

John Ruskin Primary School and Language Classes

English Policy

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Last review: July 2024
Current Review: 2027



“Be responsible, be fair, stay positive and care”

‘The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum 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.’

English National Curriculum (2014)

English at John Ruskin Primary School

(insert INTENT)

At John Ruskin Primary School and Language Classes (JRS), our English curriculum is designed to develop children’s love of reading and writing alongside the skills of speaking and listening -using these to communicate and further their learning in all areas of the curriculum. We aim to inspire an appreciation of our rich and varied literary heritage and a habit of reading widely and often. We nurture a culture where children take pride in their writing, can write clearly, imaginatively and accurately and adapt their language and style for a range of contexts and purposes. Developing the understanding and use of ambitious vocabulary is paramount across subjects. Our intent is that children leaving after Year 6 will be equipped for a future as confident communicators, life-long readers and curious, independent learners with high aspirations.

Principles and Purposes

The development of English is the responsibility of the English Coordinator, with a focus on phonic acquisition and use by Sarah O’Neill and overseen as a cross curricular subject by the Senior Leadership Team.

This policy aims to give an overview of policy and practice in the English Curriculum at John Ruskin School.

At John Ruskin we aim to encourage a love of language throughout the school through rich and diverse experiences, derived from quality first teaching and literature together with appropriate, engaging resources..

We believe that children need to talk, listen, read and write to a high standard in order to access and participate fully in the whole primary curriculum. For this reason, speaking and listening, reading and writing are recognised as integral to the teaching of and learning across **all** areas of the national curriculum.

We aim to involve parents as closely as possible in supporting and extending children’s development in English through regular, liaison with the school.

We believe that all children should be set high standards to achieve, irrespective of race, gender, home language, culture or areas of special educational need.

We view positively the skills all children have in English, inclusive of accents, dialects and home language.

Practices

At JRS, the teaching of English is taught in the following ways:

- Daily English lessons, including drama
- Modelled, Guided/Shared Writing
- Extended Writing incorporating taught skills
- Guided and Independent Reading
- English Skills focus lessons, embedded at 'point of use' whenever possible and in response to marking
- Daily/ embedded phonics teaching (EYFS and KS1, extending to KS2 when appropriate)
- Handwriting skills and fluency
- Grammar, punctuation and spelling lessons
- Opportunities for talk and reasoned debate throughout the curriculum
- Reading aloud in small groups, to the class and to the wider school in assemblies
- Use of the school and local community library
- PACT scheme: home/school reading activity booklets in KS1 & LKS2; Reading Journals in UKS2
- Use of specific Phonic and Reading schemes
- Visiting professionals – e.g. librarians, poets, writers, storytellers, drama workshops.
- Other planned and unplanned opportunities as they arise, including specific Literary focussed days/events (National Poetry/World Book Day)

Daily English lesson

John Ruskin School uses the Teach through a text pedagogy in line with the Literacy Tree framework. Each class in Key Stage 1 and 2 have a daily English lesson. Teachers use John Ruskin School medium term plans, which include Literacy Tree texts, the English Curriculum and themed resources to plan daily lessons for English. The medium term plans use the objectives from the National Curriculum (2014) Programme of Study for English for each year group but teachers are free to adapt these plans by tracking objectives backwards and forwards to ensure the relevant teaching of English objectives are meeting the needs of all children. Explicit teaching of metacognitive strategies to make links and extend children's thinking to further application of learnt skills, as well as the use of marking to identify areas for development enable this flexibility within lessons to ensure individual attainment is maximised.

The objectives on the medium term plans feed into the planning for daily lessons and are monitored across yearly progression grids. Over the course of each unit, there will be a balance between reading and writing objectives.

Daily Planning should include opportunities for:

- An engaging starting point of a high-quality children's text at the beginning of each unit.
- Spelling, punctuation and grammar objectives and activities taught in context.
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- Explicit teaching of core/key vocabulary as well as wider vocabulary development, linked to Spelling Seeds activities.
- Reading objectives and activities.

- A progression from reading into writing across the unit.
- Writing objectives and activities, including the whole process of writing (plan, draft, edit, publish).
- Clear links between teacher modelling and children practicing and using taught skills.
- Explicit teaching of writing with a clear audience and purpose in mind
- Shorter and extended writing pieces of writing, clearly identified.
- Regular opportunities for speaking, listening and drama

Clear cross curricular links made where possible, indicated on yearly maps.

English in the Early Years is covered in two strands of the EYFS curriculum: Communication and Language; and Literacy. Handwriting is covered in the Physical Development strand and includes regular Finger Gym activities.

