

English Curriculum Purpose and Rationale

At Arden Forest our vision is to enable our whole school community with the skills to be happy, successful and independent life-long learners with healthy mind, bodies and spirit.

'Little Learners, Big Achievers'



Taken from Arden Forest vision statement and school motto.

Statutory Commitment

EYFS Framework – Literacy (Sept 2021)

Educational Programmes – Communication and Language

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

Educational Programmes - Literacy

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and

KS1 National Curriculum – English (2013)

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written 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.

songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

School Commitment

Our Curriculum Intent (Appendix A) identifies what opportunities and experiences our pupils have on entering our school. This also recognises what our pupils need in order that we fully enable our school vision. It maintains a fidelity to the new EYFS Statutory Framework and KS1 national Curriculum as well as a commitment to alignment across the two phases in our school. Through our English curriculum, we want to develop the children's sustained thinking skills in order that they can articulate their thoughts about their reading and writing and engage in extended conversations about their English knowledge and skills. The ability to understand their own and others' emotions will help pupils communicate better whilst developing their key personal and social skills which are needed in English when interpreting texts, developing good comprehension or even write from different viewpoints. Therefore, there is an emphasis that our English curriculum chooses high quality texts and stimuli that develops emotional Literacy and imagination.

We are also committed to our carefully planned progression for learning Phonics and Reading, through starting with mastering the initial skills of blending and segmenting in order to develop fluency and understanding of texts.

Our Growth Mindset Learning Behaviours help children develop the right attitudes to English in order that they fulfil their potential and experience success. E.g. valuing the need to be a stick-a-saurus and keep persevering when faced with challenge in Reading or Writing, or a think-a-docus when considering language choices or even a Solv-a-tops to problem solve.

Within all aspects of English, there are opportunities for pupils to develop their School Responsibilities' of being kind and respectful, learn and let others learn and keeping themselves and others safe.

Why do learners at Arden Forest Infant School need to study English?

At Arden Forest Infant School, our teaching of English supports our vision of inclusive practice and it enables all children to achieve their potential. We believe that English lessons will engage, inspire and challenge all children to communicate effectively both orally and in writing, as well as gain pleasure in reading.

'A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of

language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils, therefore, who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.' NC English 2013

Therefore, through our English lessons the children will have access to a wide range of high quality books and extracts. This will enable them to learn how to express themselves and communicate their ideas as well as take risks by experimenting with different writing genres.

The essential, basic knowledge and skills gained in English provides the foundation stones of learning in all other areas of the curriculum.

How we promote personal characteristics and relationships?

At Arden Forest Infant School, the English curriculum delivers a vast range of social, moral, spiritual and cultural aspects which reflects the school's Personal Characteristics and Relationships principles. It encourages the children to be responsible, show kindness, respect, positivity, tolerance and resilience. All of these themes are woven through our wider curriculum, but are also echoed in English by creating pleasure and interest in Reading and Writing in the wider world.

Within English, children will often have opportunities to work responsibly, sharing resources and managing their tasks. Children are encouraged to support each other positively and respectfully and to peer assess and evaluate. It may also include teamwork to produce collaborative pieces of research or writing. This demonstrates respect and tolerance for each other and each other's contributions or work as well as encourage kindness.

Children are able to develop their self-esteem, self-knowledge and self-confidence to produce different responses in Reading and Writing. Children learn how to respect different cultures within English and questioning is encouraged to consolidate understanding of controversial or sensitive issues. Together, children will experience challenge safely and understand that they can be resilient in response to changes in lessons or school.

What are the aims for the English Curriculum? (What do we want learners to be able to know and do by the time they leave Arden Forest Primary?)

Our aim is to engage, inspire and challenge children, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to communicate effectively as well as being competent and fluent readers and writers.

Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing, therefore we ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in speaking and listening skills. This includes growing the children's confidence in engaging in extended conversations and articulating their ideas and emotions by modelling sustained talk. Similarly, children will explain their understanding of books and other reading, and use talk to prepare their ideas before they write. Children will be able to make their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others.

