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1. Ethos

At Avanti House Primary School, we give high priority to the teaching of English. This is reflected in the time we devote to developing language skills, the funding we have invested into resources for English, the encouragement we give to children to practise skills for home learning, and the training that all the staff have received in this area. Learning to read fluently, to write confidently and to express oneself well orally are essential skills that underpin all other learning.

2. Aims and Objectives

The study of English develops children's abilities to listen, speak, read, and write for a wide range of purposes, using language to learn and communicate ideas, views, and feelings. It enables children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as non-fiction and media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures, and origins. Children use their knowledge skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations.

The Aims of English are:

- ❖ To enable children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners
- ❖ To encourage children to listen with concentration to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard
- ❖ To enable children to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands
- ❖ To develop children's abilities to reflect on their own and other's contributions and the language used
- ❖ To enable children to evaluate their own and other's contributions through a range of drama activities
- ❖ To develop confident, independent readers through an appropriate focus on word, sentence, and text-level knowledge
- ❖ To give children the appropriate phonological understanding so that they have a body of knowledge to support them in their reading, writing and spellings
- ❖ To encourage children to become enthusiastic and reflective readers through contact with challenging and lengthy texts
- ❖ To help children enjoy writing and recognise its value
- ❖ To enable children to write with accuracy and meaning in narrative and non-fiction
- ❖ To increase the children's ability to use planning, drafting, and editing to improve their work

3. Time Allocation

English is taught in a cross curricular approach. Discrete Guided Reading sessions and phonics teaching take place regularly across the school (see below how this is taught in KS1 and KS2) in addition, time is set aside for English related activities. This includes the provision of the wider English curriculum e.g. drama, extended writing, independent reading, story time, library sessions, grammar, punctuation and spelling and handwriting.

Key Stage 1: Guided reading takes place at least two times a week alongside the discreet teaching of phonics. Guided reading sessions include a variety of activities such as comprehension tasks, spellings, activities based on the child's current reading book, etc. Two groups of children read with their class teacher and/or LSA and take part in a discussion. Additionally, in Year 2 discrete comprehension is taught every week so that children learn the key skills when reading a text. These sessions focus on the comprehension of the text and pupils' inference skills. The activities during these sessions vary and allow class teachers and LSAs to work with one group at a time and assess their reading skills.

Key Stage 2: Guided Reading takes place at least two times a week in Year 3 and 4. In upper Key Stage Two, children take part in whole-class reading lessons which is related to the key text that each year group is studying during that half-term. These sessions focus on the comprehension of the text and pupils' inference skills. In Years 5 and 6, one guided reading session per week is generally the length of an English lesson (1 hour). This provides teachers with the opportunity to spend substantial time with at least two groups of pupils. Teachers, in these sessions, will be able to assess the fluency of reading as well as their understanding. In Years 3 and 4, this is followed by two or three shorter sessions with a more specific focus. The activities during the shorter sessions vary and allow class teachers to work with one group at a time and assess their reading skills.

4. Teaching of Phonics

Phonics is a fundamental part of our approach to support children in their reading and writing, and we strongly believe it is a body of knowledge which will support them in their understanding of English throughout their lives.

We use the Letters and Sounds scheme as a basis for our phonics teaching in EYFS and Key Stage 1. In Reception and Year 1 classes, discrete phonics take place daily and children engage in different activities such as matching words to pictures, reading captions and sentences, spelling words, and reading phonetically decodable reading books. In Year 2 classes, discrete phonics and spellings is taught at least twice a week. Children are encouraged to continue to use their phonic knowledge throughout the school, if required.

We have invested in new decodable reading books which support the children apply their phonics knowledge more successfully and therefore further develop their love of reading.

