



Everton Heath
Primary School

English

Intent

At Everton Heath Primary School we believe that English forms the basis for our development, relationships and our understanding of the world around us. The study of English is key to our personal growth and, through the development of effective written and spoken communication, it is the foundation for all our learning. The ability to communicate effectively, confidently and with clarity is crucial in school, but also in becoming an effective participant in our wider society, with skills of communication being key to accessing the world of work and in navigating adult life. In a fast paced, global world the importance of fluent written and spoken English is crucial and it is essential that we develop these skills through an effective English curriculum.

The National Curriculum for English aims 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

Implementation

At Everton Heath, English lessons are taught in units that are planned around high-quality, challenging texts. The children are immersed in the engaging narrative, over several weeks, exploring characters, settings, plots and themes. Non-fiction writing is carefully interwoven into the wider curriculum. Through a Talk for Writing approach, writing skills are selected so that form part of a whole-school, skills progression. This allows children to master age-appropriate skills efficiently and enables teachers to provide timely challenge or support where it is needed.

Phonics, Early Reading and Writing

At Everton Heath, children are taught to decode (read the words on the page) using the Sounds-Write phonics programme. This is a linguistic phonics programme that teaches children 175 sound-spelling correspondences over YR to Y2 and beyond. Rather than moving on to spelling rules, which have many exceptions and contradictions, children learn and apply more sound-spelling correspondences (the extended code) in their reading and writing. The linguistic approach looks at the relationship between the spoken language and the written word. The programme teaches all key elements of conceptual understanding, alphabetic code knowledge, and the other essential skills necessary for learning to read and spell.

Conceptual knowledge

Letters are symbols (spellings) that represent sounds.

A sound may be spelled by 1, 2, 3 or 4 letters.

dog street night dough

The same sound can be spelled in more than one way:

rain break gate stay

Many spellings can represent more than one sound:

head seat break

Skills

Blending – the ability to push sounds together to build words.

Example : c/a/t

Segmenting – the ability to pull apart the individual sounds in words.

Example : p/i/g

Phoneme manipulation – the ability to insert sounds and delete sounds out of words.

Example : spelling o

Is it o as in hot? oe as in no or u as in son?

The alphabetic code is split into two sections: the initial code and the extended code.

Teaching the Initial Code

At the start of the programme, simple, one sound/one spelling, one-syllable, CVC words only are introduced. As the programme progresses, the complexity of one-syllable words is increased to four-, five and six-sound words of the structure CVCC, CCVC, CCVCC/CCCVCC, before introducing the most common consonant digraphs. The Initial Code is taught in Reception but may be taught again through small group interventions as and when required.

The Extended Code and Polysyllabic Words

Thereafter, from Year 1 onwards, all the remaining common vowel and consonant sound to spelling correspondences are taught until all the common spellings for the forty-four sounds in English have been covered. In parallel with this, pupils are taught how to read and spell polysyllabic words, progressing from two-syllable to five- and six-syllable words.

The extended code will have been fully taught by the end of Year 2 and for most children they will have acquired the knowledge and skills to be confident in applying the sound-spelling correspondences within their reading and writing. Throughout KS2, children study etymology (the origin of words) which enables them to discover the meaning of new words and apply their extensive code knowledge.

In addition to the Extended Code, we teach children to read and spell polysyllabic words (words with 2 or more syllables). This is essential as 80% of words in the English language are polysyllabic. In Key Stage 2, students apply their phonic knowledge to read new words, and to spell words from the National Curriculum for spelling, using Grammarsaurus resources. Increasingly, teachers support students to develop their knowledge of etymology and morphology.

When we plan our phonics lesson, we include three elements. Firstly, we review learning from the previous unit. Secondly, we teach new learning and provide students with opportunities for controlled practice. Thirdly, we provide students with opportunities to retrieve learning with freer practice.

Reading

Reading is fundamental to everything we do at Everton Heath. We are aware of the huge impact it has on the children's learning in all subjects.

