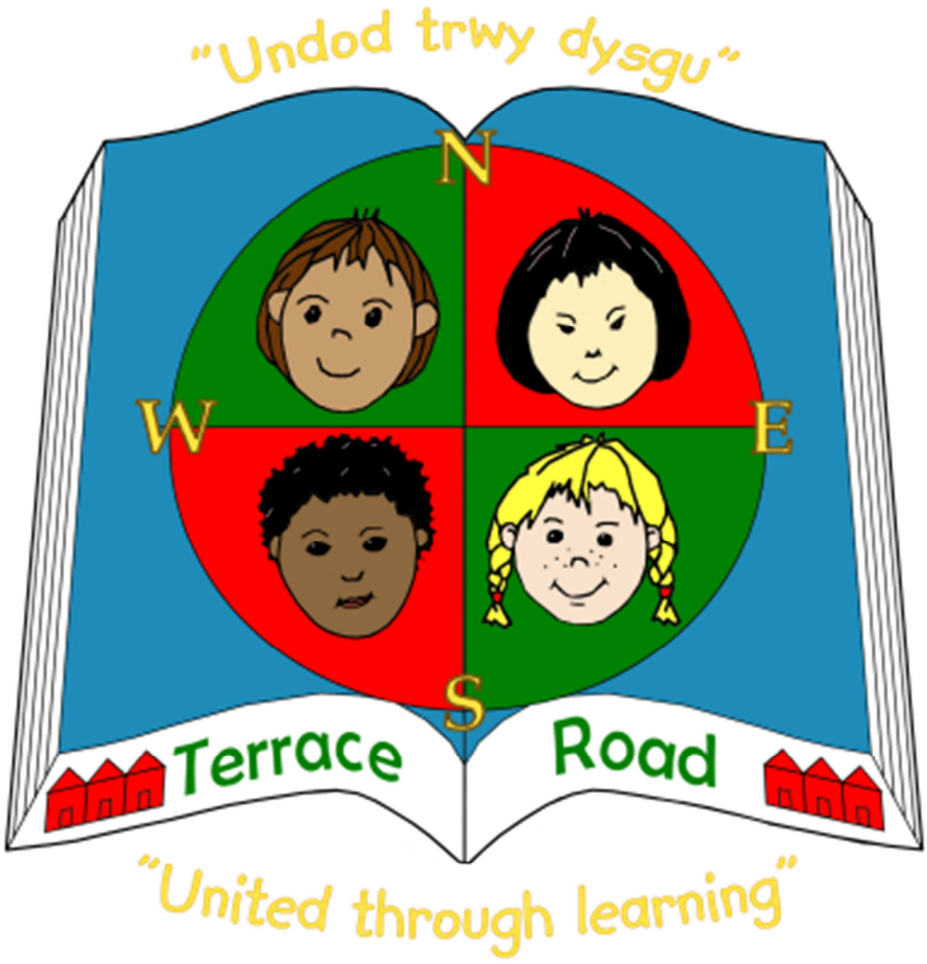
Terrace Road Primary School



English Policy

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Introduction

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for teaching and learning English at our school.

It is our aim to provide for our children continuity and consistency of approach both within year groups and across the whole school from Foundation Phase to Year 6.

Statement of Principles

To enable our children to:

- Develop their full potential in all areas of language so that the demands of their adult lives may be met enabling them to speak, read and write clearly and effectively.
- Extend their repertoire systematically so that they grow in creativity, intensity and sensibility.
- Understand that language and literacy are Key Skills and need to be developed across all areas of the curriculum.
- Be aware of our cultural heritage and become competent and confident in their use of language and be led to an appreciation of the works of great writers.
- Be given access to a range of cultures including that of Wales.
- Develop their critical faculty both textually and pictorially. It is essential that they know the processes by which meanings are conveyed in print and the ways in which advertisements and other media carry values so that they may become discerning consumers.

