

English

At Cliftonville Primary School, English lies at the heart of all learning as across the curriculum, we provide engaging and enjoyable opportunities for learners to develop and practise their literacy skills to enable them to become skilled communicators.

Reading

Intent:

We believe that every child has the right to learn to read and our aim is for them to also develop a love of reading too. We strive for all children to develop the necessary skills of word reading and comprehension to enable them to discover new knowledge, understand what they learn and take enjoyment from the activity.

Implementation:

We follow a clear, sequential curriculum based on the National Curriculum which builds skills in reading progressively through the school. Children receive direct teaching in reading skills as well as a plethora of opportunities to develop and hone these. We create a “language rich” learning environment where reading and books have a high priority and status. We believe that no child should be left behind or become a disenchanted reader so targeted interventions – both group and individual – are deployed appropriately.

Reading lessons

All pupils have opportunities for differentiated shared reading and independent reading throughout the school day alongside working together in guided groups or as a whole class on detailed explorations of whole books and shorter texts. Teachers employ a range of resources to support focused group work including packs of phonetically decodable books, the Bug Club shared reading programme, PiXL resources and the Leicester inference training. Teachers follow a rota of whole class, group and independent reading in their guided reading lessons. To enable effective and focused teaching on specific skills in small groups by teachers, TAs share a high quality picture book with the main class in EYFS and KS1 and hear independent readers in KS2.

Early reading

In the early stages of reading, children’s phonic knowledge is systematically developed in a fun, multi-sensory approach through discrete daily phonics sessions that follow the “Letters and Sounds” approach. Phonics is taught daily as soon as children join EYFS and from Term 3, children are taught in sets allowing more personalised learning. Children continue to receive phonics teaching in Year 2 to further enhance their reading and supplement their spelling learning. Teachers regularly use detailed assessments to identify children’s phonic knowledge and areas of weakness in order to inform their planning and select children for interventions. Older children who need additional support with their phonic knowledge and understanding continue to receive daily phonics teaching using the “Letters and Sounds” framework supplemented by additional resources.

Reading schemes

In EYFS and KS1 children have access to wide range of books from a number of publishers and phonics schemes which are fully aligned to “Letters and Sounds” as we believe children become excellent, motivated readers through being exposed to a rich range of authors and illustrators. Children are allocated a phonetically decodable book at their current level of reading development which focuses on the group of sounds that they have just been taught in school and books are clearly banded by the phase and set of “Letters and Sounds” to ensure progress and challenge for all children. Books are changed twice a week so that there are opportunities for multiple readings at school and at home to aid the development of fluency. Children also have access to books online via Bug Club which are again matched to their phonics level and closely motioned by teachers.

In KS2, we employ the Accelerated Reader programme which ensures that each child is adequately supported and challenged at their appropriate level and allows them access to a wide range of genres and themes of books exposing them to various authors and writing styles reflecting our drive to broaden their horizons, experiences and aspirations. Children are encouraged and – where necessary – supported, to become independent in their book choices and use of the school library. The AR system enables staff to easily track and celebrate the children’s progress and success. Children who are still at the earlier stages of reading, continue with phonetically decodable books until they are able to access the AR system.

Core texts and school reading journey

Children are read aloud to daily for fifteen minutes. This not only allows them to encounter more demanding texts in a safe environment but also aids their vocabulary growth. A clear school reading journey is in place to ensure progression throughout each year group and the school overall whilst exposing children to key authors (both older and modern) and a range of topics plus avoiding repetition. In EYFS and KS1, teachers share a picture book daily with children and this is done weekly in KS2. Throughout the school, poems are read weekly to the children. Teachers also employ a range of other visual literacy forms to help develop the children’s inference and comprehension skills.

