

English at Heathfield



Intent

At Heathfield, we know our children, families and the local area and know them well. This knowledge was used to design an English curriculum which is tailored to meet the specific needs of our children, whilst meeting the aims of the national curriculum. We know that many of our children start their school journey behind where other children may be nationally. However, we know that we can close this gap through a carefully considered curriculum, excellent teaching, swift intervention, and within a culture of high expectations for all.

We understand that being a competent and confident reader is the key to unlocking the entire curriculum and wider world for our children, which is why early reading and instilling a love of reading is a priority in our English curriculum.

We know that mastering language and gaining a deep vocabulary represent the very foundation of learning to read and write. We also know that many of our children join our school with a vocabulary deficit, so we know that we need to be explicit and rigorous with introducing and explaining new vocabulary and provide regular opportunities for children to develop their oracy skills.

We recognise the importance that clear expectations, explanations and feedback play in helping our children to flourish in English and overcome any potential barriers. We know that children need to master the mechanics of English before being able to innovate. We ensure that our teaching of reading and writing (including grammar and spelling) is clear and well sequenced so that opportunities for children to learn, consolidate and succeed are maximised.

We understand the value in regular, research based CPD for our school staff to ensure that teaching continues to be excellent and meets the needs of our children.

Implementation

Reading

Reading sits at the heart of almost everything we do at Heathfield. Here is a summary of how we have implemented our intent with reading in each key area:

Early Reading / Phonics

- We follow the Read Write Inc – a complete systematic synthetic phonics programme
- Daily sessions for all children in EYFS – KS1 and for some children in KS2 where appropriate
- Children participating in Read Write Inc take home a book which is matched to the sounds that they are learning
- Children also take home a second book of choice which is their book to read for pleasure
- Swift intervention is put in place for any children who need additional support
- KS2 peer mentors offer additional support for some children

Oracy

- Opportunities for children to develop a good level of oracy are frequent and take place throughout the wider curriculum
- Heathfield has worked with several outside providers such as The Royal Shakespeare Company and Nottingham Playhouse (our local theatre) to provide further opportunities to develop oracy skills
- Quality, research based CPD has been carried out with all staff to ensure planning for and provision of oracy sessions are as good as they can be

Vocabulary

- New vocabulary is introduced, defined and revisited as frequently as possible – this includes during all reading sessions, in writing sessions and throughout the wider curriculum (e.g. Science or Geography lessons)
- Resources are provided to support children in making accurate and appropriate word choices – such as our ‘Strength of Meaning’ or ‘Colour Thesaurus’ resources
- Key vocabulary associated with key stage topics is visible on displays so that children can refer back to prior learning

Reading Skills and Whole Class Reading

- All children in years 1 – 6 take part in some form of Whole Class Reading at least four times per week
- Explicit teaching of reading skills – Vocabulary, Inference, Prediction, Explanation, Retrieval and Summarising. Children will also learn to identify and assess intended author impact, recognising text conventions and themes and learning how to read with appropriate fluency
- Quality fiction and non-fiction is sourced while also ensuring that children learn about a wide variety of genres and text types
- The skills of Vocabulary, Retrieval and Inference are prioritised as the most frequently taught skills

Instilling a Love of Reading

- Investment of over £8000 over the past two years in quality texts for children to read for pleasure in the classroom
- Children are read to by an adult on a daily basis
- Rainbow Reading was introduced to promote reading at home. We challenge children and parents to read at least three times per week at home. Class progress is rewarded with book packages in addition to 'gold' children being able to select a book of choice for free at the end of the year
- Time for Reading for Pleasure is given on a daily basis in all classrooms
- Classes build their shared Reading Journey in their classrooms, which promotes a shared knowledge of books
- Book Weeks provide three weeks per year where each class teacher can select a quality text to dive into and explore as a class
- The school libraries are inviting and well stocked with knowledgeable pupil librarians on hand to guide and recommend new books to children
- As part of our Heathfield Pledge, author visits are planned for each year group throughout the year

Reading Throughout the Curriculum

- Our two-year Long-Term Plan has been carefully designed to ensure that children access a wide range of quality books during their time at Heathfield
- Careful consideration has been given to the quality, genre and relevance to our children at Heathfield
- Each topic that children will learn has both a quality fiction and non-fiction text linked to it
- Quality texts will also be found in the wider curriculum, where we have worked closely with subject leaders to source texts to support the teaching of those subjects (e.g. 'The Culture of Clothes' for RE and 'DK Science Encyclopaedia' for science lessons)