Extended Writing

Extended writing plays an important role in the English curriculum, giving the children an opportunity to use learnt skills to write independently for a sustained period of time.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, extended writing should aim to take place every week in the timetabled slot, however developing quality pieces over time may result in a series of shorter sessions being used. Where possible, the extended writing should be linked to the English unit being taught at the time. Teachers should also regularly plan for extended writing opportunities as part of their wider curriculum every two weeks. For example, writing under pictures that have been sequenced in an RE lesson, writing a letter from or to a historical character, writing instructions on how to make something in DT, etc.

Extended writing should always be led by English objectives, even when the writing is cross curricular. Handwriting expectations remain high across all subjects. All extended writing should be completed in English or topic books and taught in English sets in Key Stage 2.

Guided Reading and Independent Reading

Guided reading is an approach to the teaching of reading that supports pupils' development as active and independent readers.

Guided reading should be taught daily in the timetabled slots and will, in some instances, include whole class teaching and skill development. Groups for guided reading should be set according to the current needs of the children with each guided reading session being carefully planned to meet the needs for that group.

Objectives for each group should be taken from the '*STAR assessment framework for reading (2018)*' which can be found in the 'Staff Server/English' under 'Assessment GR Records.' These record sheets provide a breakdown of the standards expected by each Year group and teachers should use the breakdown as a guide for planning guided reading for each group.

The teacher should work with a different group each day, tailoring the structured teaching to meet the needs of the group. The text chosen should be 90% accessible for the level of reading in the group, using phonically decodable books where appropriate.

During the guided session, the teacher should be developing skills through careful modelling of strategies and a range of question types, both oral and written. Vocabulary development is paramount to developing comprehension fluency and, as such, is a key focus in both pre-read and teacher led activities .

During guided reading time, all children should be engaged in a reading/writing task or be given opportunities to browse and read in the class book corner or library, for pleasure and information. These activities should be planned and monitored by the teacher.

Guided reading texts can be found in the library and have been book banded to ensure teachers choose books that are correctly matched to each group. The teacher should choose the text and should have read it in order to ensure that it meets the needs of the children, including the More Able and Talented medium term plans for each year group. Key questions linked to the key Reading Skills (as identified by the Pawsome Gang,) should be planned for each guided reading session and then reinforced with a planned follow up activity to consolidate learning.

Children should be given an opportunity each week, supported where necessary, to choose an appropriate book from the class book corner and/or library in order to develop their independence when reading for pleasure.

English Skills

Using the Literacy Tree pedagogy, English skills, wherever possible, are taught at the 'point of use', in context of the current English text and daily lessons. Taught sessions should be used alternately for reading comprehension, GPS including handwriting skills and writing skills.

Reading comprehension

Use for:

- Timed practice, such as '60 second reads'
- Opportunities to explicitly teach 'Pawsome Gang' reading skills, through discussion and practise of interpreting meaning and expressing answers using varied sentence construction.
- Opportunities to go through answers and identify where the answer was found in the text, including evidence for reasoning questions (use of Point, Evidence, Explanation)
- Guided comprehension tasks

Resources include:

- First News (KS2)
- Reading Eggs printed materials (access to online resources under review)
- Oxford Owl online eBooks
- Rising Stars comprehension assessments
- Badger comprehension books

- Collins comprehension books
- Past papers
- Kent comprehension papers ? Does anyone still use these?

English skills lessons (planned and taught within context, where possible)

Use for:

- Drafting, editing, publishing across genres
- Identify and write for different audience and purposes
- Development of grammar/sentence construction skills
- Speaking and listening tasks
- Spelling: KS1 through ELS program; KS2 discreet teaching sessions including Spelling Seeds investigations, activities and tasks and dictation
- Opportunities for individual/group conferencing
- Addressing weaknesses/areas to develop from current medium term plan objectives and marking feedback.

Resources:

- Nelson Handwriting online Grammar for Writing
- Developing Early Writing
- Collins Activity books
- Literacy Tree Spelling Seeds planning and resources
- Websites such as Phonics Play, Bug Club,
- Reading Eggs/Eggspres printable resources
- Whiteboards
- Spelling Banks, games
- Pie Corbett signs and books

Essential Letters and Sounds Daily phonics teaching

John Ruskin School use the Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS) program, as a whole class approach to teaching a systematic progression of synthetic phonics as a strategy for early reading. ELS is used to teach children how sounds are represented by written letters, providing a structure to build up children's learning gradually and systematically with review and practise built into the daily lessons. A series of 4 children's workbooks supplement children's practise and generalisation of taught sounds and patterns. Children's phonic knowledge is closely matched to appropriate level decodable readers for use in school and as take-home readers.

