



KRISHNA AVANTI

Excellence · Virtue · Devotion

'I will give teachings to all and live by what I teach.'
Lord Chaitanya

INTRODUCTION

At Krishna Avanti Primary School, we recognise the crucial importance of studying the English language. Improved performance at reading, writing and spoken language will enable our learners to express their thoughts and ideas more fluently and accurately. This will help them to engage more successfully with other curriculum subjects, while enriching their lives beyond school. The teaching and learning of language skills are, therefore, given a high priority in our school and where appropriate, using the Cornerstones curriculum and ICT tools. Our overarching aim for English is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping learners with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

AIMS

We aim for our learners to:

- Develop the ability to communicate effectively in speech and writing.
- Listen with understanding.
- Enable our children to become fluent and responsive readers.
- Develop a lifelong love of reading and writing.

To develop our learners as Speakers and Listeners we:

- Give them opportunities to express their ideas to a range of audiences.
- Give them opportunities to take part in group discussion and drama activities.
- Encourage them to listen and respond appropriately to others.
- Help them to understand the need to adapt their speech to different situations.
- Give them opportunities to evaluate and reflect on their own speech.
- Encourage them to use the vocabulary and grammar of standard English whenever appropriate.

To develop our learners as Readers we:

- Teach them to read accurately and fluently using a range of strategies.
- Share reading targets with children.
- Help them to understand and respond to what they read using inference and deduction where appropriate.
- Allow the opportunity for children to reflect on and discuss what they have read, including the language and punctuation choices made by the author.
- Enhance their understanding of a variety of text types including non-fiction, fiction and poetry.
- Encourage them to develop a love of reading and become confident, fluent and independent.
- Teach them how to seek information and learn from the written word.
- Use drama and role-play, where appropriate, to engage children in the text.

To develop our learners as Writers we:

- Teach them to write effectively for a range of purposes and a range of reasons for a variety of audiences, adapting their vocabulary and style as appropriate.
- Encourage them to write with interest, commitment and enjoyment.
- Show them how to write in a variety of forms such as stories, poems, reports and letters.

- Show them how to evaluate and edit in order to improve their own writing.
- Show them how to use punctuation to make the meaning clear to their reader.
- Give them the knowledge and the strategies to become confident and accurate spellers.
- Teach them a fluent and legible style of handwriting, promoting an understanding of how to present work appropriately.

LEARNING AND TEACHING

1. Spoken Language:

Learners should be ‘taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently in Standard English’¹. We encourage learners to speak clearly and confidently and articulate their views and opinions. We encourage learners to express themselves orally in an appropriate way, matching their style and response to audience and purpose. By listening and responding to literature;- giving and receiving instructions;- they develop the skills of participating effectively in group discussions.

We support this:

- with activities planned to encourage full and active participation by all children, irrespective of ability
- with supporting children with specific speech and language and auditory problems being identified and help sought, where appropriate
- by encouraging reading across school and talk about books
- with school plays during festivals and class assemblies
- with class debates within topic and PRE
- through class worship and ‘reflection’ time discussions
- with school council/media group gatherings
- through drama / role play
- through PSHE and circle time

2. Reading

Learners should be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose and be encouraged to read for pleasure. Reading is singled out as of extreme importance since through it, ‘learners have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually’ (p13). Reading allows learners to ‘acquire knowledge’ and to ‘build on what they already know’ (p13).

In line with the National Curriculum, we cover two dimensions:

- Word reading/ decoding
- Comprehension

We develop reading with:

- daily phonics in Key Stage One, so that learners learn to read easily and fluently
- regular reading to adults in school and an incentive to read at home
- developing skills in reading for understanding

Opportunities for Reading in Early Years and Year 1

¹ National Curriculum - page 10.

In early years reading is taught alongside the Phonics programme. Phonics is planned using the 'Letters and Sounds' document. This initiative promotes a strong and systematic emphasis on the teaching of synthetic phonics to aid the teaching and learning of reading.

As part of this scheme the children will be taught to:

- discriminate between the separate sounds in words
- learn the letters and letter combinations most commonly used to spell sounds
- read words by sounding out and blending their separate parts
- study written representations of a sound and how it looks
- recognise on sight vocabulary identified as 'common exception words'

Reading will be taught through shared reading sessions, guided reading sessions and opportunities to practice and consolidate skills through independent reading and during continuous provision. During these sessions, teachers will use a wide range of strategies to try and enhance the teaching of reading.

As learners progress through the years, opportunities for reading include:

Shared Reading

- Whole class shared texts, which are beyond independent reading levels.
- Teacher modelling, teaching and applying reading skills at word, sentence and text level.

