



English Policy

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‘Reading is the gateway which makes all other learning possible’

Barack Obama

Rationale

We aim to provide a supportive, stimulating and secure environment where children are encouraged to express themselves and where their contributions are valued. We will provide for the language development of pupils and will develop their ability to use language to think, to explore and to recognise and communicate their ideas.

The National Curriculum (2014) clearly states that teaching the English language is an essential, if not the most essential role of a primary school.

At Newham Bridge we recognise that without effective communication, little achievement can be made. We know that we have a duty to ensure that English teaching is a priority and we recognise that this is necessary across all subjects and a constant through-out school life and beyond. It is part of the ‘essential knowledge’ (p6 National Curriculum) that is needed in society.

‘Teachers should develop pupil’s spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for pupils, understanding the language provides access to the whole curriculum. Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects.’ (p10 National Curriculum)

We are an inclusive school, we set high expectations and recognise the importance of accurate and regular assessment in order to support individuals at every part of their learning journey and in whatever circumstances. We use one to one support, small groups and cross-phase work to help with this. We plan teaching opportunities to help those for whom English is an additional language and those with disabilities outlined in the SEN code of practice. We agree with the statement of the National Curriculum, that ‘pupils...who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised’ (p13)

Principles

- literacy as a right for all pupils
- the responsibility of all teachers for the development of literacy
- the development of literacy skills across all areas of the curriculum

This policy needs to be read alongside other school policies including:

- Homework policy
- Curriculum and Planning policy

- Early Years Foundation Stage policy
- Gifted and talented policy
- Special Needs policy
- Assessment policy

This policy also should be read alongside the National Curriculum in England (published September 2014) and other documents from the Standards and Testing Agency.

Aims

- To raise the standard of literacy for all pupils.
- To enable pupils to express and communicate meaning in spoken language, listening to and interpreting what others say and matching style and response to audience, context and purpose.
- To provide pupils with a range of relevant and purposeful opportunities to develop their ability to read, understand and engage with various types of text for enjoyment and learning.
- To enable children to communicate using written language effectively, making and shaping text appropriately, according to context, purpose, reader or audience.

Role of the Teacher

- model: as a skilled user of language, the teacher's role is the central element in fostering positive attitudes towards literacy;
- facilitator: providing a supportive and stimulating environment, organising purposeful activities and enabling children to develop literacy skills;
- initiator: providing a variety of resources and opportunities for a wide range of balanced activities to encourage the development of skills in talking, listening, reading and writing;
- monitor: observing and recording the development of skills in literacy; • assessor: evaluating and assessing the development of skills in literacy.

Speaking and Listening

Rationale

Talking and listening are fundamental skills upon which the educational development of our children depend. Through the development of oral and aural skills, they learn about language and this equips them to demonstrate and refine their learning.

Our overall aim is for our children to become efficient language users. This will be achieved by devoting time, energy and resources to the development of oral communication. Through purposeful interaction with teachers, children will be provided with experiences that develop their skills and their thinking.

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be 'taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently in Standard English' (p10) They should:

- Justify ideas with reasons.
- Ask questions to check understanding.
- Develop vocabulary and build knowledge.
- Negotiate.
- Evaluate and build on the ideas of others.
- Select the appropriate register for effective communication.
- Give well-structured descriptions and explanations.
- Speculate, hypothesise and explore ideas. Organise their ideas prior to writing.

Classroom environment

We aim to provide a classroom environment in which children feel relaxed, accepted and affirmed.

Our aims are:

Rationale

- to plan for talk in all areas of the curriculum
- to use a variety of experiences and activities to promote a wide range of types of talk
- to vary classroom organisation and management eg use of pairs, small and large groups; composition of groups; varying roles in groups
- Modelling oral language
- use of resources and display eg 'talk board', interest tables, software, book displays, strong links with reading and writing.

Reading

Our aims are that our children will learn to read, will enjoy a wide variety of texts and will become independent, critical, life-long readers and learners.

