

# **Policy for English**

**This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of English at Skelton Primary School.**

**English is the single most important tool for communication. It lies at the heart of understanding and is the foundation upon which effective learning and communication is based.**

**January 2004**

**Next review Summer 2006**

# **The Importance of English**

**English equips pupils with the essential skills to understand, influence and communicate with society.**

**English is of paramount importance in everyday life. It is a vital way of communicating in school, in public life and internationally.**

**In studying English pupils develop skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing. This enables pupils to express themselves creatively and imaginatively and to communicate with others effectively.**

**The study of English helps pupils to understand how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Using this knowledge, pupils can choose and adapt how they communicate in different situations.**

**English is a creative and stimulating discipline. It develops those skills necessary to enable pupils to make choices and to enter a fulfilling adult life.**

**(Rt. Hon. David Blunkett MP)  
Secretary of State for Education and Employment**

**English: The National Curriculum for England      2000**

## **AIMS**

**Our general aims in teaching English are:**

- 1. To comply with the statutory requirements of 'The National Curriculum for English' based on the 'The Framework for Teaching English, The National Literacy Strategy.'**
- 2. To develop a positive attitude to English as an attractive and stimulating subject.**
- 3. To challenge each child and ensure all pupils have the chance to succeed whatever their individual needs and the potential barriers to learning may be. Our ultimate aim, therefore, is for each individual to gain a sense of achievement. Learning English consequently, must be an experience from which pupils derive pleasure and fulfilment, not anxiety or apprehension.**
- 4. To develop an awareness of the importance and use of English in the world beyond the classroom. In doing this, children will realise how the skills of English will help them deal with situations met in everyday life.**
- 5. To develop an appreciation of literature and to promote literacy skills through the study of different text genres.**
- 6. To develop an attitude of independent learning and the ability to think with clarity, originality and creativity.**
- 7. To develop awareness that English is about communication and to foster an appreciation of how this can be effectively achieved.**
- 8. To indicate how English can contribute towards, and promote learning across the curriculum. (See English: The National Curriculum, pages 8/9)**
- 9. To actively ensure that all work is planned to allow equal access and opportunities for all children.**

# **OBJECTIVES**

**The overall objectives are those of the National Literacy Strategy.  
Pupils should:**

**Read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding;**

**Be able to orchestrate a full range of reading cues (phonic, graphic, syntactic, contextual) to monitor their reading and correct their own mistakes;**

**Understand the sound and spelling system and use this to read and spell accurately;**

**Have fluent and legible handwriting;**

**Have an interest in words and their meanings and a growing vocabulary;**

**Know, understand and be able to write in a range of genres in fiction and poetry, and understand and be familiar with some of the ways in which narratives are structured through basic literary ideas of setting, character and plot;**

**Understand, use and be able to write a range of non-fiction texts;**

**Plan, draft, revise and edit one's own writing;**

**Have a suitable technical vocabulary through which to understand and discuss their reading and writing;**

**Be interested in books, read with enjoyment and evaluate their preferences;**

**Through reading and writing, develop their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.**

**The detailed objectives of Skelton Primary School can be found in the framework of the National Literacy Strategy on pages 32 - 55.**

## **Organisation of Teaching and Learning**

The organisation of teaching and learning follows the recommendations of the National Literacy Strategy:

- **Daily period of dedicated literacy teaching time for all pupils.**
- **Direct teaching and interactive discursive work with the whole teaching group.**
- **Controlled differentiation, with all pupils engaged in work relating to a common theme.**

**Years 2 to 6 are taught in ability groups for their daily English lesson, with Group 1 (higher ability) having the greatest number of children. For example, in a year group of 75 children, the groupings would be approximately 35, 24 16.**

**The daily Literacy lesson for all year groups is an hour long and is taught, where possible, during the morning session. However, external timetabling for activities such as swimming, will at times, make this impossible.**

