

Crofton Junior School



English Policy

January 2020

English Policy

Rationale

At Crofton Junior School we embrace the English National Curriculum (2014) and uphold that English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. It is a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for pupils, understanding language provides access to the whole curriculum.

We believe that it is important to develop a shared reading culture, which encourages pupils to become skilled and competent readers and ultimately develop a 'love for reading'. Our topics are derived around a 'driver text' in order to set a context for learning and broaden children's awareness and appreciation of the written word, whilst developing their skills as writers.

Aims

The overarching aim for English in the National Curriculum is to promote high standards of literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the written and spoken word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The National Curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

Driver Text

From September 2016, our Curriculum at Crofton Junior School is derived around a 'driver text'. This is a high quality text, chosen by the class teacher, which provides a platform for our topic curriculum. The text could last for part of a half-term, a full half-term or a whole term. Within this, the teacher should provide opportunities for children to explore a variety of literacy text-types.

Independent Reading

At Crofton Junior School, pupils (if appropriate) will be assigned an Accelerated Reader book. This will be assigned after a pupil has taken a STAR Assessment. Pupils will take 4 STAR Assessments a year to ensure they are reading books at their level. After a pupil has read a book, they will take an online quiz. This is motivating for the pupils and the teacher can track a pupil's understanding. The Reading co-ordinator will monitor Accelerated Reader.

Time must be allotted for independent reading within the classroom where children can read texts related to, or indeed the "driver text" itself. Time should also be made for children to read their Accelerated Reader book, which they should also take home daily to read at home.

As part of homework, children are required to read at least three times a week at home, and have their reading record signed by an adult to ensure this is happening. Reading Records must be given to every pupil (in order to monitor their reading habits and provide a good home-school link). Staff must check records regularly to ensure and check that children are reading regularly at home. Children who teachers feel need more regular reading in school, will be listened to by other adults including parents, Teaching Assistants and Teachers at a convenient time. If a child has read 3 times in a week they will earn a raffle ticket which then gives them the opportunity to win a prize.

Text Types

Teachers must teach a balance of text-types throughout the year. These text types can be repeated if the teacher deems this appropriate. The main aim of writing through text types is in order to give children a purpose for their writing.

Teachers may choose from:

- **Recount:** a sequential retelling of events, e.g. a diary entry, newspaper report, a blog, factual story based on people or events.
- **Instruction:** guides the reader by stating how to do/make something, how to take care of something, e.g. a guide to taming a dragon, a set of instructions for playing a game of tag rugby.
- **Narrative:** generally a fictitious story although may be based on fact. Can be written in different genres, e.g. traditional tale, adventure, mystery, science fiction, historical, ghost, flashback, time-slip, myths/ legends/ fables.
- **Report:** describes what something is or was like and provides information about it, e.g. non-chronological report e.g. on an animal, an informative leaflet, a report on a school project, a newspaper report.
- **Explanation:** explains how or why something happens or works. Is usually organised logically and/or sequentially, e.g. PowerPoint slides to explain how a bicycle works, a written outcome of a science experiment.
- **Argument and persuasion:** presents opinion and points of view which may be biased or balanced, e.g. a letter to persuade or protest, a book review, a speech, a play script.
- **Poetry:** e.g. to entertain, to reflect, to convey information, to tell a story, to share knowledge or to pass on cultural heritage.

Teaching Approach

Text types are taught following the three phase model:

- Phase 1: Familiarisation with the text-type/genre/text driver (Read stage)
- Phase 2: Capturing ideas and teacher modelling (Analyse stage)
- Phase 3: Independent application (Write stage)

Teachers follow this planning and teaching sequence when planning a unit of work.

Phase 1: Familiarisation with the text-type/genre/text driver (READ stage)

During Phase 1, pupils should be given the opportunity to explore examples of the given text-types, discuss their features and understand the purpose of the text in relation to the audience. This can be taught through shared and independent reading.

Shared Reading

This is the opportunity to share texts with children that they would not normally access or be able to interpret on their own. The reading skills taught in the shared reading sessions are usually appropriate to the age of the children rather than their reading ability. However, a skilled teacher will ensure that children of all reading abilities will be able to engage with the text and immerse in 'Book Talk'.