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose and be encouraged to read for pleasure. Reading is singled out as of extreme importance since through it 'pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually' (p13) Reading allows pupils to 'acquire knowledge' and to 'build on what they already know' (p13).

Schools are expected to have library facilities and support and encourage reading at home.

The 2014 Curriculum divides reading skills into two dimensions:

Word reading/ decoding Comprehension

We recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods. We recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, writing, grammar and vocabulary. We also understand that reading is a developmental process and part of life-long learning and we encourage and praise children at every stage of it.

Classroom environment

We seek to provide classroom environments in which reading is given importance and prestige. We aim to create warm and inviting book areas with a range of genres and authors. We have a school library which is accessible to all children, including a wealth of books. We engage with external role models and facilitators such as the libraries, authors, poets and theatre companies to provide fresh and exciting opportunities for the children.

Teaching approaches and organisation of learning

- regular reading aloud to children in all classes
- paired reading with peers or an adult
- developing phonological awareness
- dedicated phonics teaching with skilled adults (RWInc scheme)
- language experience, combining writing and reading
- modelling of reading strategies *whole class guided reading in Y1-6
- weekly 'Book Club' from Y1 – Y6. Dedicated 30 minute session to share and discuss quality texts from a range of authors.
- uninterrupted, sustained, silent reading (USSR) *classes displayed high quality literature *group novel study in KS2

- intervention programmes such as 'Fresh Start' for identified pupils
- Accelerated Reader programme from Y2 – Y6.
- Reading plus used in Y6 to develop stamina and fluency.

In order to facilitate pupils' differing learning various styles, a variety of approaches is used.

Progression

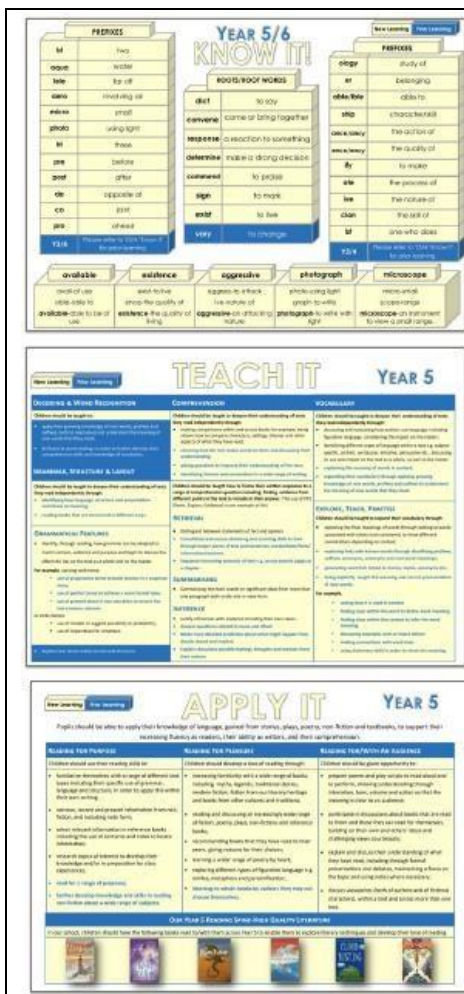
At Newham Bridge we use a variety of reading schemes which are levelled through the book banding system. We have a wide range of both fiction and non-fiction and use Read Write Inc phonics to support the teaching in EYFS and KS1. All KS2 classes have a class novel with individual copies for each child in most cases. Y2 – Y6 now follow the same structure to their reading lessons. Y1 will move to this model from Spring 2/Summer 1. Each class now has 2 reading lessons each week. Thursday is a 90 minute lesson in Key Stage 2 and a 60 minute lesson in Key Stage One. These lessons immerses the children in the text through drama, role play, practical activities. Children spend the time developing an understanding of the different texts. Fluency is also developed here using choral/echo reading. On Friday, we have a 60 minute lesson focused on developing skills such as inference and retrieval.

New Curriculum

In 2020 we launched our bespoke Reading Curriculum which fulfils all NC requirements and builds upon and embeds learning through school; ensuring a consistent and progressive approach.

