

English
Information and Guidance
Portsmouth Primary School and
Early Years



PORTSDOWN
Primary School & Early Years

At Portsdown Primary School, we believe that the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing are some of the most important skills a child needs, to ensure that they can achieve their potential in the future.

We develop these skills through an integrated programme of speaking and listening, reading and writing. Pupils are given opportunities to consolidate and reinforce taught English skills within other subjects to ensure that their learning is embedded and to use these skills to learn about other curriculum areas.

The aim of English teaching and learning is that children:

- read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding, using a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct
- read for enjoyment by developing fluency, word recognition and comprehension reading skills
- are interested in words, their meaning; develop a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms
- use basic skills, including spelling, handwriting, punctuation and grammar, and use these in all curriculum subjects
- use the powers of imagination and inventiveness along with critical awareness skills

Subject Organisation

In KS1 and KS2 the English curriculum is delivered following the guidance in the National curriculum in England: English programmes of study (DfE, 2013). Foundation Stage follow the guidance outlined in Development Matters (British Association for Early Childhood Education, 2012) which was produced with support from the Department for Education. Early Learning Goals ensure continuity and progression from Foundation Stage, preparing the children for Year 1 through to Year 6.

Much of the teaching and learning in English centres around the use of high-quality texts. These have been carefully selected to offer children a wide range of authors to discuss and rich contexts from which to write from.

The main themes that are revisited throughout these texts are:

- Friendship
- Being an Outsider
- Our Relationship with Nature
- Conservation
- Migrancy

The progression of texts studied provides children with opportunities to revisit these themes and build on prior learning.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Speaking and listening skills permeate the whole curriculum. Opportunities for children to discuss learning in all subjects is at the heart of our teaching. We value the importance of our children developing effective communication skills in readiness for later life.

At Portsdown Primary:

- children relate to each other, and to the adult world around them, using speaking and listening skills
- speaking and listening skills are emphasised as the primary means by which children relate what they already know to any new knowledge and experiences
- children's achievements as speakers and listeners are as highly valued as other achievements

Teaching Strategies

We enable children to develop speaking and listening skills by:

- the use of effective questioning, which encourages children to explain, justify and expand on their viewpoint
- encouraging them to add, build on, challenge and question each other
- providing opportunities for children to present in front of an audience in a range of contexts
- creating opportunities to recite performance poetry and join in with stories and songs
- encouraging children to re-tell stories, use role-play and drama skills in a range of subjects

- making short videos using ICT
- setting up debates and discussions about real life issues
- making children 'experts' in a certain field and allowing them to teach others
- encouraging collaborative work

Progression in Speaking and Listening

Across both key stages, pupils are able to

- listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers
- ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge
- articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
- give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes
- express their feelings
- maintain attention and participate in collaborative conversations
- use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas
- speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English
- gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s)
- consider and evaluate different viewpoints
- select and use appropriate language for different conversations.

READING

We enable children to develop reading skills by:

- promoting a desire and confidence to read
- developing fluency in reading
- teaching a range of skills and strategies which will enable them to become critical, appreciative and reflective readers
- encouraging reading for pleasure as well as for a particular purpose
- developing the skill of reading as a writer
- teaching them to use the library effectively
- promoting a home/school partnership in the reading process

Teaching Strategies

Early Reading and phonics

In FS and KS1, we teach children to use their phonics skills as the first strategy to use when they are reading. We follow the synthetic phonics programme 'Letters and Sounds' and our fully decodable reading books are matched to the progression of the Letters and Sounds scheme.

Children are routinely assessed for their sound recognition, ability to blend these sounds together and their knowledge of 'tricky words' that cannot be sounded. Children in Year 1 also take the 'Phonics Check' which is a national assessment. Extra intervention and catch-up sessions are organised for any children who have or are in danger of, falling behind age expectations.

Our aim for children's progression in phonics is:

- Year R – For most children to be secure in Phase 3 by the end of Year R
- Year 1 – For most children to secure Phase 5 by the phonics check in June
- Year 2 – For most children to secure Phase 6 and move onto the 'Support for Spelling' curriculum which teaches them about the spelling rules in the English language.

There is additional information about Portsdown's approach to phonics in a separate appendix to this guidance.