Phase 2: Capturing ideas and teacher modelling

During Phase 2, teachers need to ensure pupils are prepared for Phase 3 through careful scaffolding and effective modelling. This may include using the following approaches:

- Drama techniques e.g. hot seating, freeze frames, debates
- Speaking and listening opportunities e.g. group discussions, Talk4Writing imitation
- Research of knowledge/content
- Reinforcing and developing techniques identified in Phase 1
- Planning
- Drafting
- Editing

Furthermore, children need to see and discuss the writing thought process. Thus teachers should incorporate as many opportunities as possible for shared writing, where the children and the teacher write a text or a section of a text together. By sharing and creating ideas together as a class, the children may be more successful in Phase 3. Furthermore, in some instances, shared writing may then be followed up with guided writing, where the teacher focuses on a group of particular children, to further develop a skill, or support the pupils with an aspect they are finding difficult.

Phase 3: Independent application

During Phase 3, the children need to apply the skills taught in Phase 2. The level of independence may vary, depending upon the task or the outcome. The work completed must be used formatively; the teacher may revisit aspects from Phase 2 or ensure findings feed into future learning, addressing misconceptions or challenging pupils further.

When a specific text type has been taught it should be re-visited again, so that the children have the opportunity to re-apply skills they have previously learned. Please see appendix a for further guidance on the teaching of "writing".

Approaches to Spelling

Each year group will follow the Spelling Shed scheme of work thus allowing progression and coverage throughout KS2. Each class will teach discreet spelling sessions within the 'English skills' element of the timetable. The number of sessions each week will be agreed by the teacher according to the needs of the class. Spelling sessions will focus on:

- Spelling patterns, rules and statutory word lists from previous and current year groups and key stages, thereby recapping and building upon prior knowledge. (See separate Appendix from Spelling Shed Scheme for how these areas will be covered within each year group)

This approach to teaching spelling will ensure a progressive sequence of tasks, which promote an understanding of how to spell the word(s) and their meaning. It is expected that children will be able to apply spellings successfully in to their writing.

Weekly spellings, which link to the taught discreet lessons, will be provided to learn at home as part of school's homework policy. Children will then be tested on these words through dictated sentences, which are read aloud by the teacher, thereby embedding the meaning of the words. The complexity and number of words provided will be decided according to the ability of the pupil thereby providing the appropriate level of challenge.

The Application of Spelling

When a piece of written work has been completed, it is expected that spelling patterns, rules and words, which have been previously taught will be spelt correctly. If these words are mis-spelt:

- Feedback (verbal or written) will be provided enabling the pupil to respond by correcting the spelling during the writing process. Staff will use their professional judgement in identifying the number of spellings; however, they must ensure they maintain the pupil's self confidence and focus on words which the pupil is expected to know.
- Pupils should be given the opportunity to identify and correct spellings through the proofreading and editing process. The skills of proofreading and editing are implemented as a progressive process, which enables the children to become independent over time. Children may be supported in this process by:
 - An adult leading a group to identify and correct mis-spelt words;
 - Co-operative learning partners identifying mis-spelt words;
 - Mis-spelt words being highlighted;
 - The side of the line where a mis-spelt word is being highlighted;
 - Pupils identifying mis-spelt words independently within a sentence, series of sentences and then paragraph.

Approaches to Handwriting

At Crofton Junior School, all children are expected to join their handwriting and the same handwriting patten is taught in families across all year groups, which are displayed in all classrooms across school. Handwriting sessions are taught during discreet sessions and timetabled by the teacher. Sessions should occur more frequently, if needed, to ensure that children have mastered a cursive approach to handwriting before reaching Upper Key Stage 2. When children initially join Crofton Junior School, they will write in pencil. Teachers in Year 3 and 4 will award children with a pen licence when they feel children have fully mastered a cursive approach to writing. By Year 5 and Year 6 ,all children will write in pen and whilst teachers may place more emphasis on discreet handwriting sessions in Autumn term, children will be expected to write in a joined, fluent and legible style by this point. Handwriting practice will occur more through children copying up pieces of writing in best as oppose the separate, discreet sessions. Any children still struggling with handwriting in Upper Key Stage 2, may take part in a separate intervention arranged by their class teacher.

Sequence of the "families"

1. Over the Top Family

2. Top to Bottom Family
3. Top to Bottom, Back Up Family
4. Down, Round Family
5. Down the Slide Family

Throughout Key Stage 2, handwriting should be taught in the “families” with a focus on joining tricky letter strings. This should be then reinforced when children are writing in other areas of the curriculum.

Classroom Environment

Classroom displays should be used to further develop a sense of pride, by the showcasing of children’s work. Also, every classroom should have a working wall, which could include: non-negotiable spellings, shared writing, terminology, features of text-types, rules etc.

