**Twiss Green Community Primary School**

**Policy for English**

**Overview**

English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others, and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.

**Aims**

The overarching aim for English at Twiss Green is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. We aim to ensure that 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 language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
* use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
* are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate

**TEACHING AND LEARNING**

The major focus for the teaching and learning of English at Twiss Green will be through a daily English lesson. This will be planned from the relevant curriculum. During the lesson, there will be a clear focus on English instruction and direct teaching. Teaching should be:

* discursive - characterised by high quality oral work;
* interactive - pupils' contributions are encouraged, expected, and extended;
* well-paced - there is a sense of urgency, driven by the need to make progress and succeed;
* confident - teachers have a clear understanding of the objectives;
* ambitious - there is optimism about and high expectations of success.

The objectives in the National Curriculum give teaching focus and direction, which should aim for high levels of motivation and active engagement for pupils. To achieve this, teachers will need to use a wide range of teaching strategies including:

1. direction;
2. demonstration*;*
3. modelling*;*
4. scaffolding*;*
5. explanation to clarify and discuss;
6. questioning: to probe pupils' understanding, to cause them to reflect on and refine their work, and to extend their ideas;
7. initiating and guiding exploration*;*
8. investigating ideas;
9. catering for different learning styles;
10. feedback;
11. opportunity for peer and self assessment.

**Spoken language**

At Twiss Green teachers will ensure the continual development of pupils’ confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills. Pupils should develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write. They must be assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others, and teachers should ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions. Pupils should also be taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate.

All pupils should be enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Pupils should be able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role. They should have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, including Sunshine Assemblies, Harvest and Christmas presentations as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.

Pupils should be taught to:

* listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers
* ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge
* use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary
* articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
* give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings
* maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments
* use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas
* speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English
* participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play/improvisations and debates
* gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s)
* consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others
* select and use appropriate registers for effective communication

Pupils should be taught to develop their competence in spoken language and listening to enhance the effectiveness of their communication across a range of contexts and to a range of audiences. They should therefore have opportunities to work in groups of different sizes – in pairs, small groups, large groups and as a whole class. Pupils should understand how to take turns and when and how to participate constructively in conversations and debates.

Teachers should also pay attention to increasing pupils’ vocabulary, ranging from describing their immediate world and feelings to developing a broader, deeper and richer vocabulary to discuss abstract concepts and a wider range of topics, and enhancing their knowledge about language as a whole. Pupils should receive constructive feedback on their spoken language and listening, not only to improve their knowledge and skills but also to establish secure foundations for effective spoken language.

**Reading**

At Twiss Green, reading is an integral part of almost every English lesson, and includes shared reading from the Pie Corbett reading spine, independent reading, guided group reading and modelled reading. A daily reading workshop will take place, where the teacher will focus on the pupils who need the most support. Initially the children’s guided reading will be based on a wide range of decodable books, with the aim of getting the children onto more varied texts which include ‘high frequency’ words. Teachers will ensure that pupils are accessing a wide range of genres. Daily phonics lessons will take place in Reception and Year One, with a continued rigorous programme of phonics from Y2-6 for any pupils requiring it. Throughout school, books will be sent home weekly (see homework) and the keeping of a journal will be a key part of developing the children’s reading throughout Key Stage Two. During all reading activities, a focus on developing both comprehension and vocabulary will be emphasized. All pupils must be encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world they live in, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum.

**Writing**

Each term pupils will focus on writing in a narrative, non-fiction and poetry genre. This writing will be crafted and take place over a series of sessions with feedback and editing an integral part of the writing process. Each of these pieces will include a self assessment sheet which outlines the objectives taught in each year group. This will provide a tool both for planning writing, peer and self assessment and teacher feedback. In addition to this, regular writing sessions will be carried out, where pupils work with greater independence to produce a piece of writing in a given time. Wherever possible, teachers will provide stimulating tasks, with real purpose and audience, often linked to themed work. This can include, in the planning stage: shared writing, planning grids, photos and pictures, role play, games to generate vocabulary and other aspects of the grammar curriculum, story bags and genre analysis.

**Spelling, grammar and punctuation**

Spelling will be taught according to the new curriculum year group programmes. Spelling will be planned half-termly with daily lessons in FS and Y1, 4 lessons per week at the start of Y2 and alternating 2/3 lessons per week from Y2 onwards. As well as a weekly or fortnightly list of words to learn, using look, say, cover, write and check, in the school handwriting style, homework extension activities will be used for some children.

