taught English in their classes. Through differentiation and the support from the class teacher and teaching assistants, all children will receive good teaching and support to ensure that they reach their full potential. Years 1 to 6 have recently started using The Literacy Tree scheme which links closely to the National Curriculum objectives. Teachers tailor this planning to the needs of their classes using ongoing assessment and summative half termly writing assessments.

Children with ‘Action Plans’ and ‘Intervention Plans’ may receive more support tailored to their individual needs.

The Marking and Feedback policy is followed; ‘live’ marking is used where possible to ensure the children receive timely feedback to make improvements and additions to their work within the lesson.

We provide opportunities for children to read and write throughout the whole curriculum, opportunities for extended writing are explicitly linked throughout our curriculum overviews.

Reading

As a school, wherever possible, we teach our English through a quality text in Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. We have recently introduced a Reading Spine, to ensure that our children are exposed to a breadth of texts throughout the year; including; diverse and representative, topic linked, archaic language, non-linear time sequences, narratively complex, complexity of story and resistant texts. The staff choose from a selection of books to ensure the children will also enjoy the texts.

Discrete daily phonics lessons are taught in Early Year, KS1 and Y3. As a school we are investing in ‘Sounds-Write’ training to ensure consistency within phonics. Parents are invited into school in Reception and Year 1 for family learning sessions for phonics and parents of EYFS and KS1 are invited to meetings to support them with phonics, so they know how to help their children. Children who do not pass the phonics screening check in Year 1, receive targeted intervention based on their individual needs in Year 2. We have an increasing selection of decodable texts linked to our phonics scheme, which we supplement with decodable extracts where necessary.

Reception and Year One teach reading through whole class reading until Autumn 2, where they have small group guided reading sessions, based on ability to develop the children’s early reading skills.

Year 2 to Year 6 teach guided reading through whole class sessions 3-4 times weekly. This ensures children of all abilities have access to a high quality text. Through our whole class reading sessions, new vocabulary is taught and reinforced and comprehension skills are developed.

To promote reading for pleasure, each class has a 15 minute story read aloud to them by the class teacher.

Each child is expected to be read with at least once per week. Those who need extra support with reading should be read to daily.

Throughout the years, we have tried a variety of rewards for reading at home including; reading karate. In September 2020 'Reading Rewards' were introduced; the children are given a set number of reads to complete at home across the half term and will receive a reward for doing so. For example; wheelie good day, Christmas movie and hot chocolate and even medals home delivered during lockdown.

All year groups from nursery to year 6 will be expected to read/share a story at home. For the children reading 'chapter books' a read will be at least 10 pages.

At our school we have a fantastic library area, in which the children visit at least once per week. We invested in a reading scheme with a combination of fiction and non-fiction books in each book band; the children change their books at least once per week to read at home. The children can also take a library book back to their class. In Reception and nursery, the parents come into school to choose a library book with their child to encourage early reading at home.

We also invested in decodable books, closely matched to our phonics scheme. The children are given a book to read linked to their phonics level, to take home to practise.

We have pupil librarians from KS2, they completed job applications and went through a rigorous interview process to be given the role. They ensure the library is kept tidy, support children with suggestions for books they may like, they also create ideas for reading displays and opportunities to promote reading in school.

To promote reading for pleasure at school; we have organised events such as the 'Big Book Swap' where children brought in their old books and swapped them for books brought in by their peers. We have also had a '#shelfie' competition, where both staff and children had to send in a 'selfie' of them reading a book. We have had a 'Booky Breakfast' where parents and children came to school for breakfast and staff shared their favourite stories. We had a popular book character potato competition too. Some children also choose to read outside on cushions during playtimes and lunchtimes.

Writing and Grammar

At Toner Avenue School, we teach writing from a quality text, using the Literacy Tree scheme. Objectives for reading, writing and grammar are covered and have purpose when writing both shorter and longer pieces. Children are given real reasons to write including explanation, persuasion, informing, instructing and entertaining allowing opportunities to vary tone and level of formality is appropriate.

We are continuing to develop our teaching of writing across the school, to promote writing for a purpose and an audience through our curriculum. For example, some of our children's work was sent through Twitter, to the author of the text we were studying, the children were delighted when the author replied. Some children also created a 'Guide to Minecraft' which they created a video and narrated for, it was then uploaded to YouTube and our School Website. In another year group, children wrote a letter to the Prime Minister regarding plastic pollution in the oceans. Our themed curriculum provides more opportunities for writing for a purpose outside of the English lessons.

Speaking and listening is incorporated within our teaching of writing. It is important for the children to learn how to say their sentences before writing. It is also important for children to be able to read their work out loud for different purposes, to either present to an audience or to read it aloud critically to be able to edit and improve it.