Every classroom should have a selection of books on offer, with a range of fiction and non-fiction books appropriate for the age group. Books linking to topic work may be taken from the library and School Library Service (SLS) and used within classrooms, but must be returned to the main library after use.

Assessment

An independent piece of writing (used as an assessment piece) must be completed termly and must be clearly displayed as independent piece in English books. Every term, the children’s writing should be assessed using our writing assessment grids. Independent assessed pieces of work, and writing done by the child over the course of that term, should be used when the class teacher tracks the skills the child can do, on our writing assessment grids.

Teachers should use the *NFER* tests at the end of each term to assess where children are working at in reading and in SPAG.

Interventions

If a pupil has difficulties with reading, spelling or another area of English which aren’t being addressed through quality first teaching and additional intervention work, e.g. Lexia or Rainbow words then advice must be taken from the SENCo. Referrals may be made to external professionals in order to implement specific individual programmes of work.

School Library

Our school library is located in the room to the right of the hall. The library is made up of a range books, including a variety of non-fiction and fiction for all ages and abilities across school. Additionally, there are packs of books and resources available for teachers and assistants to use in group reading sessions if you wish.

All classes have a weekly library slot where children get to visit the library and take a library book home, in addition to the Accelerated Reader reading book they have. All classes will have two children who act as librarians during this time, and maintain the library at other times within the school day. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to ensure our children know how to keep the library tidy and well ordered.

Children at Crofton Junior School are encouraged to change their reading books independently however it is the responsibility of the class teacher to ensure books are suitable and appropriate.

Additional Enrichment

Parental Involvement

Parent readers are welcomed into school to conduct 1:1 reading with children. If a parent wishes to do so, the teacher must inform Miss Watson who will accommodate for the parent where possible.

On request, staff will hold Parent's Workshops to support parents in their child's literacy development.

Author Visits and Special Days

Visits are organised by the Literacy Coordinators in order to promote literacy and inspire the pupils.

World Book Day will be celebrated every year and pupils will be issued with a voucher which entitles them to a free book. Additional days may be celebrated as necessary; the timetable for any special days will be provided by the English Coordinators and a letter will be sent out to inform parents.

We provide book fairs at least once a year to provide children and parents with the opportunity to purchase new books.

SEND Pupils

We have high expectations for all pupils and therefore the writing curriculum will be adapted to meet the needs of each individual pupil.

Monitoring

The consistent implementation and impact of this policy will be monitored on a continual basis by:

- Class teachers;
- Support staff;
- Subject leaders;
- Senior leaders;
- Governors.

Appendix (a)

Approaches to Planning and Teaching Writing

This approach involves children making links between reading and writing objectives, with a quality text being at the centre of their work. Teachers will choose fiction and non-fiction text types as vehicles for written pieces and children will read and analyse model texts similar to those in which they will eventually write. Grammar and punctuation objectives will be taught during the second stage of this approach, which gives children the necessary context to apply the grammar and punctuation skills they will need to use when writing.

Throughout the approach, children will be taught to use the process of planning, drafting, editing and proofreading in order to perfect their piece of writing. Teachers place a high value on modelling and scaffolding these key elements of writing during shared and modelled writing within writing lessons. Shared writing will involve the children (in either a group or as a whole class) contributing to a shared piece of writing scribed and guided by the teacher. Modelled writing is where the teacher will draft writing to groups of children or the whole class, sharing out loud their thought process of the content and written skills they are applying. After children have drafted their own writing, the focus of children's editing may come from the teacher's feedback (both verbal and written) or from the success criteria set out by the teacher. Proofreading will be taught as the final stage of writing and must be initially modelled by the teacher. A focus on proofreading for grammar, punctuation and spelling will be taught by the class teacher and this approach will be progressive across year groups, so that by Year 5 and 6 children are independent and confident in how to proofread their own work.

Teachers plan their units of work using the weekly literacy planning document. Objectives planned within these units come from the long term reading and writing grids for English, which include the full coverage from the programmes of study from the English National Curriculum. Units of English work should be centred around the literacy driver text, which will change every term (sometimes half-termly), and link to the topic being taught where appropriate. Whilst every effort should be made for grammar and punctuation to be taught in context, other revision or discreet sessions may take place within the "English skills" element of the timetable. Teachers will plan English skills sessions based on the needs of their class.

Lessons for English, which may have a reading, writing or spoken language objective will take place daily in each class across school.