Guided Reading:

- Small group sessions with adult, focusing on developing children's ability to become independent readers, thinkers and learners. Learners are grouped by ability and read individual copies of the same text, which matches the reading level of the group. A reading focus is planned for the group and discussed with the adult.

Independent Reading Time:

- Learners read material which interests them, to assist them in fostering a genuine love of reading and help them to appreciate its value.

Story Time:

- Texts appropriate to topic work or objectives covered in English are read aloud by the teacher. We believe that giving children the opportunity to hear an adult read to them, develops a child's ability to comment on and respond to events and experiences within a text. These sessions also allow the teacher to check a child's comprehension, by asking literal and inferential questions, which aid deeper understanding of the plot and themes of the story, also increasing their vocabulary.

Library Skills:

- A whole variety of rich texts from differing genres to engage readers into a world of information and imagination. Learners can access the library for research purposes, when appropriate, developing skills needed to locate and effectively use information. They also can take books from the library for reading in the classroom, using the scanning process.

Home/School Reading:

- Learners are encouraged to borrow books from class collections, and read these at home and in school during independent reading time. Initially, learners take home book banded (colour-coded) reading books, which are suitable for their reading ability (these books are often from a range of reading schemes and are identified from benchmarking the learner each term). When learners have progressed through all book bands, they move onto 'Free Readers' ('real', non-scheme books, suitable for their age).

Adult Support/Reading Intervention:

- Learners that require extra reading will be supported by adults at a time convenient for the child.

Parental Involvement:

- Parents are urged to share books with their children and hear their children read at home. All learners are given a Reading Record with sample questions to support parents getting involved

3. Writing:

At Krishna Avanti Primary School, we strive to create an environment that will promote both reading and writing. In order to ensure that all learners learn to be confident writers we encourage children to write creatively whilst teaching key writing skills explicitly and systematically. The school uses Cornerstones to engage learners in their learning through cross-curricular topics.

'Engage' days are used at the beginning of each topic to hook learners onto their learning and create a desire to further explore all aspects of the curriculum. Teachers use Cornerstones topics termly and plan sequences of lessons to build towards a longer writing outcome that is linked to reading, drama and other shorter writing tasks, broadly following the structure below: There is a balance between fiction, non-fiction and poetry with an emphasis on whole texts rather than extracts and worksheets.



Ways in which we support this include:

- A purpose and audience for each piece of writing is decided from the outset.
- Writing displayed and celebrated all over the school.
- Stimulating first hand experiences, such as trips, storytellers and drama.
- Writing taught as a carefully sequenced activity in roughly three week blocks.
- Working walls to display key vocabulary, grammar foci, punctuation prompts; referred to on an ongoing basis to help guide the learners in their writing.
- Regular helpful feedback through marking with time in lessons and Steps to Success; allowing learners to respond to written marking and feedback.
- Writing, in the main, linked to Cornerstone topics to promote engagement.
- Progression in complexity of tasks and expectations year on year.
- The opportunity (especially for the higher achievers) to create writing pieces independently as they progress into upper key stages
- Building stamina for writing by providing opportunities to write independently and for extended periods.
- Editing and reviewing during lesson time.
- Peer marking.

4. Spelling:

Foundation Two and Key Stage One:

- From Foundation Two, children are introduced to the concept that words are broken down into sounds.
- Learners have short, focused phonics sessions every day which build slowly from learning single letter sounds to digraphs (two letter sounds such as 'sh' and 'oa') and split digraphs (the impact of magic 'e' on earlier vowels as in 'hop' to 'hope'). This knowledge is applied in children's reading and writing.
- Learners learn sounds, actions and letters through games and activities that support sounding out, segmenting and blending.
- Learners having a go at writing by sounding out words and recording the sounds they hear.
- From Year One, learners applying phonic knowledge to read real and 'alien' words.
- From Year One, learners are actively encouraged and taught to proof read their writing for spelling errors.

Key Stage Two:

- Teaching of spellings is based on the 'No Nonsense Spelling' units and the National curriculum that follow clear patterns to aid understanding.
- Throughout Key Stage Two, a spelling rule or new letter sounds are introduced weekly and relevant spellings are taught, e.g. through mnemonics, word sorting and spelling games.
- Key word banks, high frequency words, dictionaries and word pattern visuals scaffold children as necessary.
- When writing, children are encouraged to 'wobble' underline words they are not sure of to check in a word bank or dictionary to avoid interrupting the flow of their writing.
- Learners practice spelling corrections in their work as part of their response to marked work.
- Where additional spelling support is needed, learners work in small groups with an adult to reinforce spelling patterns, alongside whole-class word lists.
- Learners have a spelling journal where new words are recorded and these words can be practised during STS time.
- Spellings for the term are uploaded onto the school website each term and learners are tested weekly.

