

Introduction

At Lewknor C of E Primary School we believe that language and literacy are fundamental to the overall development of the child and their access to all aspects of the curriculum. Literacy is a significant life skill that is essential to participating fully as a member of society. We aim to develop the abilities of all children in our school to communicate their ideas effectively in speech and writing. We also believe that by developing the reading and listening skills in our pupils they will become effective communicators.

Aims

We aim to develop in all children, irrespective of background, race or gender:

- a love for reading where pupils choose to read frequently for enjoyment and information
- the ability to read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- a strong command of the written and spoken word in order to communicate and respond effectively
- a high awareness of audience and the ability to adapt their language and style for different purposes/genres and audiences
- an interest in words and their meanings to acquire a wide vocabulary
- a good understanding of grammar and punctuation
- a legible fluent handwriting style
- the confidence and competence to produce high quality writing and solve problems through the application of knowledge and skills
- their powers of imagination, inventiveness, critical awareness and apply these skills across the curriculum

Objectives

- provide a language-rich environment that promotes a culture of reading and writing
- develop in children a love of books by exposing them to a wide variety of quality books
- teach the basic skills of writing daily – grammar, spelling, handwriting and punctuation – to liberate creativity
- foster in children the confidence, desire and ability to express their views and opinions both orally and in writing
- enable all children to reach their full potential in becoming literate pupils by the time they leave at the end of year 6
- identify pupils who require additional support and intervene at an early stage

Statutory Requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum English Document (2014) and in the Communication and Language and Literacy sections of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2012).

In the Foundation Stage (Reception), children are given opportunities to: speak and listen and represent ideas in their activities; use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum; become immersed in an environment rich in print and opportunities to communicate.

At Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2), children learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They learn to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They learn to use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds. Children are given opportunities to speak and listen throughout all subject areas.

At Key Stage Two (Years 3 - 6), children learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works.

The Governing Body receives regular reports on the progress of English provision.

Subject Organisation

Teachers are provided with a yearly overview of long term planning of genres (appendix 1) and key grammar skills (appendix 2) from which to plan their Literacy lessons, using the school's planning format (appendix 3). This ensures an even balance and distribution of genres and key skills studied across each term, and embeds key skills across the key stages to ensure progression.

Each class from Foundation Stage to year 6 has a Literacy working wall that is used as a key part of teaching a genre of literacy.

At the beginning of each year, every teacher should use the first week back to introduce VCOP, handwriting and guided reading (see each heading for more details).

Approaches to Speaking and Listening

We believe that speaking and listening skills are an intrinsic part of the writing process. A child needs to be able to say a sentence before they can write it. To help develop this skill, teachers are expected to plan oral activities into their weekly literacy planning so that children have the opportunity to think and say their sentences before they begin writing.

Children are also given many opportunities to retell familiar stories and poems and are expected to know them by heart. This gives them the chance to orally practise using the language of a writer/poet. Each year group has performance poetry units throughout the year. During these units children are expected to perform to a live audience and to know the poem off by heart.

Approaches to Reading

Children in the Foundation Stage class and Key Stage 1 take home a levelled book from school according to their ability. Parents are encouraged to hear their child read the book and then record how they have got on. This encourages teacher – parent communication and involves adults in the learning process. In Key Stage 2 children choose books to take home and read. Children who still require a more structured approach to reading have access to the levelled reading scheme. Throughout the Key Stage children become more independent in recording what they have read in their reading journals. However, we still encourage all readers to share a book at home with their family members for 10 minutes per night. We believe that this not only helps to develop inferential skills, but also supports a lifelong love of reading.

Reading for enjoyment

We recognise that reading is a core tool for life and we aim to foster a love for reading in our children. We have identified the need for children to be heard read and to be read to on a daily basis and throughout the curriculum. Children should be exposed to quality texts and vocabulary above their own reading abilities. Through reading, pupils are introduced to new vocabulary that can then be used in their own writing and speech. We also promote the use of the local library van, which visits the school every month so all children are able to loan books that are an interest to them.

Word reading (Phonics)

Reading is taught discretely on a daily basis. We use a systematic phonics approach to teach reading using Letters and Sounds, which includes Phonics Bug and Espresso. Pupils are grouped according to their reading ability across Key Stage 1. Children identified having difficulties accessing phonics have individual interventions using Jolly Phonics during the school day.

In Foundation Stage, focus is on children sounding and blending unfamiliar printed words quickly and accurately. Children are taught:

- To discriminate between separate sounds in words
- Grapheme-phoneme correspondences
- To apply the skill of blending phonemes in order, all through a word to read it
- To recognise sight vocabulary identified as 'tricky words'

It is the aim that by the end of KS1 all children should be able to decode quickly in order for them to be able to develop the breadth and depth of their reading and become enthusiastic readers.

Guided Reading

Guided reading (year 2 onwards) takes place daily using the school planning format. Children are grouped according to ability; each group has one guided session per week with the teacher who plans and assesses each child's ability. This is then recorded onto a guided reading record sheet and is used as a continuous monitoring method to ensure children are in correct groups and are making good progress.