Aims:

Our aims in teaching English are that all children will develop the necessary skills to use the English language confidently, appropriately and accurately to the best of their ability and to:

- be able to speak clearly, fluently and coherently in a variety of situations and for different audiences;
- be able to listen to the spoken word attentively in a variety of situations in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard.
- to develop a confidence and independence in reading through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text level knowledge;
- to establish reading as a pleasurable and useful activity;
- to develop enthusiastic and reflective readers through contact with challenging texts;

- to enable children to communicate with clarity in a wide range of contexts, for a variety of purposes and for a variety of audiences;

- to write using appropriate punctuation and grammar and accurate spelling;

- to develop legible handwriting in both printed and joined up styles and to understand that different forms of handwriting are needed for different purposes

- to increase their ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work.

The school aims to develop good independent work habits so that children achieve their full potential. To this end children are encouraged to be:

- purposeful in their thought and presentation
- independent in their thought and action
- co-operative in group situations
- imaginative, creative and flexible
- confident in class /school assemblies and plays
- capable of furthering their own learning through the use of books, ICT and media.

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Teaching and Learning

At Terrace Road Primary we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English lessons. Our principle aims are 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, in which we study a wide range of texts. Literacy contributes to all subjects within the primary curriculum and opportunities are sought to draw literacy experience out of a range of activities, as this will allow children to begin to use and apply their skills in real contexts.

Oracy

Helping children acquire good conversational skills is the foundation on which all language is acquired. It provides the groundwork for listening to others as well as for discussion, debate and argument, skills that will be required across the whole curriculum. Children are taught to express themselves confidently and clearly for a variety of purposes and to different audiences. Strategies used to encourage speaking and listening skills include role-play, drama, class discussions, debates, hot seating, P4C and Circle Time.
Talk for Writing provides an essential opportunity for the children to hear and talk the language of the text genre being taught.

Opportunities are taken during the year to visit local theatres and to invite theatre groups into school so that the children listen to the diction of professional performers.

Reading

In our school we employ a range of teaching strategies to develop reading. These include modelled, shared and guided reading techniques as well as individual reading.

Multi modal texts and the moving image are used to promote interest and develop reading skills when appropriate.

Questions on texts are open-ended to encourage children to be thoughtful readers.

Reading is given a high profile throughout the school through displays, the celebration of World Book Day and Library Club, which is also open to parents and carers.

Many opportunities are given for children to read during the day.

We recognise and value the support of parents in developing reading skills and children take fiction and information books home to read.

We are fortunate to have reliable volunteers who regularly visit to hear the children read.

At all stages, children are exposed to a wide range of good quality fiction and non-fiction texts.

Writing

Writing demands the use of many skills such as handwriting, spelling and the application of grammatical knowledge. These aspects are explicitly taught using a variety of strategies and resources. Pupils are given opportunities to practise these skills by writing for real purposes and audiences.

Writing tasks are preceded by the discussion of ideas and vocabulary relating to the text type being taught.

Pupils are taught the characteristic features of a wide range of genres, both imaginative and non-fiction, and taught to structure and organise their own writing according to purpose and audience. Proof reading, editing and revising are skills that are taught in KS2.

Teachers use modelled writing as a strategy to show children how the writing process is developed and carried out. This encourages children to reflect on their own writing.

There are children of differing abilities in all classes at Terrace Road Primary and we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. This is sometimes achieved through differentiated work, sometimes by resource and sometimes by outcome from the same starting point. We use classroom assistants and N.N.E.Bs to support and to extend children either individually or in small groups, thus enabling work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

A child’s ability to spell affects performance in many areas of the curriculum. Children are taught a range of strategies to match their preferred learning style so that they are able to develop a positive, confident, independent attitude to spelling.

The development of a comfortable, legible handwriting style is an on going process, starting at nursery level and continuing until the skill has been mastered. Children are praised for effort and their handwriting skills are valued and built upon.

Foundation Phase

Language, literacy and communication are crucial and important factors in children's development. Across all Areas of Learning, careful planning ensures the progressive development of skills in:

- speaking
- listening
- reading
- writing
- communicating

Relevant and engaging learning experiences enable the children to make steady progress appropriate to their stage of development.

