

Stroud Green Primary School



Believe and achieve

Stroud Green Primary School, part of a richly diverse community, is a place where all children flourish in a safe, happy and stimulating environment.

English Policy

Subject Leader: Jo Bartlett

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Aims

Stroud Green Primary School is proud to be part of a richly diverse community and, in keeping with our core values, we want all our children to flourish in a safe, happy and stimulating environment. Within the context of a broad and balanced curriculum, our integrated programme of Speaking & Listening, Reading and Writing is designed to teach our children to speak and write fluently so they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and, through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them.

Providing our children with a rich and stimulating language environment will enable them to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Developing the fundamental skills of language as a means of communication gives our children access to the rest of the curriculum and provides a vital key for future learning. All our staff play an important role in nurturing the development of these basic skills.

We want our children to:

- be interested in books and read for pleasure and for information
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- read confidently, fluently and with understanding
- use a full range of reading cues (phonic, graphic, syntactic, contextual) to self-monitor their reading and correct their own errors;
- develop an awareness of purpose and audience for both written and oral language.
- be able to reflect on and evaluate their own and others' contributions.
- have a suitable technical vocabulary through which to understand and discuss their reading and writing;
- write confidently in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the situation;
- be confident, competent and expressive users of the language with a developing knowledge of how it works (i.e. grammar, spelling and punctuation).
- plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing;
- have an interest in words and their meaning and a growing vocabulary;
- understand the sound and spelling system and use this to read and spell accurately;
- have fluent and legible handwriting.
- be competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate

Statutory Requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum in England: English Programmes of Study – Key Stages 1 and 2 (2014) and in the Communication and Language and Literacy sections of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2012).

In the Early Years Foundation Stage 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 possibilities for communication.

At Key Stage 1 (Y1 and 2) children are given opportunities to learn to:

- speak confidently and listen to what others have to say.
- read and write independently and with enthusiasm.

- use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.

At KS2 (Y3-6) children are given opportunities to learn to:

- change the way they speak & write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences;
- Read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them;
- Explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works.

Subject Organisation

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

In EYFS children have opportunities to develop their communication, language and literacy skills on a daily basis in both adult led and child initiated activities. Immersion in a print rich environment promotes a reading culture and develops speaking and listening. In Reception children have daily discrete phonics sessions.

Key Stage 1

In KS1 daily discrete phonics lessons continue and are taught in ability groups, while children have daily mixed ability English lessons with an emphasis on studying a range of text-types. Word-level, sentence-level and text-level work will ensure that English skills are developed within discrete English lessons and across the curriculum. Children take part in both guided and individual reading sessions and have regular story times to develop a love of reading. Classroom environments promote a reading culture and develop speaking and listening.

Key Stage 2

In KS2 children have daily English lessons. Research shows that spelling (word-level work) and grammar and punctuation skills (sentence-level work) are best taught when led by quality texts. Children generally use quality texts as a starting point, analysing these in depth before being encouraged to write in specific genres. In this way children develop comprehension skills and scaffold writing, while applying the key principles and accurate use of grammar, spellings and punctuation in meaningful (and cross-curricula) contexts. They also are provided with clear models to promote sustained composition. Children also benefit from guided reading, spelling, grammar, handwriting sessions and daily reading aloud of a class novel. English skills are developed across the curriculum. As in earlier Key Stages, we recognise the importance of immersing children in a print rich environment to promote a reading culture and develop speaking and listening.

There are children of differing ability in all classes at Stroud Green Primary. We provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through differentiated group work, by asking children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas, using classroom assistants to support some children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals and using a variety of strategies during English lessons to address children's different learning styles e.g. thinking skills, higher order questions, planning for mastery opportunities and tasks by considering different learning styles.

Resources such as: digital texts, picture books, paintings, film and media clips, TV programmes are also used as a stimulus to engage our children.

If necessary, additional provision is made for children who require extra support through targeted teaching and/or intervention programmes.

English Planning

We carry out the curriculum planning for English in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The National Curriculum in England (2014) and the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2012) details the objectives and genres to be covered each year. Haringey Resource packs are used in KS2 classrooms to support learning and teaching and to ensure children have skills needed to be able to produce high quality written responses to texts studied. Our medium term plans give details of the main teaching units for each term. These are linked where appropriate to other curriculum areas, providing opportunities for reinforcement and enrichment. These plans define what we teach and ensure purpose, balance and distribution. Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan. This lists the specific learning objectives for each lesson including Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar, reading and writing giving the details of how the lessons are to be taught. It also includes details of how learning is appropriately differentiated to meet the needs of the children. The class teacher evaluates each child's learning from every lesson and notes it on the plan. Our Senco will work collaboratively with the Speech and Language Service and class teachers to plan for and support the language needs of our children.