Additional development of the teaching of reading includes:

- children are given support and guidance in their selection of books, ensuring that the chosen text is within their capabilities
- children are introduced to a range of literature, contemporary, classic and from other cultures as well as their own, throughout both Key Stages
- children have access to the school library to select books
- children are encouraged to explore tastes and preferences in books while at the same time they are supported to widen the range and breadth of their reading choices
- children practise being reflective readers by talking about their reading
- children regularly read to adults in school
- children take books home to read with parents and use Accelerated Reader (ICT resource) to support comprehension skills and independent learning

Progression in Reading

Key Stage 1 reading is taught through group Guided Reading sessions, where children read phonetically decodable books at a level that supports them make progress, phonics and through other opportunities throughout the day such as story time and individual reading. Key Stage 1 progress is characterised by:

- Little Wandle Phonics assessments
- familiarity reading a growing number of words accurately and quickly
- using clues to check and confirm meaning

Pupils' developing understanding is characterised by:

- increasing awareness of the range and purposes of print
- growing independence in choosing and reading books for themselves
- growing competence and confidence in reading and understanding texts of gradually increasing complexity

Pupils' developing response to text is characterised by:

- choosing and reading books for pleasure
- the growing ability to express preferences about what they have read

Key Stage 2 progress is seen in pupils' increasing independence as readers, their understanding and response to what they have read and their growing ability to find things out. Reading is taught as part of the English session, through 'Whole Class Reading Sessions' where the class explores a text together, and through other opportunities throughout the day such as story time and individual reading.

Pupils' understanding is characterised by:

- making inferences using information within a text, including predicting
- summarising the main points of a text
- using appropriate reading strategies and skills when seeking information
- explaining the meaning of new vocabulary
- confident use of information retrieval systems and libraries

Pupils' response to texts is characterised by:

- enthusiasm for reading; ability to express opinions about books
- supporting their views of a story, poem or non-fiction source by reference to a text
- discussing and understanding different ways in which a writer uses language to communicate ideas

- and achieve effect

Individual Reading

All children will have at least one individual reading book either from the schools set of phonetically decodable books or the school library. All children will have the opportunity for quiet reading and/or reading to an adult on a daily basis with additional reading time for any children who are working below the expected standard for their age.

Library

The School Library contains a variety Fiction and Non-Fiction books. All children are entitled to borrow at least one library book with their own library card. Once children have become 'free readers', they can borrow two books from the library. Each class has a weekly timetabled slot in the library where they can change their books.

Daily Supported Reader

Daily Supported Reading (DSR) is an approach to the teaching of early reading in KS1 (and for low readers in KS2). Primarily a whole class programme, it has proven success as a small group or 1-1 catch up intervention.

The programme is finely attuned to ensure children become fluent readers who are independently motivated. Children:

- read stories on their own right from the start
- learn to respond to and engage with new ideas and information (cultural capital)
- are taught how to access information with increasing autonomy
- learn to problem solve independently while keeping a story or message in mind (global comprehension)

Accelerated Reader

Children from Year 2 to 6 use Accelerated Reader at school. This software supports children with their book choices by assessing their reading capabilities and matching it to a range of books in the library. Children's comprehension and vocabulary knowledge are checked as part of the program and they are rewarded with points for all their hard work. Our Reading Champion gives out reading prizes in celebration assembly for classes and individuals who have been trying really hard with their reading.

Classroom Environment

There are opportunities for pupils to experience print around them through classroom notices, labels and signs. These should take a variety of forms such as single words, handwritten font appropriate to their handwriting stage, phrases and complete sentences. All classrooms have a Book Corner, which allows children easy access to a range of interesting and appropriate books for their age as well as regular visits to the library.

WRITING

We enable children to develop their writing skills by:

- teaching them to use, refine and improve their spelling, punctuation, grammar and handwriting as a
- means of communicating effectively
- helping them develop and use an increasingly wide vocabulary as appropriate for the purposes of their writing
- ensuring children know the purpose and audience of any piece of writing
- creating stimulating 'hooks' to produce high-quality writing
- giving children ample opportunities to plan, revise and evaluate their writing
- providing opportunities to motivate writing for pleasure

Teaching Strategies

The teaching of writing in the English is supported by the use of high quality texts which are used to create writing opportunities for the children.

Children are taught through:

- well-planned, engaging lessons that model effective writing processes
- quality texts which are used as a stimulus for writing
- varied opportunities to write independently for a range of purposes
- classroom environments that assist and inspire the children
- looking at excellent examples of other children's writing
- supportive resources such as word mats and dictionaries

Progression in Writing

Key Stage 1 progress is characterised by:

- writing with meaning clearly communicated
- a developing vocabulary
- an increasing knowledge of simple spelling conventions and accuracy in the punctuation of a sentence
- the development of a comfortable, legible handwriting style

Key Stage 2 progress is characterised by:

- the ability to write appropriately for a widening range of purposes and audiences
- coherent and grammatically correct sentences which are accurately punctuated and correctly spelt
- the use of a widening and varied vocabulary
- a developing understanding of how writing can be improved
- fluent, joined handwriting

Cross-curricular Writing Opportunities

Cross-curricular opportunities for writing are used across the curriculum as a means of practicing and embedding key skills and as a learning tool in other subjects. Teachers plan for pupils to practice and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

Information Technology

Children are given opportunities to use information and communication technology (ICT) equipment and software to communicate ideas and information in a variety of forms, incorporating texts, graphs, pictures and sound as appropriate.

