



# **CROFTLANDS INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL**

## **English Policy**

### **Aims and objectives**

The study of English develops children's abilities to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes so 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 takes account of their listeners;
- To encourage children to listen with concentration in order 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 others contributions and the language used;
- To enable children to evaluate their own and others contributions through a range of drama activities;
- To develop confident, independent readers through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text-level knowledge;
- 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 children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work.
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### **Teaching and Learning Style.**

At Croftlands Infant and Nursery School we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English lessons. In EYFS we follow Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage. In Key Stage One we follow National Curriculum.

Our principle aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding in English:

At Key Stage One we do this through a daily lesson that has a 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 opportunity to experience a wide range of text and use a range of resources. Children use computing in English lessons where it enhances their

learning. Wherever possible we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

In the Early years we teach English as an integral part of the schools work. We relate the English aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the EYFS Curriculum. 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 through continuous provision and play.

There are children of different ability in all classes at Croftlands Infant and Nursery School. 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 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. Where possible we use classroom assistants to support some children and enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

### **English Curriculum Planning.**

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. Literacy is taught in EYFS using Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage. We carry out the curriculum planning in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). Our Medium-term plans, which we also base on the framework and guidance, give details of the main teaching objectives for each term. These plans define what we teach and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term. The English subject leader is responsible for reviewing these plans.

Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan for teaching of English. This lists the specific learning objectives for each lesson and gives details of how the lessons are to be taught. It also includes details of what each group of children will be learning. The class teacher keeps these individual plans and the class teacher and subject lead often discuss them on an informal basis.

### **Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas.**

The skills developed in English are linked to, and applied in, every subject of our curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their schoolwork.

### **Mathematics**

English contributes significantly to the teaching of mathematics in our school. Children in the foundation stage develop their understanding of number, pattern, shape and space by talking about these areas with adults and other children. Children in Key stage 1 meet stories and rhymes that rely on counting and sequencing.

### **Computing**

The use of computers enables children to use and apply their developing skills in English in a variety of ways. At Croftlands Infant and Nursery School all children have access to networked computers &

laptops in their classrooms. All classes in Key Stage 1 and the Early Years have an interactive whiteboard in their classrooms. Computing provides children with access to e-books and interactive texts for shared reading and word level work. Computing is used to provide support for writing, for example through word processing and word banks. We encourage all children to use computing as a resource for learning.

### **Teaching English to children with special educational needs.**

At our school we teach English to all children, whatever their ability. English forms part of the school's curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our English teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum and the Early Years outcomes allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style and differentiation so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the children's needs.

Intervention through School Action and School Action Plus will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs. The IEP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to English. We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning English.

### **The Core concepts, skills and aptitudes**

The Literacy Curriculum is delivered using a variety of teaching and learning styles. The Early Years curriculum is followed to ensure continuity and progression from Pre-school into Key Stage One. At the beginning of Year One, the assessments from the Early Years will enable the planned work to follow in smooth transition.

### **Approaches to Speaking and Listening**

The Four Strands of Speaking and Listening: Speaking; Listening; Group Discussion and Interaction, and Drama permeate the whole curriculum. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise reading and writing standards. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life. We aim for children to be able to speak clearly, fluently and coherently, to be able to listen attentively with understanding, pleasure and empathy, and contribute to group discussion effectively. We aim to achieve this by:

- Giving our children confidence in themselves as speakers and listeners, by showing them that we value their conversation and opinions and encouraging a respect for the views of others.

- Being aware that we provide a model for speakers and listeners in our day-to-day interactions with them and other adults in the school.
- Helping them to articulate their ideas and provide purposes and audiences for talk within a range of formal and informal situations and in individual, partner, group and class contexts.
- By providing opportunities to perform to a larger audience, in assemblies and productions, where children's efforts and skills are acknowledged by staff, parents, carers, visitors and peers.
- By providing a range of experiences where children can work collaboratively and give them opportunities to reflect on talk and explore real and imagined situations through role play, hot-seating, drama and discussions.
- By developing the child's ability to listen with attention and understanding in all areas of the curriculum and where necessary, asking and responding to questions appropriately.