Approaches to Speaking and Listening

At Stroud Green Primary we recognise the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum and that spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. We support our children so they can develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life, through a broad range of opportunities, including mock elections and debates, class assemblies, talk partners, reading buddies, drama activities, whole-school performances. We follow the guidance set out in the revised National Curriculum document (2014).

The four strands to speaking and listening are:

1. speaking;
2. listening and responding;
3. group discussion and interaction
4. drama.

These oral skills are directly taught, modelled and sensitively encouraged in whole class and small group settings throughout the curriculum and during extra-curricula activities. Interactive teaching approaches and a variety of communication strategies are used to engage all children in order to raise standards.

Our aims for learning and teaching within speaking and listening are to enable children to:

- Listen to and make sense of what they hear;
- Follow verbal instructions, with or without non-verbal cues;
- Understand what good listening is and how to respond during discussions, conversations and when information is given or asked for;
- Use communication, including talk, to communicate their needs and to develop and express their ideas;

- Develop the skills of turn taking and working collaboratively with others;
- Be taught in a way that specifically targets and supports their speech and language needs as identified (e.g. as identified on EHC Plan, in Speech and Language Advice or on a Personal Education Plan).

Opportunities across the whole curriculum are planned for and developed. Children play an active part in presentations, group discussions, debates and drama activities. Digital recordings and photographs are a means of capturing progress and keeping records.

Speech Therapists support the development of Speaking and Listening within the school.

Drama is a useful way to improve speaking and listening skills and it boosts attainment in reading and writing, as well as building confidence and esteem. Children are encouraged to use a range of dramatic forms to express feelings and ideas both verbally and non-verbally. Children are encouraged to appreciate drama both as participants and observers.

Approaches to Reading

Reading is taught both discretely and as an integral part of the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to become confident, enthusiastic, reflective and independent readers. They experience print in a variety of forms and for a variety of purposes and read for enjoyment, information and interest.

Whole class reading develops listening skills, a love of story and reading for pleasure. This is teacher-led reading of a class book or novel, with children listening and responding to questions, predictions and vocabulary choices as appropriate to the level of the children. In all year groups this happens on a daily basis.

Children also participate in shared reading that immerses children in the pattern of story and features of text types. This happens in English sessions when introducing text and prior to writing. The teacher models reading strategies as an expert reader and draws out the key elements of the content during shared reading sessions.

Guided reading is used to target children's reading skills. Guided reading takes place in small groups with teacher or teaching assistant input. Children have the opportunity to develop reading strategies and to discuss texts in detail during guided reading sessions.

In KS1 children also have the opportunity to read 1-1 with an adult at least once a week. TAs and Volunteer Readers support reading activities to ensure that children have more frequent opportunities to read with adults. As the children move through the school, opportunities to read independently for a sustained period of time are afforded to them.

Our aims for learning and teaching within reading are to enable our children to:

- read for and with other children and adults in a variety of situations;
- share personal preferences and opinions about books;
- understand the features of a book and how it works;
- have an interest in words and their meanings;
- use a range of strategies, which will help them to read with meaning, fluency, accuracy and expression;
- use appropriate reading strategies to find and interpret information;
- reflect on their reading and offer a personal response to a wide range of texts;

- understand how the format and language changes with different genre;
- use inferential skills to find meaning beyond the literal;
- appreciate the tools of the writer and the techniques used to involve the reader in the text and to build these strategies into their own writing;
- appreciate the work of individual authors, illustrators and publishers;
- read for and with other children and adults in a variety of situations;
- use a range of resources, including classroom materials, the school and local library and ICT for a range of reading materials.

Home-School Reading

Books are sent home with a reading diary to log communication with parents. Books are changed regularly with guidance from a teaching assistant or teacher if needed. Oxford Reading scheme books have a controlled vocabulary and therefore children are moved through the stages as they are able to read the key words. When confident children may choose their own chapter book to take home and these are changed regularly. Some children are also given alternative scheme books to further support their reading skills.