Early Readers

In YR and Y1, children practice reading the words on the page by reading texts (Dandelion Readers) that are fully aligned to our phonics programme. These are phonically controlled to ensure they are practising previously taught sound/spelling correspondences. It is vital that children develop their code knowledge to automaticity, so they will practice reading from the same decodable text at least three times, until they are completely fluent. In addition, they listen to high quality texts read to them from our library, to ensure they experience a rich reading diet that develops their vocabulary and background knowledge. Once children have learnt sufficient code, the texts they take home will be selected by them with support from their class teacher.

Accelerated Reader

From Year 2 onwards, we use *Accelerated Reader Stars Tests* to assess everyone's reading age and to closely monitor their progress in reading. The

children choose their own text, supported by the class teacher, and encouraged to be within their ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development). Once the children have completed the text they will complete an AR Reading quiz, which assesses their understanding of the text they have just read. If pupils have not achieved 80% or more on the quiz, then the teacher/TA will support them with their next book choice.

Being able to read quickly and fluently unlocks comprehension of the written texts. Anything that occupies our attention limits our ability to think; if we have to spend too much time thinking about how to decode the words on the page, we will have reduced capacity to consider the meaning of those words. In order to optimise reading fluency and comprehension, reading is taught as explicit lessons as well as being an integral part of English lessons and across the whole curriculum. At Everton Heath, reading skills are taught:

- Through partner or paired reading, with children taking it in turns to read part of a text to one another.
- From the teacher reading aloud to pupils they will be able to use prosody to deepen their understanding of a text and allow them to access more complex text than their reading level allows.
- By teachers modelling how skilled readers make sense of a text, work out meaning of unfamiliar words or incorporating new ideas into existing background knowledge and stopping to think aloud, commenting as they read.
- Through careful questioning, children learn how stories and non-fiction writing is constructed and in doing so, develop their comprehension skills and their ability to understand and interpret the books they read.

Reading for Pleasure

We know, and the research tells us, that encouraging reading for pleasure and putting creative, well evidenced practice at the heart of literacy learning, is transformative for children's futures.

CLPE Reading for Pleasure 2021-2022

Reading for Pleasure is a priority at Everton Heath, and we want all of our children to develop a habit of reading widely and often; it is promoted and celebrated by:

- Class teachers reading aloud to their class from a carefully chosen book every day
- Visiting the school library to select books of interest to take home and read with their families.
- Having well-stocked and welcoming book corners in each classroom which children can visit.
- Planning additional enrichment activities to celebrate reading, including World Book Day events such as author visits, competitions, and themed days.
- Teachers and Tas are advocates by sharing their favourite books, authors, new books, and an enthusiasm for reading. Adults who read themselves and share their love of reading in the primary classroom can, in turn, encourage children to read more.

Writing

Using high quality texts and the Talk for Writing approach, enables children to read and write independently for a variety of audiences and purposes within different subjects. A key feature is that children internalise the language structures needed to write through ‘talking the text’, as well as close reading. The approach moves from dependence towards independence, with the teacher using shared and guided teaching to develop the ability in children to write creatively and powerfully.

Cold Task (assessment)

Teaching is focused by an initial assessment known as a ‘cold’ task. The children are provided with a stimulus but no initial teaching, with the aim of seeing what the children can do independently, drawing on their prior learning. Assessment of this writing enables the teacher to know what to teach the whole class, groups, and individuals.

1. Imitation

The teaching begins with a model text which is pitched well above the pupils’ level and has built into it the underlying, transferable structures and language patterns that children will need when they are writing. This is learned using a ‘text map’ and actions to strengthen memory and help children internalise the text. Activities such as drama are used to deepen understanding of the text.

Once pupils can ‘talk like the text’, the model, and other examples, are then read for vocabulary and comprehension, before being analysed for the basic

text (boxing up) and language patterns, as well as writing techniques or toolkits. All of this first phase is underpinned by rehearsing key spellings and grammatical patterns. Short-burst writing is used to practise key focuses such as description, persuasion or scientific explanation.

2. Innovation

Once pupils are familiar with the model text, then the teacher leads them into creating their own versions. A new subject is presented and the teacher leads children through planning. With younger pupils, this is based on changing the basic map and retelling new versions. Older children use boxed-up planners and the teacher demonstrates how to create simple plans and orally develop ideas prior to writing. Shared and guided writing is then used to stage writing over a number of days so that pupils are writing texts bit by bit, concentrating on bringing all the elements together, writing effectively and accurately.