Assessment and Target Setting in English

The progress children make is assessed regularly to improve the quality of teaching and learning by:

- daily assessment during lessons to inform future planning; independent assessment activities to set personalised targets and inform future teaching
- marking and feedback to assess the children's abilities to achieve the learning objective, praising the work and suggesting areas to improve and extend skills
- encouraging children to assess their own and each other's work and suggest improvements
- summative tests in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6
- formal SATs tests at the end of Years 2 and 6
- Little Wandle Assessment every half term

The results of assessments are reported to parents in writing (summer term) and at parents' consultation meetings held in the autumn and spring terms. Progress is tracked to identify next steps in learning.

Inclusion

Teachers plan differentiated activities to support all ability groups, specific individuals or groups of children. Pupils and/or groups of pupils who are under-achieving are identified and steps are taken to improve attainment:

- learning is broken down into achievable steps
- small group and one-to-one support is provided where needed
- advice sought from external agencies where appropriate

- adaptations are made to the physical environment where necessary
- provision of resources to meet individual needs

Most able children are identified and suitable learning challenges are provided, directly linked to enrichment and extension activities, which:

- encourage meta-cognitive thinking within and between subjects
- develop confidence to make informed judgements about learning and methods to improve methods of communication

Equal Opportunities

All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability or home background.

Parental Involvement

Parent partnership is highly valued and there are many opportunities for parents to support the teaching and learning of English. Children need their parents' support with homework (reading, E Books, phonics and spelling) and the school encourages parental support through home visits, parents' meetings, parent workshops and home reading challenges.

Review

This guidance was updated in March 2023 and will be revised each year to reflect any significant changes.

Spoken Language the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS): the Nursery and Year R

Spoken Language in the Nursery and Year R is a key part of the 'Communication and Language' area of the EYFS Curriculum. However, Communication and Language underpins the whole curriculum effectively, so elements of spoken language is evident in all areas of the EYFS provision. Within the provision at Portsdown Primary School and Early Years, the children will have a number of opportunities to listen to a range of stories, poems, rhymes, songs, music and other sounds and be supported to respond to these in different ways e.g. through dance or by retelling a story. The children in EYFS will be immersed in a vocabulary rich environment where they will be supported to acquire new vocabulary and to be able to form simple sentences, improving upon their understanding of irregular tenses and plurals and enabling them to communicate their ideas to an increasingly wider audience. They will be supported to hold and initiate conversations, with increasing complexity of turn taking and will have opportunities to develop their abilities to pay attention to more than one thing at a time. They will also be provided with opportunities to improve their understanding of a question or a command where there may be more than one part to it e.g. "Get your coat and then stand by the door." Their understanding of 'why' questions will also be developed and they will develop the ability to ask their own simple questions.

Reading in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS): the Nursery and Year R

Reading in the Nursery and Year R is a key part of the 'Literacy' area of the EYFS Curriculum (although there are also key links to the Communication and Language; Expressive Arts and Design; and Understanding the World areas of the EYFS Curriculum). Within the provision at Portsdown Primary School and Early Years, the children in EYFS will be immersed in hearing high quality stories and non-fiction texts being shared with them and being supported to remember key sections of the texts, retelling (orally and through actions) and discussing their viewpoint on familiar stories and the characters in the texts. The children will be supported to understand the five key concepts about print: that it has meaning; print can have different purposes; we read from left to right and top to bottom (for English texts); the names of

different parts of a book; and page sequencing. They will be supported to develop their phonological awareness so that they can spot and suggest rhymes, count syllables in words and recognise the same initial sound, such as mother and money, before being immersed in reading simple sentences and words with known letter-sound correspondences and, where necessary, a few exception words.

Writing in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS): the Nursery and Year R

Writing in the Nursery and Year R is a key part of the 'Literacy' area of the EYFS Curriculum (although there are also key links to the Communication and Language; Physical Development; and Expressive Arts and Design areas of the EYFS Curriculum). Within the provision at Portsdown Primary School and Early Years, the children will have opportunities to develop the gross motor and fine motor skills required to be able to write, exploring their mark-making and developing their print and letter knowledge in a range of activities and opportunities with the aim to be able to write letters and words (in simple phrases and sentences) by the end of Year R.

Appendix to English Guidance

Phonics Lessons at Portsdown

Every phonics lesson follows the 4 part lesson as set out in Little Wandle.

Revisit and Review

Practice recognition and recall of previously taught letters.

Practice oral blending and segmentation.



Teach

Teach a new sound.

Teach blending or segmenting with letters.

Teach new tricky words.



Practice

Practice reading OR spelling with taught sounds.



Apply

Read or write captions using high frequency or decodable words.

Please also see the Little Wandle/Phonics section on our website