We use shared writing and guided writing at Toner Avenue to develop the children's writing skills. When sharing writing, the teacher models writing and explains their thought processes clearly to teach children to 'think like a writer'. The children contribute where appropriate. In guided writing, the children become the writer and the teacher supports. This is to ensure the children have the opportunity to write with the class teacher helping them to develop and extend their writing skills based on their needs.

We will also ensure that the teaching of grammar, as far as possible, should feed into the writing or reading activity the children are undertaking.

Spelling

All staff follow the expectations of spellings, set out in the National Curriculum Framework 2014.

In Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Y3, spelling is taught and monitored through discrete phonics sessions. In the early stages of writing, the children are encouraged to make phonetically plausible attempts at spellings. The younger children are explicitly taught how to spell words with spelling patterns they've not covered yet (e.g. you) and the Year 1 and 2 common exception words. The Sounds-Write training has ensured consistency when addressing errors in spelling through error correction techniques. It is expected that they will apply these within their writing.

Starting September 2021 in Key Stage 2, new spelling sound correspondences and patterns are introduced and taught in daily discrete Sounds Write spelling lessons and consolidated in the main English lessons, where possible.

Handwriting

At Toner Avenue, we expect high standards of handwriting across all subjects.

Handwriting is taught in short bursts, in daily discrete sessions, using the Penpals scheme. This is completed in the child's English book. Handwriting is modelled regularly by the teachers within their lessons. Short daily practise is expected in English books.

EYFS support the early development of handwriting by allowing children to practise their manipulative skills and teach children how to hold a pencil correctly. This is to ensure that children develop fine motor skills for writing. This continues into KS1 where necessary.

Staff are expected to model high standards of handwriting, through their marking and guided writing to ensure the children have a model to aspire to. Staff must always correct incorrect formation and encourage children to redo the letter correctly.

Statutory Requirements

This policy adheres to the National Curriculum in England: Framework Document (2014) for English. It also adheres to the Communication, Language and Literacy section of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2014).

Assessment

Reading

In the EYFS, pupils' achievements are ongoing and are assessed against the Early Learning Goals.

Assessment for Learning is well established in all teaching and formative assessment occurs daily through oral feedback.

Summative Assessment Requirements: Year 1, 3, 4 & 5, children are assessed using the National Curriculum objectives.

Year 1 children also complete the phonics screening test in June each year. Children who do not meet the standard in Year 1, resit this in Year 2.

Years 2 and 6 children encounter questions in the style of the statutory tests to prepare them for formal assessments.

Writing

In the EYFS, pupils' achievements are ongoing and assessed against the Early Learning Goals.

All teaching staff use AfL techniques in each lesson and formative assessment occurs daily.

Summative Assessment Requirements: Year 1, 3, 4 & 5 children are assessed against the objectives from the National Curriculum 2014. This evidence is from their daily work in class to obtain an accurate assessment of children's individual writing skills.

Children in Years 2 and 6 are assessed against the outcomes from the relevant Interim Teacher Assessment Frameworks.

Internal and external moderation of writing assessments take place regularly.

Monitoring

The Subject Leader should be responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through monitoring and evaluating:

She takes the lead in policy development designed to ensure progression and continuity of English throughout the school.

She provides support for colleagues in their development of planning and the implementation of the scheme of work.

The subject leader also gives support in assessment and record keeping activities.

The subject leader assists in the monitoring of progress and standards in English, takes responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central resources for English and keeps up to date with developments in English education and disseminates information to colleagues as appropriate.

In association with the Senior Leadership Team, the subject leader will analyse data and monitor teaching and learning. Using this information, the subject leader will identify priorities and set appropriate targets.

They should plan and deploy resources accordingly to meet these targets.

Parental Involvement

At Toner Avenue Primary School, we recognise and value the role of parents/carers in their child's education and value the importance of developing strong, home school links. We appreciate the impact that parental involvement can have on accelerating a child's development in all areas of English and actively encourage parents/carers to become involved with their child's education at Toner Avenue by supporting their child at home or in school. As well as regular reporting to parents/carers, we are seeking to develop opportunities to involve parents in the children's learning.

We also actively share events through our school website, Facebook and Twitter account.

Equal Opportunities

All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

Impact

The impact will be shown in; improvement in data across school, improvement in data for ELGs, phonics screening check, KS1 and KS2 assessments.

Prior to lockdown, results in statutory assessments in Y1, Y2 and Y6 had improved, Toner Avenue was broadly in line with national averages for both phonics, reading and writing.

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