Parents are encouraged to read with their child daily. All children are encouraged to take real books home to read in addition to scheme books. Children can also read at home using a computer or tablet to access the Read for My School library online. Parents and carers are encouraged to report back on how their child reads at home.

The Reading Environment.

The print rich environment encourages children to interact with displays & follow instructions/signs, promoting functional language. Themed displays are encouraged along with opportunities to write book reviews in reading corners. Books are also displayed and promoted around the classroom and the whole learning environment of the school.

The school library provides reference and reading materials for children and teachers. The school encourages all children to join and use their local library and all Y3 children, supported by parents, visit the local library every fortnight, which makes a wider selection of books available to them and instils good reading habits (refer to Library Policy).

Phonics

We follow the 'Letters and Sounds' to deliver phonics teaching at the appropriate phase for our children. Classes in Y1 work collaboratively to allow for more effective differentiation and progression. There are regular opportunities for discrete phonics lessons, which follow the recommended structure set out in the 'Letters and Sounds' document. In addition to phonics, children are also encouraged to recognise words by sight.

Phonics sessions interventions are run in Y2 for specific children. Phonics activities encourage pupils to say the sound, listen for the sound and write the sound. Parents and carers are offered workshops to help them support their children. Phonics are taught in other year groups where necessary.

Approaches to Writing

At Stroud Green Primary we want our children to develop as independent, enthusiastic and expressive writers, who are able to write in a meaningful way. We encourage children to regard themselves as writers and value their own work and that of others.

Children are encouraged to develop both their gross and fine motor skills to prepare them for the experience of writing. When at the emergent stage of writing children are encouraged to mark make as a way of representing their ideas and are then encouraged to read this back, demonstrating an understanding that text carries meaning. In conjunction with regular phonics activities they can then progress to the use of symbols and recognisable letters in their mark making. Other skills that will be developed include writing from left to right and grouping symbols or letters in order to represent a word.

The compositional and transcriptional skills are taught alongside the creative aspects. Children benefit from meaningful experiences to write about as well as being immersed into a subject before being expected to write about it. Immersion in reading, talk and preparation for writing is essential to the writing development process. Children are given frequent opportunities in school to write in different contexts using quality texts as a model and for a variety of purposes and audiences. The text types are outlined in our long term curriculum plan for each year group to ensure that there is a breadth of coverage.

Writing is taught through various strategies. Shared writing is modelled by the teacher as the expert writer with contributions from the children. This is teacher-led writing with children watching and contributing ideas. Shared writing is not exclusive to English sessions and can be taught within Foundation subjects. The emphasis may be on the generation of ideas, grammatical awareness, spelling and phonics, compositional, transcriptional, presentational and text level skills or other key strategies needed in writing. The teacher as the expert writer leads the writing process.

Guided writing targets children at their point of writing. Guided writing takes place in small groups with a teaching focus using targets and writing already modelled. The main part of the session is spent by the child writing with the adult intervening as appropriate.

Throughout the school children need opportunities to develop their confidence and practise their writing skills independently. All writing activities should have a purpose and quality should be promoted through book making, publication or presentation to another audience. Independent writing takes place during extended writing sessions. Children may produce writing on their own or as part of group.

Our aims for learning and teaching within reading are to enable our children to:

- Explore a variety of writing activities;
- Use writing as a means to communicate ideas and information to a reader;
- Write in a grammatically accurate way;
- Develop an increasingly wide vocabulary suited to the purpose and genre;
- Understand and use the conventions of written language;
- Use teacher modelling as a means to understand the writing process;
- Understand how writers can have an effect on the reader;
- Incorporate ideas and skills of other authors into their own writing;
- Collaborate with others during the writing process;
- Draft and redraft, making changes where appropriate;
- Use ICT as a tool for writing;
- Use spelling and punctuation accurately and with confidence.

The school environment celebrates quality writing through displays of work in both handwritten and typed form as well as signs and labels. All classrooms have purposeful working walls and well-equipped resources to aid writing.

Approaches to Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar is taught using the objectives outlined in the Revised National Curriculum (2014). It details the expectations for the teaching of grammar and the agreed terminology (from the NC glossary) which must be used by each year group. Grammar skills are embedded within Literacy lessons but may sometimes be taught discreetly where appropriate.

When spelling becomes automatic, children can concentrate on the content of their writing and the making of meaning. Confidence in spelling can have a profound effect on the writer's self-image. In order to help children become more able spellers, confident to use an increasing range of vocabulary in their own writing, the teaching of spelling at Stroud Green Primary is as investigative as possible. We aim to use explicit, interactive teaching which draws children's attention to the origins, structure and meaning of words and their parts, the shape and sound of words, the letter patterns within them and the various ways they can learn these patterns.