**The structure of the Literacy Hour follows the recommendations of the National Literacy Strategy and contains an introduction, a substantial main teaching element and a plenary session. Lessons will consist of shared text work, word/sentence work, group and independent work and a whole class plenary. Teaching will show a range of strategies used to ensure the needs (both of ability and gender) of all pupils are met.**

**Where children are taught in ability groups, they will be working on a common theme at the same time. This will enable the transfer of children between groups, as and when appropriate.**

**A new timetable has been organised to accommodate guided reading sessions throughout school.**

## Recording of Work

**Good presentation of work in English is to be encouraged at all levels. Techniques of recording need to be taught. However, a balance must be struck so those children who experience persistent difficulty with presentation are not hindered in the development of their language understanding.**

**Purposes for children recording work include:**

**Helping to clarify own thinking;**

**Acting as notes for future reference;**

**Communicating their ideas to themselves, other children, teachers and parents;**

**Providing evidence of their work in English;**

**Helping the teacher to assess ability and achievements and to plan future learning that is appropriate to the child.**

**From Year 3 children will record work in two separate books. The Extended Writing Book will contain all work connected with the development of Narrative Writing, Persuasive Writing, Poetry, Letter Writing, Information Writing and Play Scripts (and will include Sentence Level work.)**

**The red English Book contains all other Text, Word and Comprehension Work.**

## **Marking of Work**

**Marking of work in English constitutes the school's formative assessment of pupils' work and should also be in accordance with the School Marking Policy.**

**Specific marking in writing should highlight and praise particular achievements and be followed by recommendations for the next steps needed to move the individual child forward. Children are given focused time within the English lesson to read and act upon the teacher's marking.**

**There are times when it can be beneficial for the children to mark their own work.**

## **Monitoring Continuity and Progression**

**Year group team meetings ensure continuity across the classes and year group. Whole school meetings inform cross phase continuity. Literacy Co-ordinator (AST) monitors whole school progression and continuity by feeding back to all staff and Head Teacher.**

**Group assessments at the end of each unit/block of work are used to inform of progress made and to set new targets.**

**Transition meetings take place between year groups to ensure all necessary information is transferred over to allow a 'fast' start to the new academic year for all children.**

## **Schemes of Work and Planning**

**All teachers are involved in the planning of English. All planning, long, medium and short term, is done co-operatively in year group teams. Planning is done in such a way that teaching groups can be flexible, enabling children to move between groups when necessary.**

**The National Literacy Strategy is the long term planning in KS2. In KS1 planning is based on the NLS with cross-curricular references to the whole school plan of topics.**

**At the foundation stage literacy planning takes account of the school's overall curriculum plan. The early learning goals develop and lead into the NLS by the last term in reception.**

**Medium term planning in both Writing and Reading is completed each half term. Detailed objectives are listed, along with activities designed to deliver these objectives. Targets are set and assessment tasks planned to assist in the evaluation process at the end of each unit/block of work.**

**Short-term plans are drawn up weekly using a standard format. (See attached planning sheets.) IEPs are implemented for children with special educational needs.**

**Commercially available schemes of work are available for use in supporting the teaching and learning of English.**

**Such schemes are continually monitored for effectiveness and are updated where necessary.**

## **Assessment**

**Assessment in English will reflect the overall School Assessment Policy and will incorporate teacher, individual and group assessments and SATs, in accordance with National Curriculum guidelines.**

**Formal summative assessment is carried out in May/June through the use of optional SATs in all year groups. Raw scores, standardised scores and National Curriculum levels are recorded for each child in Writing, Reading Comprehension and Spelling. The Salford Sentence Reading Test (Revised) is given to each child twice during the year. Form Y is given in June and is used as a baseline in September. Form X is given in January to inform parents of progress made and to assist in setting targets for children.**

**Single Word Spelling Test (nferNelson) is given at the end of the year to provide a spelling age/standardised score for each child. This information is used as a baseline in September. For Years 3 to 6 a diagnostic test containing 20 spellings taught the previous year, is also administered in September.**