Reading for pleasure

We promote enjoyment through the creative use of high quality texts and a range of engaging activities. We also provide regular age appropriate book recommendations to children that encompass older, classic literature and key authors alongside introducing children to more recently published high quality children’s books. We believe it is important that children are encouraged to read poetry and non-fiction as well as fiction and that they are able to access a diverse range of characters and stories that provide “windows” to the lives and experiences of others and “mirrors” that reflect their own (Emily Style, 1988). As a result of this, we invest each year in a wide range of new fiction, non-fiction and poetry texts and promote these new additions to the school library. Teachers aim to be reading role models in the way that they discuss and promote books as well as modelling reading for pleasure. They make careful selections both in the texts that they choose to use in the teaching of English and in those that they read aloud to pupils. We promote our carefully chosen list of 50 books for each year group to children and families.

Vocabulary

Children are taught in a “language environment” where “word consciousness” is encouraged and promoted. All children receive daily explicit instruction of challenging vocabulary (with a focus on academic “Tier 2 words”) in exciting ways that actively involve pupils. Alongside this, pupils are taught strategies to independently deduce the meaning of

new words they encounter such as through considering context cues and exploring the morphology of words which allows for direct links to be made with spelling and grammar. Children also learn about the etymology of words and their relationships with other languages: this helps to promote curious learners, a respect for other cultures and consolidates long term learning.

Support

Close monitoring of children's progress and achievement allows staff to quickly identify children who are at risk of not meeting their individual targets or who are currently below the expected standard. These children are given additional support to meet their specific needs. Methods include:

- 1:1 reading
- Lexia (a computer-based approach to improving reading)
- IDL (a computer-based approach to increase reading ages and support learners with dyslexia)
- BRP (Boosting Reading Potential scheme)
- Individual or small group phonics interventions – either weekly or daily “mop-up”
- PiXL interventions.

Parental support

We promote the importance of reading with our parents and carers and share information about how we teach phonics and early reading. We explain to families the rationale for using phonetically decodable books in the younger years and provide support and resources on how to hear children read and share books together. We also make regular book recommendations. We create opportunities for parents to engage with reading in school such as reading with their child in EYFS and volunteers hearing individual readers or sharing books in class.

Impact:

We strive for every pupil to leave us with the necessary skills to access the reading and vocabulary demands of the secondary curriculum and for them to be successful communicators throughout their lives. We aim that our children will develop a love of reading and make at least good progress from their starting points in EYFS.

We monitor the impact of our teaching of reading regularly throughout the year through:

- Seasonal testing using PIRA followed by detailed gap analysis of children's strengths and development areas to inform teachers' planning and interventions
- Seasonal phonics screening in Reception and Year 1 as well as for older children who need continued support with early reading skills
- Termly AR STAR testing in KS2
- Daily oral and/or written feedback
- Year group and whole school reading moderations
- Detailed quality assurance by year group leaders and senior leaders three times a year incorporating book moderations, lesson observations and pupil conferencing
- Regular lesson drop-ins by the English lead
- Regular checks on the reading scheme by the English lead through hearing children read
- Termly pupil progress interviews and data reviews
- Governor monitoring visits
- Regular year group “Reading Champion” meetings

Writing

Intent:

We aim for all of our children to be able to write independently in a variety of genres and for a range of purposes with fluency, accuracy and enjoyment. We believe children should understand from an early age that their writing needs to be accurate, legible and set out in an appropriate way. It is our hope for them that they will learn to enjoy writing, see the value of it and for them to leave us as confident, accomplished writers who are able to express their thoughts and ideas coherently by adapting their language for a range of purposes and audiences. We believe our children should understand and be competent in all stages of the writing cycle (ideation, creation, reflection and publication). We strive for our children to have a secure grasp of correct spelling and punctuation and be able to use Standard English.

Implementation:

From early on in their learning journey, children explore a range of genres, see adults writing and experiment themselves through mark marking, symbols and conventional script. Though oral rehearsal, children learn to communicate meaning in narrative and non-fiction texts and spell and punctuate correctly.

As they move through the school, children develop an understanding that writing is essential to thinking and learning but also enjoyable in its own right. They learn the main rules and conventions of written English and start to explore how the English language can be used to express meaning in different ways. Powerful teaching techniques such as shared and guided writing mean children are exposed to high quality demonstration, exploration and discussion of the choices writers make. Children use the planning, drafting and editing process to improve their work and alongside effective feedback marking, are encouraged to become reflective, resilient learners.