3. Independent application

Eventually, students move on to the third phase, which is when they apply independently what has been taught and practised. Pupils are guided through planning, drafting and revising their work independently. It is essential to provide a rich starting point that taps into what students know and what matters so that their writing is purposeful. Writing may be staged over a number of days and there may be time for several independent pieces to be written. With non-fiction, students should apply what they have been taught across the curriculum. The final piece is used as the 'hot' task, which clearly shows progress across the unit.

Using this approach our curriculum for writing ensures that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- 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

Grammar is taught within these lessons using Grammarsaurus resources to structure the grammar spiral curriculum, carefully embedding skills in the units so that children learn the correct use of grammar while engaged in the class book. For example, they will learn about the use of inverted commas while building conversations between their favourite characters. This avoids grammar being taught as a detached, abstract part of the writing process and helps children practise and retain what they have learned.

We recognise the importance of nurturing a culture where, throughout the curriculum, children take pride in their writing, can write clearly and accurately and are able to adapt their writing style for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.

Following on from Sounds-Write phonics to support spelling in YR to Y2, we utilise the 'Grammarsaurus' spelling resources in Key Stage 2 to plan and deliver 3 spelling lessons per week, additional to the English lessons, which allows teachers to track the progress of individuals or groups of children and tailor the content of spelling sessions to suit their needs.

Oracy

Oracy is the ability to articulate ideas develop understanding and to engage with others through spoken language. Oracy is an essential tool for learning, when children are effective speakers and listeners, they are better able to understand themselves and the world around them.

To ensure our children are confident and articulate speakers they are given regular opportunities, across the curriculum, to talk, exchange ideas, explore new areas and challenge assumptions.

Handwriting

Fluent handwriting is crucial to allow children to think about what, not how, they are writing. We teach and practise handwriting discretely to the point where children no longer have to think about how they are forming, and later joining, their letters. At Everton Heath, we use Letter Join to teach handwriting. In YR and Y1, children are taught a printed style in discrete handwriting lessons until they have learned to form the selected letters to automaticity. In Y2, children begin to learn the Letter-Join cursive script in discrete handwriting lessons, which continues into Key Stage 2. As the children progress through the Key Stage 2 modules, they develop consistency and fluency and by the end of

Year 6 children should be able to adapt their handwriting for a range of tasks and purposes and to create different effects.

Most pupils can write legibly and fluently. For those children who need more support with handwriting, provision will be made for this. The school will provide additional support using resources such as triangular pencils, pencil grips etc. If difficulties with fine motor skills impact a child's handwriting, then the class teacher needs to consult with the SENDCo to implement a programme of support, so that the child's self-esteem is not impacted by their difficulties.

Assessment

Teachers and TAs give live feedback in the lessons tailored to the individual needs of the child, to enable them to review and improve their learning. Anyone identified as working above or below age-related expectations is given support or challenges to help them take the next step on their learning journey. Regular learning conversations with the children ensure that they understand and are applying feedback in future writing across the curriculum.

Rigorous assessment and review will ensure that we are able to provide targeted support so that all children experience success in English; we believe that a secure basis in English skills is crucial to a high-quality education and will give our children the tools they need to participate fully as a member of society.

Impact

By implementing our English Curriculum, we expect the following results:

- Immersing children in high quality texts and providing opportunities for writing with a purpose, children develop a love of English.
- Children at Everton Heath speak enthusiastically about the books they study in class and are proud of the writing they have produced that is linked to the book.
- Children's books show that they are inspired by the books which they have studied.
- Children are encouraged to assess their own work. Evaluating their own progress often feeds their eagerness to reach new targets and enables children to talk freely and enthusiastically about their next steps.
- Children will independently apply reading and writing skills, for their year group, across all areas of the curriculum.
- Children will acquire a wide vocabulary, a solid understanding of grammar and be able to spell new words by effectively applying their knowledge of spelling patterns and rules.
- As good writers, children will be able to refine and edit their writing over time, therefore developing independence when identifying their own areas for improvement.
- Children will be confident in the art of speaking and listening and can use discussion to communicate and further their learning.