### **Approaches to Reading**

#### **Early Years**

Children are taught a wide range of reading strategies, including context, picture cues, and sound/letter correspondence. The school has a variety of pre-readers and reading scheme books used by early readers.

To develop our pupils as readers we

- Build on the children's knowledge and experience of print that they bring to school and involve parents for the beginning.
- Provide a stimulating environment, where books and other reading materials are presented in an attractive and inviting way, so that children can see we value books and reading, and will enjoy reading for pleasure and information, and develop an awareness of the importance of reading in the everyday life.
- Ensure that the children are given extensive experience and access to a quality selection of a range of genre, and plan for them to have time to browse and read for pleasure as well as using books as a tool for learning.
- Provide opportunities for children to read aloud, on their own, with their peers and with their teachers and also regular opportunities to enjoy stories being read aloud to the class.
- Give opportunities to respond by talking appreciatively and critically about what they have read, discussing authors, themes, characters, settings and plots.
- Encourage children to write their own stories or poems, making books or contributing to class books so that they have opportunity to become authors.

## **Phonics – Floppy’s Phonics**

The teaching of phonic skills is embedded within English teaching in each year group. Additional provision is made each day in our Floppy’s Phonics sessions everyday. Each session comprises of “word-level” work, focusing on oral and aural phonological skills, sight vocabulary, and phonics. In each session children are also explicitly shown how to apply their developing skills to text and how to apply these to their writing. All children are grouped in accordance to their individual needs and are in phase appropriate groups.

## **Guided Reading**

Children read a variety of texts in small groups to their teacher in school on a weekly basis. Children are grouped for reading according to ability and read at an appropriate level. They are assessed regularly. Guided-reading records are kept for each reading group, in which a learning focus and progress notes are noted.

## **Shared Reading**

Regular shared reading takes place where pupils are encouraged to listen, discuss, re-enact and develop their own ideas in co-operation with others.

## **Individual Reading**

In Key Stage One, each child chooses a book from the book boxes to share at home. In this way children are encouraged to develop skills of selection and have some autonomy within a framework, to choose the book they want to read. Each child has a home to school book, where dates, titles of books read are recorded by the child. Parents are encouraged to add comments. The reading diary acts as a contact between all who hear the child read, and is an important link with home.

## **Parental Involvement**

Reading with a supportive adult is the centre of our reading philosophy and reading can be best learned with the support of both school and parents. Therefore, we actively encourage parents to participate and share in the child’s reading.

All children are encouraged to read daily. Parents and teachers can communicate in the child’s home to school book for reading on a regular basis.

We also encourage joining the local library and participation in regular summer ‘Book Trails’.

## **Approaches to Writing**

To develop our children as writers we

- Treat children as writers, from the earliest stage, who have something they will want to communicate, by building on their writing skills they have acquired and their knowledge of print form the environment.

- Provide experiences where the child can acquire confidence and a positive attitude to writing.
- Develop and sustain writing skills by providing opportunities for children to write a range of purposes and audiences.
- Use guided writing sessions to model writing skills, teaching children how to compose, amend and revise their writing.
- Teach children to become critical readers of their own writing by using self-evaluation and checking their work independently for sense, accuracy and meaning.
- Teach grammar and punctuation in the context of children's own writing, as well as exercises and word games and by modeling examples.
- Encourage children's ability to organise and present imaginative factual writing and poetry in different ways.
- Teach strategies for spelling to enable children to become confident and competent spellers.

### **Handwriting**

Handwriting begins in the Early years with mark-making and patterns. All pupils are given access to a wide range of writing tools and mediums to practice the early fine motor skills. Pupils are given opportunities to trace and follow writing patterns until they are confident of writing independently. Pupils are encouraged to develop fluent lines of correctly orientated letters from an early age and emergent writing is encouraged. We believe that discrete handwriting sessions where children's formation and pencil grip can be readily overseen should take place on at least a weekly basis and more frequently in the Early Years. Correct posture and positioning of paper or books are also emphasised during these sessions. The needs of left handed children are also taken into consideration.

