



Spring Meadow Infant and Nursery

English Curriculum

English overview

Our vision at Spring Meadow is for all children to develop a lifelong love of English and an enjoyment for literature. All children are provided with a great range of opportunities to develop and apply their English skills across the curriculum.

We aim to equip all children with the essential skills they will need for the rest of their educational journey and future careers. By the time they leave our school, we aim for all children to be able to express themselves clearly orally and in writing, take part in discussions, read fluently and have a broad and varied vocabulary. We ensure that all children are supported and encouraged to have high aspirations so they can reach their full potential.

Speaking and listening

Intent

We want children to feel confident in expressing their thoughts across a variety of situations. Our aim is for children to be able to understand their emotions and feel comfortable in communicating these. At Spring Meadow we develop and inspire creative, fluent and confident speakers. All children are encouraged to be independent and take an active part in spoken language activities at a level appropriate for them. For pre-verbal children our inclusive approach offers many other ways of communicating through Makaton, visual aids and Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC). This is a range of strategies and tools to help people who struggle with speech. These may be simple letter or picture boards or sophisticated computer-based systems. AAC helps someone to communicate as effectively as possible, in as many situations as possible.

We encourage children to share their ideas with peers and staff throughout the school ask questions, take part in discussions and construct arguments.

Implementation

We believe that speaking plays an important role in developing children's thought processes and therefore we ensure that we provide plenty of opportunities for children to build and strengthen their oracy skills.

These opportunities include:

- Talk for Writing English lessons. Talk for Writing is an approach that we use from Nursery and continues throughout the school. Talk for Writing helps children become better talkers, listeners, readers and thinkers. It uses talk, actions, drama and images to fully immerse the children in a model text and its genre. The children are engaged in talking through ideas and refining their spoken and written approaches.



- Subject specific vocabulary being taught explicitly with word banks displayed in all classrooms on working walls.
- Talk partners used in all curriculum areas.
- Paired and collaborative work, including discussions and debates
- Listening to and discussing stories as a whole class.
- All staff develop children's speaking and listening by using age-appropriate language, modelling and remodelling correct sentence structure and repetition using the my turn- your turn approach.

It is important to highlight that there are opportunities for children to develop their oracy skills outside the curriculum. These activities include:

- Assemblies.
- School Council– giving the children a chance to give their views about their school life.
- Pupil voice discussions in all subject areas.

Outside of school, we encourage parents to continue to model good speaking and listening practise including giving children opportunities to discuss their ideas, ask questions and pose arguments. Encouraging children to discuss and reflect on their day also allows them to develop their thoughts.

Reading

Intent

As an infant school, teaching our children to read is the most important thing that we do. We believe that the teaching of reading is integral to a child's understanding and appreciation of the world. We have created a learning environment and ethos which promotes a love of literature, an enjoyment of reading for pleasure where children can become Independent, enthusiastic and motivated readers so they read more, find out more, know more and become more knowledgeable. We aim to develop children's confidence in reading using a wide variety of genre and text types to share in cultural experiences. We want them to develop the vocabulary needed to increase their understanding of texts and have the skills to tackle increasingly challenging texts. These tools enable children to become resilient, independent readers. It is vitally important that they read fluently with good understanding and develop the habit of reading widely and often both for pleasure and information.

Our approach to teaching reading provides the opportunity for children to acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language. We also ensure that children develop an understanding and appreciation of the rich and varied literary heritage in England and other countries of the world. We use a wide variety of texts which demonstrate diversity and inclusion in different communities. We use a text-based approach which enables us to create opportunities for reading, discussion and opportunities to read during writing lessons and across the wider curriculum.

Reading is a key skill which is required for accessing other subjects of the curriculum. It provokes thought in children and provides the platform for them to use their imagination, broaden their perspective on the world around them enabling them to see beyond their everyday experiences. We encourage reading for pleasure through providing a choice of challenging and enriching texts as well



as building in time for children to read independently and as part of a whole class. All children have daily opportunities to read a variety of material in school, including regularly with an adult.

We seek to instill a love of reading in our children where they are passionate about literature, whilst simultaneously creating fluent and confident readers who can comprehend what they have read.

Implementation

Our adults lead by example through daily story times across the school where they share their passion for books and spark an interest in the children. Regular visits to our library ensure that children have access to a vast variety of literature across a range of genres and authors, as well as non-fiction and poetry books. Dedicated time for reading in school ensures that all children acknowledge the importance of reading and have exposure to high quality literature. By having a strong reading culture embedded in our school, new experiences are opened to our children, as well as supporting them in developing a better understanding of other cultures. Our reading books are all decodable and each child has a fully decodable book which exactly matches their phonic knowledge and reading ability. These follow the Sounds write phonics programme. Every child has their own reading record book which is a point of contact between home and school.

Writing

Intent

At Spring Meadow, we strive for all children to be able to coherently express their creative ideas in writing and be confident in writing for a variety of purposes and audiences. We aim for all children to form clear legible handwriting and to be joining letters by the end of KS1. Writing is an essential skill that they will need throughout their lives therefore we hope to prepare them for this.

Implementation

Through our use of high quality texts, we foster children's interest in writing giving them a clear audience and purpose. Children are taken on a writing journey which builds their knowledge of writing for context and purpose. The progressive curriculum builds on prior knowledge from previous years allowing the children to explore a variety of genres. The writing continuum builds in the crucial skills of planning, drafting and re-drafting their writing. Grammatical skills and spelling structures are linked to the writing genre studied and underpin the writing process. We will broaden our children's exposure to high level vocabulary and build opportunities for the new vocabulary to be used in context and in other areas of the curriculum. We want our children to apply their understanding of vocabulary and grammatical features within and across the English and the wider curriculum as well as learning spelling strategies.

Our curriculum and high expectations ensure that our children develop a strong level of written English. From Nursery, we promote a passion for writing and create a comfortable, sharing



environment across our school community where children take pride in their work. Our whole school Talk4writing approach encourages children to orally tell stories: ones they have read or listened to, as well as their own adaptations of these or even their own stories entirely. This leads to our children having a true enjoyment of stories and becoming great storytellers full of ideas that they can then put into their writing. We create exciting opportunities for the children and give them real-life experiences to write about.

We regularly practise the mechanics of handwriting and have high expectations that clear handwriting is used in all subjects. Spelling is taught both within main English sessions as well as focused independent sessions. These sessions cover specific spelling rules, as well as all common exception words.

Phonics

Intent

At Spring Meadow we use the Sounds Write phonics programme. We aim for children to read words and simple sentences by the end of Reception and become successful, confident and fluent readers by the end of Key Stage 1.

Implementation

Daily phonics and additional group sessions teach the children all of the sounds and their matching graphemes, as well as learning how to blend these in order for them to decode words on a page. We follow the systematic approach of the Sounds Write programme to plan and sequence lessons where children build upon their knowledge.

Every child is given a fully decodable reading book which is tailored to their level. This ensures that children develop an enjoyment for reading as they are able to decode every word.

Children also learn to read and spell common exception words, which are words that do not rely on phonic knowledge. The Sounds Write programme provides the opportunity to learn new sounds and revisit previous learning, practise and apply new skills in a structured but engaging way. The sounds taught in phonics lessons are referred to throughout the rest of the curriculum to consolidate, practise and apply the sounds which have been taught.