Writing

If reading is the 'breathing in' of language, writing is the 'breathing out'. Here is a summary of how we have implemented our intent with writing in each key area:

Talk for Writing

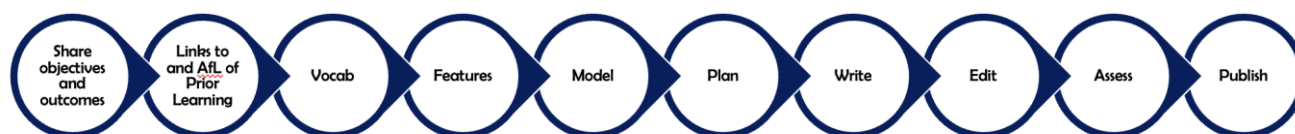
- EYFS and KS1 use Talk for Writing to structure their writing lessons
- They use a process of imitation, innovation and independent application
- Texts have been carefully selected to support quality writing outcomes
- CPD on effective Talk for Writing teaching has been given to all staff and has been frequently revisited by key staff

Mechanics for Writing

- Once children have mastered the process of imitation, innovation and independent application they then move on to writing wider genres and more independent pieces of writing
- A carefully considered transition plan is in place to support children to move on with their learning between KS1 and LKS2
- Many elements of Talk for Writing remain in KS2, such as breaking down text structures and planning
- Children are explicitly taught and practice the specific features of a given text
- Heathfield has created a carefully considered 'Progression of Text Features' document to support teachers with planning and teaching age-appropriate features when teaching a specific text. This allows for clear progress to be seen between each year group when writing a given genre (e.g. Non-Chronological Reports or Newspapers)
- Grammar, punctuation and vocabulary are key features of these lessons

Sequence of Learning

Each writing unit follows the same sequence of learning to ensure the coverage of the key elements that form the backbone of the writing curriculum:



SEND Provision and differentiation

To ensure all children are able to access the English curriculum, teachers use a range of strategies to support the inclusion of children with SEND. This includes the differentiation of objectives and activities, the use of smaller steps to support progress and the use of tailored resources.

Reading

In reading sessions some strategies may include:

- Identifying a smaller region of the text for the pupil to find the answer
- Providing sentence stems to help children construct their answers
- Reducing the quantity of questions they may be asked to answer
- The text could be read to them so they can focus purely on the reading skills
- Sound mats may be used to support them with identifying sounds
- Talking tins to help construct answers
- Dyslexic pupils may use a coloured overlay or the text may be printed into specific coloured paper
- Finger pointers may be used to track the words
- Clear timings and consideration for how long pupils are reading to support some pupils with maintaining focus – e.g. pupils working for timed, short bursts
- Pupils phonics and social needs are considered when organising phonics groups

Writing

In writing sessions some strategies may include:

- Children are supported with planning their writing
- Children are given a wide variety of feedback – prioritising verbal
- Working in shorter, timed bursts to help with maintain focus
- Vocabulary resources are easy to access
- Where group is needs, some children may work in even smaller groups to help aid quicker feedback and to reassure
- Children are given clear, specified targets so they know what their next steps are

Assessment

We give feedback and assess our children in English in a variety of ways to ensure that success is celebrated and gaps are swiftly identified and filled:

Self-Assessment

- In writing, Children are provided with checklists of key text features.
- Children can track what they have or have not included in their piece of writing
- Children use prior feedback to include as a target to work on in their next piece of work

Feedback

- Verbal feedback is given in all lessons
- Written feedback is given to children to respond to when appropriate
- Effort Scores are given to indicate the level of effort that we believe a child has given to their piece of work. High levels of effort are praised, low levels are challenged
- Assessment checklists have been developed in line with national curriculum aims to aid teachers (and children) in judging where they are with their learning in relation to national expectations
- Children receive targets/next steps to work on on their assessment checklist after a sustained piece of writing

Assessments

- Children in years 1-6 take part in termly assessments in Reading and Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling
- PIRA and GAPS assessments from Rising Stars are used
- Question Level Analysis is carried out on all assessments to identify individual, class and year group gaps and trends
- National comparisons can be drawn from the online assessment tool

Writing Moderation

- Writing moderation is carried out at least termly
- Writing moderation is carried out in several ways to ensure that accurate judgements are made, this includes between classes, campuses, phases and with other schools

- CPD on carrying out effective and accurate writing moderation has been delivered to staff and regular updates ensure key messages are regularly enforced

Impact

Children leave Heathfield as happy, confident learners who have developed a love of reading and writing with the key skills and knowledge necessary for the next stage of their learning.