**For Nursery and Reception children the Foundation Stage Profile is used.**

**As part of the Education Action Zone, PIPS National Testing is used from Year 1 to Year 6.**

**ASPECTS (baseline test) are administered at the beginning and end of a child's time in nursery.**

**Consultation evenings take place each term. An annual written report is given to parents in Term 2 during consultation evenings. Parents are warmly welcomed into school and actively encouraged to contact school should the need ever arise. Teachers also contact parents to discuss the progress of a child and to celebrate achievement.**

### **Initiatives in English (from April 2003)**

- **Reorganisation of timetable to accommodate guided reading outside the Literacy Hour.**
- **Guided reading record sheet introduced to whole school.**
- **In Lower School all guided reading books and independent reading books have been graded according to book bands.**
- **Guided reading and individual reading records have been updated and refined to establish a consistent recording system throughout school.**
- **All Aboard Reading scheme has been purchased for Lower School and stored centrally.**
- **Newly refurbished centralised area for All Aboard reading books in Upper School has been set up.**
- **Money raised by the PTA has been spent on additional All Aboard reading books (£1015)**
- **In Lower School guided reading books have been transferred to central area.**
- **Additional home reading books purchased throughout school.**
- **Reading Recovery has been introduced to Y1.**
- **There are teaching assistants in all reception classes and each year group has at least one teaching assistant.**
- **Y3 target children participate in ALS.**
- **Y5 target children participate in FLS.**
- **EAZ provide support for Y6 target children by funding Assistant.**
- **Reception has held two literacy workshops for parents.**
- **Homework packs produced for reception children.**
- **A new Primary School library has been established (using Dewey system.)**

## **Special Needs**

**The National Literacy Strategy caters for children of all ages and abilities. In addition to greater differentiation of materials and tasks, those with special needs in literacy will be provided for with Individual Education Plans, which will include objectives for progress in literacy. Having identified the needs, the objectives are broken down into small steps and pupils will work towards these in the context of the Literacy Hour. The document 'Small Steps in English,' is used in the development of such programmes.**

**Special Needs resources are available for use within school.**

**Children who have a special talent in literacy will be catered for within their ability group. Differentiated and extension work will be given to present suitable challenges and a stimulating learning environment.**

## **The Role of the Co-ordinator**

**Key aspects of the role of the English Co-ordinator are to:**

**Take a lead in policy development.**

**Disseminate 'good practice' in Literacy teaching and provide a model for others.**

**Keep up to date with local and national developments and initiatives.**

**Support colleagues in their development of planning, of implementing the National Literacy Strategy, assessment and record keeping.**

**Monitor whole school development and ensure continuity of progression.**

**Provide support for other teachers by keeping up to date with local and national information and legal requirements, then disseminating this through INSET.**

**Liase between year groups and identify INSET needs.**

**Report to the Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher on issues relating to English teaching and learning.**

**Monitor, update and order resources.**

**Produce teaching materials.**

**A fully defined description of the role of the co-ordinator can be found in the co-ordinator's job profile.**

## **Role of Parents**

**Parental participation is greatly appreciated and actively encouraged by all staff throughout the school. Parents may assist the class teacher by listening to individual and group readers. Our school also participates in the Better Reading Partnership and parents are encouraged to follow this training and consequently come into school to work with children.**

**All year groups send out a welcome letter to inform parents of timetables and year group routines. Parents are advised of school homework timetable and policy. We ask that parents support children with weekly homework tasks when appropriate.**

**We have a long standing successful PTA, which is run by Mrs T Hill (a school governor).**

**Money from fund raising activities, organised by the PTA, is used to buy additional reading books for the children.**

## **Health and Safety**

**Teachers shall make every attempt to ensure that where language activities include apparatus with small parts, children are made aware of any possible dangers. The overhead projector/interactive whiteboard and other pieces of equipment are stored with regard to health and safety requirements. When the OHP/interactive whiteboard are in use, great care will be taken to ensure the flex is used safely. Other issues are in with our School Health and Safety Policy.**