The teaching of phonics takes place every day in EYFS and KS1. Assessment of the children's reading skills is key to ensuring that all children make rapid progress through the programme, and that they keep up rather than catch up. **As such, assessment of children's phonic knowledge is undertaken regularly (the fifth week of each half term)** to enable staff to identify and target (close the **gaps**) that may be present in either sound knowledge or reading skills.

Handwriting

Handwriting is taught according to the Nelson handwriting scheme. Copies of the teacher's manual and pupil books are available in each classroom. Support materials can be found in

the library and videos, interactive resources and printable resources are available online at Oxford Owl: Nelson Handwriting.

Teachers and other adults should attempt to provide a good model of the handwriting scheme in children's books, when shared writing and on boards. High expectations of handwriting are maintained across subject areas and through spelling dictations.

Specific teaching of handwriting skills should take place twice a week during English lessons.

Please see the Handwriting Policy for further guidance.

Opportunities for talk throughout the curriculum

At John Ruskin we understand that 'a strong command of the spoken and written language', alongside active listening, is the bedrock of English development and as such, place great importance on speaking and listening throughout the curriculum. Teachers are encouraged to include talk partners in every lesson, as well as regular opportunities for small group and class discussion, thus giving children an opportunity to speak in varied contexts on several occasions every day.

Reading aloud to the class

Teachers should match the children's interests, age and class topic to a range of books, including poetry, that are read throughout the year.

All children in Key Stage 2 should be reading a novel in class, which could be used to provide extracts for explicit teaching within the daily English lesson.

Use of the school library - see appendix

The library is organised using the Primary School Dewey System and Reading Cloud, a digitised system for storing, organising and scanning books for borrowing. These systems are maintained by the Business Manager and an appointed TA to work in the Library one half day/week.

All children should be allowed access to the resources of the library throughout the year. An adult should always be present in the library when children are using it with teachers having oversight responsibility for ensuring books are correctly scanned in and out and replaced in the correct spot when returned.

The library books are regularly audited to ensure that they:

- reflect the multicultural world that the children experience in their daily lives and may encounter in the society around them;

- have good curriculum coverage and
- include high quality children's literature for a range of reading ages, interests and abilities.

Curriculum co-ordinators are responsible to monitor and ensure library texts linked to their subject area are relevant and up-to-date, liaising with the appointed TA to maintain correct digitisation of library materials.

In Key Stage 1, children also have the opportunity to visit a local community library as a class, once a month, to develop their own reading interests (to resume following the lifting of current Covid restrictions). Close links with Southwark Library services can include visits to school and support for specific initiatives.

Please see the Library Policy for further guidance.

Reading scheme

Oxford Reading Tree (ORT) is the core reading scheme used at John Ruskin Primary School with links to the ELS phonics program in EYFS and KS1. Children begin the scheme in Reception with a progression of phonically decodable books linked to the ELS scheme. . In KS1 children continue to access reading books linked to their current level of decoding ability through to the end of Phase 6. For children who continue to require access to decodable books in LKS2 and beyond, Big Cat Collins books are used for the earlier stages to practice and consolidate early decoding before continuing with ORT. They then continue to work their way through the stages of the scheme through to Key Stage 2. Fluent readers are supported with strategies to choose appropriate levelled books until they are able to do so independently. The books are given out each week to the children and recorded in their PACT books.

Class teachers are responsible for maintaining the scheme including securing costs for lost books in conjunction with the Business manager.

PACT scheme / Reading Journals

All children will be given a PACT [Parents and Children Together] book to record the books they take home and read. Each week, children in Years R-4 take home a book chosen by the teacher (ORT) and a free choice book. Teachers should ensure that children select books that are wide ranging and of an appropriate level. In Nursery and Years 5 and 6, children should choose a book from the class book corner and/or one from the library, unless ORT or decodable books are still required to ensure reading progression in KS2.

PACT books should be kept in book bags, brought in every day and kept in a specified place within the classroom. Teachers should check PACT books at least once a fortnight to ensure that children are reading and changing their books and offering support and advice to children and parents, if required.

Books should be changed a minimum of once a week in Nursery and Years 5 and 6. From Reception to Year 2 they are changed once a week in line with ELS to encourage children to

practise their phonic skills and develop fluency by reading 4x or more. Year 4, books can be changed twice a week if they have been read and the PACT book has been signed. Year 5 and 6 children have an insert of key reading tasks that children choose from to complete.