The reading curriculum consists of 3 sections:

- Know it - the essential knowledge needed for that year group. Directly correlates to NC requirements.
- Teach it - what should be taught within this year. The blue sections refer to prior learning.
- Apply it - how children should apply their knowledge as readers



Know it!

Within KS1, the 'Know it' section links phonic knowledge, high frequency words and common exception words. In KS2 there is a growing emphasis upon knowledge of root words, prefixes and suffixes as the building blocks for vocabulary construction and understanding.

Teach it!

Having a good understanding of what has come before is essential before we can move on. Prior learning is outlined throughout the document in blue. All NC objectives are met and there are some suggested techniques and strategies outlined in the 'Explore, teach, practise' section.

Apply it!

This section looks at how pupils can use their knowledge and skills and apply it to their own reading in order to become fluent and confident readers. We have outlined some high quality literature which will support teachers in choosing texts which are age appropriate and engage pupils.

Writing

Rationale

Writing is an essential tool in the learning process. Children write to express their emotions, to convey their thoughts and opinions and to present evidence of research. By developing these skills we can equip our children to use writing across the range of curricular activities in which they are involved.

Our aim is that our children will develop the ability to write effectively in various forms according to purpose and audience.

The National Curriculum states that pupils should:

Develop the stamina and skills to write at length
 Use accurate spelling and punctuation
 Be grammatically correct
 Write in a range of ways and purposes including narratives, explanations, descriptions, comparisons, summaries and evaluations

Write to support their understanding and consolidation of what they have heard or read
 The 2014 Curriculum divides writing skills into two dimensions:

Transcription (spelling and handwriting)

Composition (articulating ideas in speech and writing)
 We recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various

methods. We recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, reading, grammar and vocabulary.

Classroom Environment

Children are encouraged to write for real purposes from Nursery and beyond. The Foundation Stage provides a stimulating environment where children are encouraged and inspired to write indoors and outdoors. All classrooms display word banks and phonic support in addition to having word banks and dictionaries. Displays celebrate writing achievements

Teaching approaches and organisation of learning

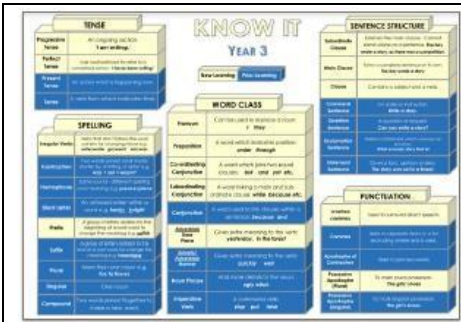
- all staff use a whole school approach to layout and structure with the use of our school 'prompt sheets' for each genre of writing.
- children write for themselves, their peers, the school, and the wider community at times. We believe in giving the children the opportunity to write for a real purpose.
- the purpose of the writing is made clear to children before they begin. Are they trying to amuse, persuade or frighten the reader? This is supported through the school's prompt sheets.
- teachers show children how to approach a writing task by writing themselves, explaining what they are doing as they go along (modelled writing) or by scribing the children's ideas onto large sheets (shared writing).
- writing sessions include time for discussion and planning - we make time for the children to reflect upon their work and edit at various points.
- children work both independently and collaboratively on their writing tasks and during the planning stage.

New Curriculum

In 2020 we launched our bespoke Writing Curriculum which fulfils all NC requirements and builds upon and embeds learning through school; ensuring a consistent and progressive approach. The reading and writing curriculum are separate but designed to work together. We know that learning is most effective when links and connections can be made.

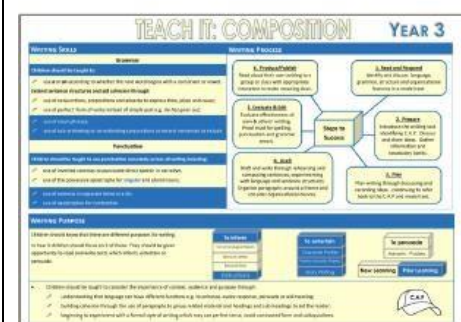
The writing curriculum consists of 3 sections:

- Know it - the essential knowledge needed for that year group. Directly correlates to NC requirements.
- Teach it - a section for transcription which focuses upon spelling and handwriting, and composition which looks at the construction of writing.
- Apply it - a progressive whole school approach to writing content.