Talk For Writing

We acknowledge the role that discussion and oral rehearsal plays in our understanding of the written word as well as the importance of teacher modelling of the writing process. Both of these aspects form an integral part of our teaching of writing through the "Talk for Writing" model which is implemented across the whole school. In this approach, children listen to and retell a variety of genres; learning some off by heart using actions. This helps them to internalise language patterns and learn new vocabulary giving them the confidence and tools to write themselves. Children first imitate, then innovate and finally invent their own version of a text.

Writing for purpose

We strongly believe in giving children first hand experiences to draw on information and emotions to enhance their learning and consequently make use of our local community regularly. Trips to local places of interest and visits from local figures are essential to provide an engaging starting point to enable the children to achieve high quality writing. We also feel that, wherever possible, children should write for a purpose and take pride in their learning; therefore we provide many opportunities for children to share their writing with the intended audience and to exhibit their work with the rest of our school community via prominent school displays.

Spelling, punctuation and grammar

We believe children require a secure understanding of spelling, punctuation and grammar to develop a true understanding of English and to be successful, so these concepts are taught discretely within English lessons in engaging ways. Through careful planning, teachers introduce new concepts in relation to the genre that the children are currently studying. These concepts are regularly revisited such as via SPAG mats in KS2 to ensure that they enter the children's long term memory.

Handwriting

We feel that children should be able to write with ease, speed and legibility so we follow a consistent approach across the school to the teaching of handwriting.

Writing across the curriculum

Children are given various opportunities to develop and practise their writing skills across the curriculum such as extended pieces of writing in topic and investigation write-ups in science.

Impact:

We aim that all our children are able to reach their full potential and make at least good progress from their starting points in EYFS. We strive to ensure that children are able to produce written work in all areas of the curriculum to a similar standard as in their English lessons and can write in a range of genres for a variety of purposes.

We monitor the impact of our teaching of writing regularly throughout the year through:

- Seasonal testing using GAPS to assess children's understanding of and attainment in spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Independent hot write at the end of each T4W unit which can be compared to their cold write before they received teaching input
- Analysis of writing tracking grids three times a year
- Daily oral and/or written feedback
- Year group, whole school and inter-school book moderations
- Detailed quality assurance by year group leaders and senior leaders three times a year incorporating book moderations, lesson observations and pupil conferencing
- Regular lesson drop-ins by the English lead
- Termly pupil progress interviews and data reviews
- Governor monitoring visits.

Speaking and listening

Intent:

Speaking and listening is central to our curriculum. We provide a wealth of opportunities from EYFS to Year 6 for children to nurture these skills. We want our children to be able to confidently discuss concepts and ideas and be able to explain their understanding and learning clearly. We provide opportunities for children to make formal presentations and take part in debates during their time with us.

Implementation:

Opportunities to develop and hone children's oracy skills are embedded not only in the English curriculum but across the wider curriculum at Cliftonville Primary School. Teachers

are resourceful in their planning of topics and look to include learning end points involving speaking and listening wherever possible such as through discussions, debates, performances and presentations. Drama is used effectively in all subjects to engage children in their learning. Children practise speaking for a variety of purposes and audiences, adapting their language appropriately as well as their intonation, tone, volume and actions, and are able to work individually or in small or larger groups with peers or older or younger children. Our staff model Standard English and expose children to appropriate Tier 3 vocabulary across the curriculum as well as directly teaching Tier 2 words. The coverage of Tier 2 words is mapped out across the school as well as subject specific words to avoid repetition and ensure progression. Children who require additional support with their speaking and listening or vocabulary are quickly identified and given appropriate extra support such as:

- Language Link
- Support from our specialist speech and language teaching assistant
- Pre-teaching of vocabulary.
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Impact:

We aim that our children leave us with the skills needed to communicate effectively. Improvements in children's speaking and listening increase children's confidence and vocabulary and contribute to progress and attainment in reading and writing. In each year group there is at least one oral outcome from their writing each year and children work together to assess this performance against a shared success criteria.