Visiting professionals

Children are given the opportunity throughout each academic year to work with visiting professionals, whenever possible and as funding allows. This may take the form of story tellers coming in and 'telling a story' or performing drama with a Key Stage, for example, or working with individual classes in writing workshops. It could also involve a class working with a librarian, historian, poet or author in a workshop situation across the curriculum.

Equalities

All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities celebrating the diversity that gender, ethnicity, disability and home backgrounds offer. Work is differentiated to meet children's individual needs and specialist equipment or extra adult support provided for children with EHCP requirements including disabilities, where needed.

The Language Unit

Children with a diagnosis of Specific Language Impairment (SLI) and a Statement of Special Education Needs are referred to the Language Unit. The Language Unit follows the English National Curriculum (2014) in the same way as the main school, but work is planned taking into account each child's language needs and IEP. The teaching progression follows a two-year cycle.

Guidelines for the teaching, learning and assessment of English in the Language Unit are available in the Language Unit Language and Literacy Policy.

Children with EAL

Dual language books that represent a wide range of cultures are available in the library if teachers' class stocks need to be supplemented.

EAL teaching is supported by. Guidelines of assessment and teaching is available in the EAL and EMAG policy.

The Classroom Environment

All classrooms should have a book corner which provides a stimulating reading environment for children. The Pawsome Guide **reading skills should be clearly displayed** as a learning tool to support children's identification and understanding of question types.

Throughout the school, teachers should be using some or all of the following as appropriate to the needs of their class (those in bold must be evident):

- **Current text /genre being used in English/ main characters and setting**
- **Key words and vocabulary, including phrases appropriate to the current text type.** These may be displayed on a 'Working Wall.'

Examples of shared writing from the teaching sessions displayed on the working wall or washing lines to support progression

- Writing types/genres
- High frequency and/or common exception words
- Spelling rules and patterns and examples of these
- Descriptions of text types
- Poems
- Book posters – including 'How to choose a book' (WBD2023)
- A book corner which conforms to the school's agreed book corner guidelines

Monitoring and Assessment

Monitoring of English teaching and learning is undertaken in line with the whole school policy and as such:

1. Senior management, together with the English co-ordinator and/or Phonics Lead, undertake learning walks twice a year, providing feedback on medium term curriculum coverage and
2. Book monitoring linked to MTPs and including Pupil voice, class environment and engagement in the overall support of maintaining high standards of English across the curriculum.

The methods used for assessing children in English are as follows:

- Discussion with children in and out of lessons, shared work in assemblies
- Salford (September baseline) and NFER reading tests – December and June.
- ELS baseline and ongoing assessments for phonic progression
- Marking children's work in direct relation to the WALT throughout and, following the lesson, providing opportunities to extend children's skills and thinking.
- Sharing of good work examples and identifying key misconceptions in follow-up lessons to allow children to develop metacognitive skills for checking their own work and editing where necessary. (see marking policy for further guidance). Children are given time in English lessons at least once a week to respond to this marking.
- Through opportunities for moderation across year groups.
- Guided reading folders, assessing group work against National expectations for each Year group (STAR assessments).
- Termly Teacher assessment of reading and writing from Year 1–6 (referencing using STAR materials).
- Baseline assessment in Reception (results not seen). In EYFS children are observed and assessed against Southwark's moderation support materials. National tests in year 6.
- Optional tests in Reading and GPS years 3, 4 and 5, once a year.

- Weekly spelling assessments, including dictation for developing automaticity of GPS and handwriting.
- Pupil self and peer assessment.

Communication and Language in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Communication and language development in EYFS at John Ruskin involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

A mixture of planned and good quality spoken interaction opportunities are provided for children to practise their Listening, Attention and Understanding, as well as speaking.

Listening and attention: children listen attentively in a range of situations. They listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions. They give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaged in another activity.

Understanding: children follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. They answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events.

Speaking: children express themselves effectively, showing awareness of listeners' needs. They use past, present and future forms accurately when talking about events that have happened or are to happen in the future. They develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.

Within the EYFS, the English curriculum is covered by two strands: Communication and Language; and Literacy. Handwriting falls under the Physical Development strand of the EYFS curriculum and includes daily Finger Gym activities.

The EYFS curriculum is delivered through positive relationships and enabling environments and is taught in a variety of different ways, including:

- Small group activities – differentiated by WALT and activity as appropriate.
- Independent Provision – activities set out by staff to support progress through Development Matters age bands.
- Whole Class Teaching – In nursery, a daily phonics session using stories, songs and games to develop skills. In Reception, daily ELS phonics plus a shared reading or writing activity.
- Good quality spoken interactions with adults
 - such as spontaneous interactions, language modelling and re-framing, vocabulary modelling