In Reception and KS1, daily phonics is the key to the children's learning of spelling. This is taught using Letters and Sounds. Children are taught to blend sounds to read and segment to spell. At the same time they learn words which are not phonically regular (common exception words).

From Y2 and into KS2 the children move towards using their phonic knowledge to help them to understand spelling rules and patterns. We teach children to use their growing understanding of the morphology and etymology of words to support their spelling. Helping the children to understand how to use and apply known spelling patterns (and to develop a range of strategies to tackle tricky words) helps them to become successful spellers. Spelling skills are embedded in English lessons so strategies and rules can be taught in the context of writing. Children are encouraged to have a sound knowledge of high frequency words for use in their daily work. Children will be taught to use dictionaries and thesauruses.

When actually writing children should be concentrating on higher order thinking skills and should simply 'have a go' at spelling and underline words that they are unsure of. When marking children's work, we do not correct all spelling errors, instead we focus on high frequency words, topic words and those studied in spelling sessions.

Gaps in children's grammar and spelling knowledge are identified from on-going formative assessments. Grammar will be taught through clear modelling of writing and games which encourage the children to play with and explore grammar themes. Children will be given opportunities to practice SAT style standalone questions. Grammar and spelling are also assessed every term using the 'Rising Stars' programme.

Our aims for learning and teaching within spelling are to enable children to:

- Recognise letters and the sounds they make;
- Be able to segment words into component phonemes;

- Know which graphemes represent the phonemes in words;
- Attempt words independently using a range of strategies;
- Use a variety of resources to help with spelling e.g. dictionaries, word banks and the classroom environment;
- Use a range of strategies to learn spellings, developing an understanding of spelling patterns and rules;
- Know the meanings of the homophones, e.g. been and bean, so that the correct spelling is used;
- Recall, e.g. by mental image, by memorising order of tricky letters, 'tricky' words;
- Look for similarities in the spellings of words which are etymologically related, eg, sign, signal.

Pupil Editing and Responses

Children from Y2 to Y6 are taught to proof-read their own writing independently and to make edits with a green pen. The children are made aware that checking their work for spelling mistakes is an important part of the writing process. We discourage staff from allowing children to waste time queuing up to have their writing checked, since we do not want children to become accustomed to teachers proof-reading their work and finding all the mistakes for them. Once marked, children are expected to make written responses to the next steps provided by the teacher. They use purple pen to make written responses, in order to clearly differentiate from the editing process completed beforehand.

Dictionary Use

There are a range of dictionaries and thesauruses in each class which are differentiated in ability levels to suit the range of needs within the English lesson. As well as doing investigations using dictionaries and undertaking specific dictionary work, the children are also encouraged to have dictionaries on their tables in order to research the meaning of unknown words.

Y6 take past SAT spelling tests throughout the year, in order to address weaker areas. In addition to this, Y3, 4 and 5 children sit half-termly spelling tests as part of their Rising Stars assessments. These results are used to inform planning and next steps.

Spelling Homework

Children will have mini-spelling investigations set as homework. These tasks will be appropriate to their needs and will be linked to the spelling investigations or vocabulary work covered in the English lessons. Year group objectives for the teaching of spelling can be found in the revised English National Curriculum (2014). Specific phonic teaching can be found in the 'Letters and Sounds' handbook.

Handwriting

Neat well formed handwriting and presentation of written work helps to raise standards as the pupils take pride in and have a sense of ownership of their work. As a school we are adopting the fully cursive method of handwriting using the Charles Cripps style of joins in order to:

- raise standards in writing across the school;

- have a consistent approach when teaching handwriting and presentation of work throughout the school;
- adopt a common approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard, on displays or when making resources.

Overwriting and copying are useful tools to support and develop handwriting in the early stages. Children will be taught to use a comfortable and correct pencil grip, to form letters correctly, use upper and lower case letters appropriately and begin to use a joined style when appropriate. By the end of Y6 we want our children to be able to produce a fluent, consistently formed style of fully cursive handwriting with equal spacing between the letters and words. This should maintain a personal style that engages the reader. Children will have handwriting sessions at least once a week depending on their needs. All children will write in pencil until neat and confident enough to use pen. Pencils and handwriting pens are provided by the school. Thicker triangular pencils, pencil grips and wider lines will be used by children experiencing problems writing alongside other activities to develop their fine motor skills (Refer to Handwriting Policy)

Cross Curricular English Opportunities

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. They will plan for pupils to practise, apply and transfer the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum and vice versa. Links between lessons makes learning more meaningful and enjoyable for the children. It can also foster a greater understanding of the topic and the related vocabulary. One piece of extended writing is expected to be produced for each Humanities and Science unit.