5. Grammar

An understanding of how to use grammar correctly, use relevant meta-language and identify word classes and sentence types is taught both in the context of a piece of writing and explicitly in whole class work. Linked to the National Curriculum guidelines for year groups, grammar is taught and planned to fit in with relevant genres of writing. Spag.com is used to support the learning of spellings, punctuation and grammar.

6. Handwriting

We place value on learners taking pride and care over their work and handwriting is a key part of this. In the early years, there is a big emphasis upon fine motor skills and we use a range of resources to practise these basic skills. This moves into correct letter formation with a focus on both upper and lower case letters.

Across the school:

- We use the 'letter families' as the basis for our teaching, which links handwriting to common spelling patterns in Year 1 and 2. . It is also consolidated during phonics lessons where formation of the graphemes is modelled and expected to be correct.
- We take the view that handwriting should be taught little and often – at least 2 X 15 minutes in Key
- Stage One and at least once every week in Key Stage Two.
- We use cursive script and encourage children to join their writing as soon as they are forming their letters correctly from Year Two.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

This is carried out by the English Lead and includes:

- Regular observation and support.
- Monitoring of work and performance by talking to learners.
- Observation of learning during lessons
- Moderation of any written, pictorial or recorded work
- Staff meetings and INSET to discuss consistency across the school, standards and expectations.
- Evaluation of opportunities for extra-curricular activities such as reading club, library club and sponsored reads.

PUPIL ASSESSMENT

We firmly believe in the power of immediate, personalised feedback, so much marking is done 'pen-in-hand' by teachers during lessons. Being next to a child and having a conversation in the moment about their work has far more impact than lengthy written feedback in many instances, so adults create classrooms where this dialogue is possible and powerful. Regular written feedback is still given, following our marking policy.

Reading

<i>Summative</i>	<i>Formative</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Early Years, children are assessed in their early literacy development against the ‘Development Matters’ goals. • The school uses the PM Benchmark system books to carry out assessments and will highlight if a learners’ progress as a reader gives cause for concern. Appropriately levelled books are then provided until a child can make appropriate independent choices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are assessed against the EYFS profile and results are shared with parents. • Year 1 take the end of year Phonics test in June. • Children in Year 2 and Year 6 take end of Key Stage national tests that examine a range of reading comprehension skills. • NFER Reading tests are carried out across KS2. Children are tested at assessment point. Tests are diagnostic, providing children with a reading age which takes into account their actual age at the time of testing and a standardised score with ‘100’ being our goal for every child, i.e. their reading at an age appropriate level. Learners giving cause for concern are tracked and underachievement plans are created to identify next steps. • Data is all analysed by the assessment lead and discussed in pupil progress meetings.

Writing

<i>Summative</i>	<i>Formative</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First and foremost, pen-in-hand immediate marking takes place throughout lessons to move children’s learning on. • Children also decide or are given differentiated ‘Steps to Success’ that they can use to help them reflect on the structure and language features of their own writing. • At the end of a piece of extended writing, the teacher marks each child’s work according to the learning objective. The teacher highlights where the child has been successful. • The teacher then identifies areas where the child needs direction towards improvement using a known technique. Children are given structured time to respond to their feedback and reflect on their learning. • A phonics tracker system has been created internally and is used by class teachers to track the progress of phonics with certain learners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers compile examples of unscaffolded, independent writing at regular intervals across the school year. • Every teacher meets one-to-one with SLT at each assessment point to discuss learners writing next steps. • Assessment of these writing samples may be used to provide over-arching targets for each child. • Writing at the end of KS1 and KS2 is teacher assessed. There is no external assessment of composition, however we routinely ask our Local Authority consultant to moderate our levels. As we do termly assessments, these, along with the children’s literacy books, help to form a profile for final teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 and 6. • NFER Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (‘SPAG’) tests takes place in KS2.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All learners regardless of age, gender, ability or cultural background have equal access to the English Curriculum. The needs of the gifted and the less able are recognised and met through Quality First Teaching in the first instance. Where additional support is needed, children may be catered for with Teaching Assistants.

Some strategies include:

- differentiated questioning
- differentiated tasks set
- appropriate grouping during the delivery of topic lessons

EXTRA-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

There are numerous opportunities beyond the curriculum to further develop learners writing and reading abilities and interests.

These may include:

- Author visits
- After school reading club
- Lunch time clubs
- 'Read for Good' sponsored reads throughout the year
- Having opportunities to write poems and short stories for publication
- Visits from the 'Book Bus'
- Local library visits
- Visits to Waterstones