Guided reading sessions should consist of a carousel of word and comprehension skills:

- handwriting
- spelling
- reading with the teacher to develop comprehension skills orally
- follow up task linked to the book they are reading

Comprehension

In EYFS children are taught how to use a range of texts to find information, how to form their own opinions of a text and encouraged to share their ideas in a range of situations.

From Year 1 through to the end of KS2 pupils are taught specific skills which enable them to decode the meaning of a text and how to form and express their own personal opinions and make comparisons. Teachers use high-order questioning skills to ensure children have a deeper understanding of a text. It is expected that teachers carefully plan their questions before a reading session to ensure a range of question types (both literal and inferential).

In both Key Stages, children will also get the chance to apply written comprehension skills by reading a text and answering questions that need written answers.

Approaches to Writing

Children are taught writing skills in daily literacy lessons (underpinned by the National Curriculum 2014) and through the creative curriculum, enabling children regular opportunities to apply and practise these skills across a range of subjects and situations planned by each class teacher. Therefore giving the children the opportunity to:

- Write in a variety of contexts in discrete literacy lessons, topics and cross-curricula writing
- Study language through shared texts
- Learn compositional skills:
 - Drafting
 - Grammar
 - Punctuation

Sometimes writing is planned so that children can follow the process through incorporating modelling, scaffolding, independent writing, re-drafting and producing a final draft.

Big Write

Our Big Write takes place on a Friday, all morning, across the school. The children have the opportunity to write freely and at length and this is then used by teachers to assess understanding and next steps in writing. In the first week of the genre being taught, teachers identify gaps in the children's learning and plan for guided writing groups. After the 2nd/3rd/4th week of learning about the genre, the children will then write another piece of writing independently. The final piece of writing will then be marked against Ros Wilson's Criterion Scale. Children should compare their first and last pieces of writing to discuss their progress and identify new targets.

To ensure The Big Write is a different experience for children they are supplied with special pencils/pens and a piece of appropriate music is played during the writing session.

Children are given individual writing targets, which are stuck in their Literacy books, and children are expected to work on these in all areas of the curriculum. The teacher and pupil monitor writing targets in guided writing sessions and new targets are set when necessary and according to individual needs.

Guided Writing

Guided writing will take place during daily literacy lessons, by the class teacher. The groups for guided writing will be formed from The Big Write sessions. Each child/group should work with the teacher on a focus, which has been generated from the Big Write. These should be planned onto the schools planning format.

VCOP

All Key Stages use VCOP (Vocabulary, Connectives, Openings and Punctuation). VCOP pyramids are available to children in each classroom.

Spelling

From the Foundation Stage, children begin to learn to read and recognise the High Frequency words and these form part of their weekly spellings in Year 1, and may continue into Year 2. Key Stage 1 spellings link with their phonic work focussing on spelling patterns. Key Stage 2 spelling patterns and word lists are taken from National Curriculum (2014). These will form the children's weekly spellings for homework. Children are also given opportunities to practise these spelling during the week in a Guided Reading session. However, children should also practice at home. Children are also encouraged to use dictionaries to support spelling and a thesaurus to develop vocabulary.

Handwriting – See the Handwriting Policy

Inclusion

We recognise that there are children of widely different abilities in all classes therefore we provide learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways:

- Setting common tasks which are open ended and can have a variety of responses
- Setting tasks of increasing difficulty for more able children
- Grouping children by ability and setting different tasks for each group
- Providing resources of varying complexity depending on the need of the child
- Providing opportunities for individual and small group work for those pupils who have been identified as requiring additional support

Where pupils do not make good progress interventions are put into place to ensure that gaps in learning are addressed. Where pupils show a talent in Literacy they are provided with additional support in order to ensure their learning moves forward.

Assessment

Reading

Teachers assess children's reading in a variety of contexts (both informal and formal) continuously. Some examples of reading assessment opportunities:

- On-going teacher assessment
- Guided reading focussed skill record sheets
- End of key stage and non-statutory test scores

Writing

Progress is monitored on an on-going basis in Literacy lessons. Each child writes an unaided piece of writing into progress books during assessment week, at least three times a year. This piece of writing is levelled against Ros Wilson's Criterion Scale, alongside other pieces of work. Formal assessments also take place during the year.

Reporting

Children's progress is formally reported to parent/guardians in the summer term and is discussed with parents/guardians at parents' evening.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher will:

- Provide support by encouraging staff and praising good practice
- Monitor learning and teaching through lesson observations
- Give feedback to teachers following lesson observations
- Support staff development through in service training and provision of resources

The Literacy Co-ordinator will:

- Monitor literacy in the school e.g. through lesson observations, termly curriculum walks and the scrutiny of children's work, teacher's planning and assessments
- Ensure continuity by moderating throughout the school and lead CDP training to support this
- Keep up to date with new developments and keep staff informed
- Formulate, maintain and review the Literacy Policy and Literacy action plan (see School Development Plan)
- Track progress in Literacy and identify areas for development

The Class teacher will:

- Be responsible for the teaching of Literacy
- Differentiate for each child
- Assess children's work in order to detail future planning