5. Teaching and Learning Styles

At Avanti House Primary School, we use a variety of teaching and learning styles, to cater for the needs of all our children. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding in English. We do this through a daily lesson that has a high proportion of whole-class and group teaching. During these lessons children experience a whole-class shared reading or writing activity, a whole-class focused word or sentence activity, a guided group or independent activity and a whole-class session to review progress and learning. They have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts and use a range of resources such as dictionaries, thesauruses and classroom displays (learning walls) to support their work. Wherever possible we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

Across the school we aim to develop the children's English with the use of Vocabulary, Connectives, Openers, Punctuation (VCOP) work and displays.

From Years 2 to 6, the format of the English lessons are based on the 'Big Writing' model. This approach to teaching writing focuses on the importance of talk and oral rehearsal as well as accurate basic skills (spelling, punctuation, grammar and handwriting). V.C.O.P. displays are present in all classrooms and form the foundation of children's writing. Every week, the English

lessons build up to an extended piece of writing through talk for writing activities, drama and comprehension lessons. The extended piece of writing is then evaluated and improved by the child. Our English working walls are used effectively to show the learning journey that takes place every week. Children use it to refer back to prior learning and build on their skills.

There are children of differing ability in all classes. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We differentiate in the group work sessions to challenge all children regardless of age or ability. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons we do it through differentiated group work, while in other lessons we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We deploy Learning Support Assistants to assist some children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

6. Home Learning

Through home learning pupils have the opportunity to practise English skills, develop a love for books, reading and use their knowledge to enable learning in other areas of the curriculum. Our home learning policy outlines the type of frequency of home learning recommended. Children are encouraged to begin English home learning from their term in Foundation Stage.

7. The Foundation Stage

We teach Communication and Language including Literacy in reception classes as an integral part of the school's work. The format for the daily lesson is similar to that used in the rest of the school. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the English aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the EYFS, which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. Teachers will plan for the use of Letters and Sounds material, as well as Jolly Phonics. We give all children the opportunity to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and extend their range of vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore, enjoy, learn about, and use words and text in a range of situations.

8. Contribution of English to Teaching in Other Curriculum Areas

The skills that children develop in English are lined to, and applied in, every subject of the curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work in school. Children write at least one piece of extended writing per half term in other subjects such as Science, Geography/History and PRE.

9. Computing (Information and Communication)

The use of ICT enables pupils to use and apply their developing skills in English in a variety of ways. Younger pupils use ICT as source of information and as a way of enabling them to present their completed work effectively. Older pupils use the Internet when searching for information. Pupils use the planning and proofing tools to in a word processor when checking their draft work. We encourage all pupils to use ICT as a resource for learning, whenever they feel it is appropriate. Pupils have opportunities to use ICT for animation, and short stories. Teachers develop pupils understanding of texts through the use of visual texts.

10. Equal Opportunities

All children cover the content made statutory by the programmes of Study within the National Curriculum regardless of age, ability and gender in line with school's policy. Their understanding and appreciation of a range of texts brings them into contact with their own English heritage and texts from other cultures.

11. Assessment and Recording

Assessment and Recording is in line with the school's policy. We use the National Curriculum Progression Skills to record pupil's progress. Teachers meet regularly to review individual examples of work against the national exemplification material produced by the DFE and the QCA. and materials produced by Harrow LA, including moderation across Avanti Schools.

12. Resources

There is a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have access to dictionaries, thesauruses and word banks.

13. Monitoring and Review

Monitoring of the standards of the pupil's work and of the quality of teaching and learning in English is the responsibility of the Principal, SLT and the English Progress (Subject) Leaders. The role of the Subject Leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, being informed about current developments in the subject and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The Subject Leader will have the opportunity to evaluate the English action plan and indicate areas for further improvement. The Subject Leader has allocated management time to enable him/her to monitor the quality of teaching and learning of English across the school. The named SSC member responsible for English meets with the co-ordinators to review progress.

Linked Policies

- ❖ Special Educational Needs
- ❖ Equal Opportunities
- ❖ Teaching and Learning
- ❖ Assessment for Learning – Presentation, Marking and Feedback
- ❖ Home Learning