Letter formation and handwriting is taught and modeled using the Nelson handwriting scheme. Individual letters are taught with flicks that lead onto a cursive script. Some children will begin to join their letters from Year One and encouraged to join their writing regularly in Year Two. Children are encouraged to think carefully about the presentation of their work and to develop clear, legible and fluent hand-writing.

### **Spelling**

Spelling is an integral part of the writing process; children who spell with ease are able to concentrate on the content of their writing. Spelling strategies are taught explicitly and important links between spelling and handwriting are made.

We gradually build children's spelling by introducing them to familiar letter strings and conventions and continue to practice those already introduced. This is taught through Literacy lessons once a week and Letters and Sounds sessions. We investigate and learn how to use common spelling patterns and frequently used prefixes and suffixes. Children will learn to spell a number of common sight words and

high frequency words. Children are taught the LOOK, SAY, REMEMBER, COVER, and WRITE, CHECK strategy for learning and checking their spellings. The use of classroom resources including displays, word banks, wordbooks and dictionaries to support spelling is actively encouraged.

### **Differentiation**

Pupil provision is related to attainment, not age. We recognize that children extend and realise their potential when they participate in a curriculum that offers challenge, learning experiences and support matched to individual needs. It is our aim to maximize each child's potential by providing appropriate resources, including the use of I.C.T. and a variety of teaching approaches, thereby personalising learning. We plan activities in Literacy that take into account individual strengths and weaknesses by offering a curriculum that allows our children to work at their own level. Children work in a variety of groupings dependent upon the nature of the activity. These include whole class, group, paired and individual work. Teachers plan visual, auditory and kinesthetic activities in order to appeal to all pupils' learning.

### **Cross curricular themes**

Throughout the school, Literacy is taught and enriched through carefully planned cross-curricular themes and interactive activities and also includes discrete literacy sessions. Teachers plan for children to practice and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through literacy lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

Teachers provide help with communication and literacy through:

- Using text that children can read and understand.
- Using visual and written materials in different formats.
- Using computing and other technological aids.
- Using alternative communication, such as signs and symbols.

### **Assessment and recording.**

Teachers assess children's work in English. The short-term assessments that teachers make as part of every lesson help teachers to adjust their daily plans. Teachers match these short-term assessments closely to the teaching objectives. They use medium-term assessments to measure progress against key objectives, and to help them plan for the next unit of work.

Teachers make long-term assessments towards the end of the school year, and they use these to assess progress against school and national targets. It is from these long-term assessments that teachers set targets for the next school year. These long-term assessments are made using end of year teaching assessments. Children undertake the national tests at the end of year 2 in reading and in spelling, punctuation and grammar. Teachers also make termly assessments of children's progress using end of year expectations in key stage one and Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage. Year one children complete the phonic screening at the end of the year. Children with S.E.N will be assessed against statement recommendations using the Rochford review.

The subject leader keeps a subject leader's file which contains tracking information for the children in each class so that she is aware of who is working above and below or at their age related level. Teachers meet regularly to review individual examples of work against the national exemplification material produced by the QCA and the DFEE.

### **Resources.**

There is an extensive range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts which are organised in genres in the reading areas. We encourage the children to take these books home whenever possible. Children have access to the Internet through their classroom computers. The library contains a range of books to support individual research. There are regular loans from the Schools Library service to improve the book resource in school. We have a wide range of guided reading materials to improve the quality of the teaching of reading.

### **Monitoring and review.**

Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the English subject leader. This 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 for English and the head teacher write an annual Action plan for English. The subject leader gives the head teacher an annual monitoring report in which she evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, and indicates areas for further improvements. This information informs the school improvement planning and action planning processes. The subject leader has specially allocated regular management time in order to enable her to review samples of the children's work and undertake lesson observations of English teaching across the school. The named governor responsible for literacy make visits to school and meets with the subject leader to review progress.