Children's involvement in planning and decision making enhance their learning.

Progression is supported by opportunities for:

- play
- experimentation
- talking/discussing
- predicting/estimation
- practise
- review
- application
- evaluation

Resources

A range of resources support the teaching of English across the school. At KS2:

- all classes have a selection of dictionaries, fiction and non-fiction texts
- guided reading texts (Rigby Navigator and Rapid) and individual reading books (All Aboard and Ginn Pockets) are stored centrally in the Learning Support Base

- the library contains a range of texts arranged in Topic Boxes to match teachers' planning and a selection of novels and picture books. These support children's individual research and are all available for loan.
- Big Books, Sue Palmer text types and multi modal texts are distributed throughout classes as required.
- Fast Phonics First and other software is installed on all computers, along with Internet access

English Curriculum Planning

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum and we use subject skills ladders and text type continuums to plan a rich, broad, balanced curriculum using a skills based approach.

Planning in English is carried out in three phases - long term, medium term and short term.

Our yearly teaching programme identifies the key genres in literacy that we teach through topics each year. The Literacy Co-ordinator keeps an updated copy of this to check on progression.

Our medium term plans give details of the main teaching objectives for each term. These plans ensure an appropriate balance of work across each term.

Class teachers complete a weekly (short term) plan for the teaching of English. This lists specific learning objectives, differentiated tasks and key skills.

I.C.T.

Whenever possible and/or when available a range of technology is used to engage interest, consolidate and further learning. Teachers endeavour to plan I.C.T. skills into their schemes of work. Computers, television, cameras, CD players and tape recorders all engage interest.

Opportunities to find, develop, create and present information and ideas are found in teachers' planning.

I.C.T. skills are a necessary life skill and we aim to teach pupils to use them appropriately and competently.

PSE

The spiritual aspect is encompassed by probing texts beyond the literal through the posing and answering of open-ended questions and in the time given to reflect on the deeper meaning underlying some texts.

During debates and the making of valued judgements on texts the moral aspect is developed. Circle Time, P4C and Group Reading are some of the many situations, which help to develop social values and skills. Texts from a wide range of cultures are incorporated into the scheme of work for English.

Curriculum Cymreig

The English scheme of work ensures that across both Key Stages the range of fiction and poetry includes texts that reflect the linguistic and cultural heritage of Wales.

Inclusion

Terrace Road Primary is committed to ensuring that equal opportunities are offered to girls and boys, to children with special learning needs and to those from different cultures through careful planning and resources.
The needs of the learner are the starting point for all planning. Children working significantly below the expected level of their year group are supported by setting in KS2. Learning support assistants are also used to teach children in small groups or individually. Where necessary, an I.E.P. is drawn up in consultation with the SENCO.

Children working well above the level of their year group are provided with resources or tasks suited to their level of skill. This can be in the form of a more challenging text or a task with a more demanding or open ended approach.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching process (Assessment Policy). Observations made are shared with the children and used to inform planning in order to move their learning on.

Assessment for learning encourages children to think critically, be more involved in and take more responsibility for their own learning. When appropriate, children generate success criteria and self/peer assess their work.

At the end of each year, children from Y1 – Y6 complete the N.F.E.R. standardised test for English. Their attainment is analysed to identify gaps or trends in specific areas of language and also measured against school and national targets.

Staff work together to standardise samples of work to ensure consistency in understanding of National Curriculum levels. Samples are annotated and filed in our standardisation portfolio.

Moderation folders support end of key stage assessment. Year 6 teachers work collaboratively with Dylan Thomas Community School and other feeder schools to develop these.

INCERTS assessment and reporting system is used to record each child's progress throughout the year; a summary of which is presented to parents in July.

Twice yearly, during open evenings, parents are informed of their child's progress, strengths and targets for improvement.

Homework

Reading and spelling is an integral part of the school homework policy. Home/School links are maintained through comments made on progress, difficulties encompassed and areas to be worked on. These are recorded in a reading diary.
Various language tasks, including research, are given as homework. Many of these tasks are of a cross-curricular nature.