Knowledge of the year group’s common exception list is vital for the children to begin writing successfully. It is our aim to cover Phases 1 to 4 in FS, with thorough knowledge of these words ready for the beginning of Y1.

A weekly lesson focusing on handwriting will take place from Y1 to Y4. This is ongoing in FS. This will not be part of the spelling sessions, but should include the same vocabulary the children are learning. It is of great importance that anything taught in handwriting, is reinforced in the children’s written work, with the acknowledgement that speedy, legible cursive script will be hugely advantageous to the children’s learning further up school. The handwriting style should also be consistently modelled by teachers. In Y5 and Y6 the emphasis on presentation moves away from a weekly lesson and is the continuous expectation in work written for an audience. Handwriting will be revisited when appropriate in these year groups. As with all aspects of English, self and peer evaluation together with regular feedback from teachers in essential.

Wherever possible, the teaching of grammar and punctuation will be linked to the writing being taught. The use of correct terminology will be emphasised and teachers will find engaging ways of teaching spelling, grammar and punctuation.

**STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS**

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum English Document (2013) and in the Communication, Language and Literacy section of the Statutory Framework for the Foundation Stage (2017).

**CLASSROOM ORGANISATION**

This is a key area to success in the teaching and learning of English. We should ensure that the needs of the full range of pupils are met. Where appropriate, and of benefit to the children, intervention programmes will supplement the teaching of English. Focus group work sessions also provide the teachers with the opportunity to personalize learning for the children twice weekly. The classroom environment will contain a ‘working wall’ where all the Year Group objectives for writing are displayed permanently and where on-going teaching and learning can be placed. Each year group has presentation guidelines displayed. A reading area will include well-organised reading materials to foster a love of reading. Each class has a chosen author and pupils will be encouraged to get to know the author by listening to stories and reading independently.

**IT&C**

Familiarity with a wide range of IT&C is essential in preparing the children for life, and life-long learning. Where ever appropriate IT&C should be used to support and engage all the children in learning. At Twiss Green we aim to give the children regular access to word processing, multi-media presentation programs, interactive games and texts, visual English, videos, sound recording, internet research and Learning Platform including blogs, wikis and forum (under the internet safety guidelines of the IT&C policy).

**PLANNING**

Clear and careful planning is important to the success of the teaching and learning of English. Lessons are planned with reference to the objectives contained within the National Curriculum and supporting material available in school.

Short term plans further develop the objectives from the Medium Term plans, providing a clear focus for teaching. Weekly or fortnightly short-term plans are recorded on the agreed English planning sheets. Teachers must have a clear understanding of the objectives and teach these in well-paced lessons, using a range of strategies to encompass all styles of learning.

**MARKING AND ASSESSMENT**

* Marking will be carried out regularly and in accordance with the school’s marking policy. It is aimed to return a child’s work within the shortest possible timeframe and marking alongside the pupils is encouraged.
* In the short term, teachers carry out continuous assessment of children’s progress by means of marking and by talking to children about their work.
* Where appropriate children will be involved in the evaluation on their own, and their peer’s work, under the supervision and guidance of the teacher.
* A written report on each child's achievements in English will be sent to parents as part of an overall report on the child's progress to date in the July of each academic year.

**HOMEWORK**

Homework is seen as an extension of class work, and is set in accordance with the school’s Homework Policy.

***Foundation Stage***

We aim to give two short pieces homework a week for Reception. This will typically be a reading activity to be shared with an adult.

***Key Stage 1***

Two slightly more extensive shared reading activities for Year 1 children.

At Year 2, typically, the children will be given a shared reading activity, plus spellings.

***Key Stage 2***

Homework is an extension of the routine begun at Key Stage 1:

***Key Stage Two:***

Spellings from the National Curriculum are normally set fortnightly, with extension and reinforcement activities alternating with the list. The updating of Reading Journals will also be given as regular homework.

**MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The monitoring and evaluation of the English policy is the responsibility of the English Subject Leader, who is responsible to the Headteacher and the Governors for the development of English throughout the school. This is to be achieved in a variety of ways:

* regular discussions with staff and pupils concerning progress of groups and individuals;
* involvement in long and medium term planning across the school in English;
* regular classroom observation and working alongside colleagues to help identify strengths and weaknesses and to provide support to individual staff as appropriate;
* regular monitoring of resources;
* reviewing of assessment outcomes and data to evaluate the quality of learning in English throughout the school;
* through regular ‘book trawls’ where a representative selection of exercise books from each year group is taken in for evaluation
* Talking to pupils about their learning

**LINKS WITH THE GOVERNING BODY**

The governing body of the school has a member who is designated as the English governor.

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