- Pupils enjoy reading and writing across a range of genres
- Pupils enjoy reading regularly, for information and for enjoyment
- Pupils discuss books with excitement and interest
- Pupils enjoy writing and use the features of different genres and styles
- Pupils can confidently write for different purposes and audiences
- Pupils have a wide vocabulary that they use within their writing
- Pupils have a good knowledge of how to adapt their writing based on the context and audience
- Pupils leave primary school being able to effectively apply spelling rules and patterns they have been taught
- Parents and carers will have a good understanding of how they can support pupils' reading development at home
- Parents and carers will have a good understanding of how they can support spelling, grammar and composition at home
- The % of pupils working at ARE within each year group will be at least in line with national averages
- The % of pupils working at Greater Depth within each year group will be at least in line with national averages
- There will be no significant gaps in the progress of different groups of pupils (e.g. disadvantaged vs non-disadvantaged)

How the Heathfield Pledge is delivered through English

Happy, safe and confident

- Reading and Writing for Pleasure is encouraged
- Removing barriers of vocabulary through immersive experiences
- Confidence through performing plays
- Fun ways of learning to spell using a range of techniques and interactive games

Eager to learn

- Hooked into books
- Excited to share book titles/rhymes they enjoy
- Eager to be 'Star Writer' in assemblies
- Excited to share ideas
- Enjoy a range of stimulus (including film, music, computing, text, drama)
- Eager to reach the next rainbow reading colour

Aiming high

- Up-levelling writing
- Children respond to feedback
- Eager to get onto the next reading band colour
- Aiming for their work to go on display
- Children are proud of their work
- Children know more and can do more

Taking care

- Taking care to write neatly and joined up
- Incentive to write neatly to gain a pen license
- Taking care of our books so that they don't become damaged
- Helping each other to read/ understand text
- Librarians looking after the library books

Healthy attitudes

- Regular spelling practice including homework tasks
- Supporting each other to choose books and read together
- Reading buddies
- Librarians helping whole school with book choices and logging books in and out
- Parents/Carers reading at home with pupils- incentivised with Rainbow Reading records

Focused on enrichment

- Pupils enjoy library visits
- Author visits
- Books Fairs
- Drama opportunities
- RSC performances and Shakespeare Ambassador involvement

- 'Stay and Read' with parents and carers in EYFS
- Book weeks each term enable class teachers to follow their class' interests

Including everyone

- Year 5 and 6 pupils read with KS1 children to support phonics
- Year 5 and 6 pupils read at break times to Year 1 and 2
- Everyone has access to high quality texts
- Lexia, Switch On and other intervention applications support all pupils at different points of their reading journey
- Support for all pupils in every class with differentiation

Environmentally aware

- We use Education Library Service for topic books
- Used books are donated to Africa
- Books are used to inform children about environmental issues through stories or information books

Living in harmony

- Celebrate books as a whole school with book weeks, book fairs and author visits
- Celebrate performances together
- Books cover a range of topics (PSHE themes)

Developing global citizens

- Speaking and listening- most spoken language in the world
- Books and stories from around the world
- Books reflect different cultures
- Multicultural authors represented
- Dual language books

How does English link to other subjects?

English has strong links to almost every subject. Being a confident reader is essential to access the wider curriculum. Teachers promote the importance of being highly literate, regardless of the lesson. For example, we would expect to see the same standard of writing in a pupil's geography lesson as we would in a writing lesson.

What can English inspire children to be in the future?

Research shows that having a love of reading instilled at an early age is the number one predictor of success in later life. Pupils being able to articulate their thoughts and feelings in a considered way is an essential aspect of human communication. Being able to read and write is also essential for future success in almost any job.