Know it!

The 'Know it' section focuses upon the grammatical, phonetic and punctuation knowledge that each year group needs to know. The definitions have made simple and clear so that staff will refer to the terminology in the same way. This will ensure a consistent approach through school. The blue building blocks outline prior knowledge.



Teach it - Composition

Within the composition section, it outlines exactly what pupils should be taught and the writing process children should follow, whilst always linking back to CAP (context, audience and purpose).



Teach it - Transcription

The transcription section includes expectations for spelling. All NC requirements are included, rules are outlined and the common exception words are included. The handwriting section fulfils all NC requirements and provides a visual guide to support progression and consistency.

Parental involvement

Parents are encouraged to be active participants in their child's learning. We aim to provide an open-door policy whereby parents can seek advice or support from any member of staff. We endeavour to communicate well through newsletters, half termly reading roundups, topic leaflets, homework diaries, reading journals, reports, open days, parental workshops (where appropriate and following guidelines) and the website.

Homework

Homework is given through school to support work undertaken in class. Year 6 operate a homework club after school to offer additional support. Regularity and amount of homework differs throughout school and the age ranges with all staff endeavouring to give one piece of English homework plus spellings per week. Staff are utilising the Home Learning site to upload

homework and if and when needed, remote teaching. All children in KS2 have access to spelling shed both in school and at home. Children are encouraged to engage in the site throughout the week to support with their weekly spellings.

Equal opportunities

We are committed to an environment that promotes equal opportunities for all children, regardless of their race/colour/gender and religion and any work undertaken reflects this commitment. Please also see the school's Race Equality and Equal Opportunities policy.

We are aware of the research that suggests boys under-achieve in literacy. We will give equal access to materials, teacher time and attention. We aim to raise standards among all children equally.

Assessment

Children have individual writing and reading assessment grids which are accessible to all. Targets are generated and tracked with bold targets indicating EOY expectations. Moderation within and across schools is regularly timetabled. We have an Assessment leader who monitors and tracks data and shares findings with all staff. We also use termly assessments to support our TA judgements.

Monitoring and Evaluating

The whole school handwriting approach teaches cursive script through school (please see separate handwriting policy)

We have a clear marking and feedback policy detailing responses to children's work.

Newham Bridge has designed its own bespoke assessment system following the review and recommendations from the McIntosh report (please see separate assessment policy)

The English leaders will work closely with the Head and Assessment leader to track data, conduct book scrutinies, jointly observe lessons and provide relevant CPD for staff.

ICT

We promote the use of Computing in English lessons, not just as a teaching tool but as a hands-on approach from the pupils in order to research and extend knowledge to the wider curriculum.

Extra-Curricular Activities

The school has a membership to 'The National Literacy Trust' in which staff have access to current research and resources. Through this partnership, school also enjoy strong links with a number of authors.

Newham Bridge are a Lead School within the Middlesbrough English Hub.

Special Educational Needs

The SENCo will liaise with the class teachers to ensure that the individual needs of pupils with special needs are met and that appropriate targets are set and are regularly reviewed. Where resources permit, it will be the school's policy for Teaching Assistants to provide extra support for the SEN Literacy group. Any Individual Education Plans (IEPs) will be shared with parents and pupils. Please also refer to the SEN Policy.

Gifted and Talented children

The Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator will liaise with the English Leaders and class teachers to ensure individuals' needs are met and that appropriate targets are set and reviewed regularly. Teachers will be mindful of the extra needs of gifted and talented children and will differentiate questions and activities to allow for further progression and challenge. Please also refer to the school's Gifted and Talented Policy.

Health and Safety

The school is committed to ensuring that all pupils are safe within the school environment. Please refer to the school's policy for Health and Safety.