Use of ICT

Opportunities to use ICT in English will be planned for and used as appropriate. ICT can be effectively used as an effective teaching and learning tool and in the development of English skills. Interactive technology is used to enhance the teaching of English. We use film and audio clips as stimuli for drama and writing and children have the opportunity to produce animations and multimodal texts to develop their understanding of visual literacy.

Assessment

At Stroud Green Primary we assess children's work in English on a daily basis as we make informal judgements when we observe during lessons, guided reading sessions, weekly spelling tests, marking and pupil conferences. This information informs planning and allows teachers to target teaching to the needs of the children and track progress.

On-going formative assessments closely match the learning objective as well as the individual targets of the children. Teacher assessments are made after lessons and recorded as part of teachers' evaluations on their planning. Daily and indepth weekly marking of children's independent writing is completed by the teacher providing positive comment/s that specifically link to the learning objective, and a next step, where necessary in order to move children on in their writing (see Marking Policy).

Every half term children will take Rising Stars assessments for all areas of English. These are then carefully analysed by teachers and the subject leader to inform planning and to identify whole school areas for development. We also assess children's unaided writing more formally each term. Strengths and gaps are analysed and individual targets are then

set and discussed with the children so that they are clear on how they can make progress across the next term. This writing, which reflects a range of genres, is then kept in a children's sample book. We use these to track our children's progress in writing throughout their time at Stroud Green Primary.

Inclusion

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment. Gifted children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

Equal opportunities

All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background. Cultural diversity, home languages, gender and religious beliefs are all celebrated through a wide range of texts, resources and enrichment experiences which represent the diversity and backgrounds of all our children. We believe in 'valuing what the child brings to school' and recognise the importance of supporting a child's first language, not only to foster self-esteem, but to assist in the learning of English.

Role of Subject Leader

The English Subject Leader will work in conjunction with the Senior Leadership Team to improve the standards of learning and teaching in English through:

- taking the lead in policy development;
- modelling good practice;
- monitoring and evaluating standards in English by analysing pupil progress data;
- keeping up-to-date with developments and disseminating new information to staff;
- auditing needs and organising staff training;
- monitoring curriculum coverage and the provision of English through scrutiny of planning and books, lessons observations;
- auditing the learning environment;
- purchasing and organising resources;
- supporting teachers in planning and using resources.

Parental Involvement

We aim to involve parents directly in the life of the school, and thus in the development of children's skills, knowledge and understanding in English. Parents and carers are encouraged to read both with and to their children at home and to discuss the books they read at home and at school in order to promote reading. Parents are asked to report back on how their child reads at home in their reading diaries.

In Nursery and Reception parents are invited in to take part in their children's Special Book meetings, which involve parents coming into the classroom to share the record of their children's learning journey and to contribute to this process. While in school the parent or carer has the opportunity to share books and play with their child.

There are opportunities each term when all parents can discuss their children's progress with their teacher. Strategies for supporting children are shared at these meetings. Termly curriculum letters provide information about the curriculum and how parents can support their children at home. They also emphasise the importance of reading and spelling investigations and the value of establishing homework routines.

We hold a range of information-sharing events. Family Support Workers run regular coffee mornings for families, including offering support in community languages. Reading and Writing workshops are set up each year to share ways parents can support their child at home. The Travelling Book Fair is held twice a year and Book Week is marked annually, featuring a book swap for children and adults and visiting authors. Book stalls are a regular feature of the Friends of Stroud Green's Winter, Spring and Summer Fairs. We also participate in the Read for My School scheme each year. SATs results are published in accordance with Government legislation. Policies are available online via the school website or hard copies can be requested.

Role of the Governors

Governors are kept informed about the teaching and learning of English at Stroud Green Primary. Pupil progress data is discussed at Curriculum Committee meetings and the policy is reviewed every two years or in the light of changes to legal requirements. Governors carry out learning walks and are invited to participate in work scrutiny exercises with the English Subject Leader.