Children will also develop competency in using their phonic knowledge to blend and segment words in reading as well as demonstrate a good understanding of the texts they have read. Phonic knowledge is prioritised in the early teaching of reading to beginners when they start school in order that they have the basic skills to begin word reading. Children will experience high quality discussion of texts with their teachers to develop their comprehension skills of different texts, including stories, non-fiction and poetry. Children will read widely in order that they can increase their vocabulary. Overtime, they will be able to read fluently and confidently, gaining enjoyment and pleasure from their reading.

In writing, children will develop their understanding of spelling and grammar rules through a progression of learning, so that they can communicate quickly and accurately as well as developing their ability to compose their ideas in writing. Children will learn how to form, articulate and communicate their ideas, organising them for a reader. Handwriting skills are taught progressively, ensuring that fine motor skills are developed. Initially there is a focus on correct letter formation before developing the skills of legibility, fluency and speed.

In order to achieve these aims, the English curriculum at Arden Forest, provides lots of first hand and real-life experiences to make learning relevant and purposeful. These opportunities will give access to a range of texts which support their social, cultural and moral development in order that we can widen their life experiences. The children will be asked questions at the beginning and end of each lesson to check they are knowing and remembering more. In English lessons the children are given the opportunity to be reflective and evaluate their work, thinking about how they can make changes and keep improving all the time. We encourage the children to take risks, experiment and reflect on their learning to develop children's perseverance and resilience in English.

Ultimately the children will maximise their learning potential in English.

How does English help our pupils to be aspirational lifelong learners?

Having good Literacy, including ability to communicate effectively, gain understanding in Reading and Writing will provide direct links to future employment. These opportunities will mean that our children will contribute to community and wider society, this might include careers in teaching, journalism, authors, advertising, I.T., administrators, lawyers, librarians, screenwriters etc. This means, being able to use the skills flexibly, even for the jobs that don't yet exist!

Why has the specific knowledge been selected?

At Arden Forest Infant School, the English curriculum is taught discreetly, with other subject areas using and applying the skills taught in English in the context of History, Geography, Science, Art etc. It is designed to help our children know and remember more. Each year, they will increase their knowledge and understanding of a range of genres and authors in both reading and writing. This provides breadth and develops greater understanding of the different purposes of both reading and writing, which is systematically built over time.

Children will gain a secure understanding of grammar, vocabulary and spelling strategies for writing and reading, to help develop the necessary knowledge and skills in readiness for KS2.

How is English implemented?

The English curriculum at Arden Forest Infant School is taught through the progression of skills and knowledge.

It is taught through:

- daily English lessons which focus on speaking and listening, spelling, grammar and vocabulary, and writing;
- daily Phonic lessons from the start of Reception until the end of Year Two
- daily Guided Reading lessons to develop comprehension and fluency
- twice weekly handwriting lessons.

Daily English lessons are structured as part of a learning journey over the week, beginning with key knowledge and skills in SPAG relevant to the genre of writing being taught, reading exemplar texts and models, practise scenarios to rehearse skills needed and write independently, producing a final written outcome. Within this, there remains flexibility in approach to teaching in order that it is fully inclusive of pupils of all ability and support is scaffolded dependent on need.

In addition to this, children apply subject specific knowledge from other areas of curriculum, alongside subject specific vocabulary to enhance and embed knowledge and help them remember more. Links across subject areas help develop wider understanding of the world.

The majority of lessons are delivered in the classroom, but some also utilise the school outdoor environment and wider localities.

Through our implementation of English, children are given opportunities to develop sustained thinking, be independent, take risks, be creative in their ideas and persevere. In turn with the support of high expectations, quality first teach and positive relationships with the teachers and adults the children experience greater resilience when faced with challenge.

Over time, learning is built on systematically.

What is the impact?

The impact of our English curriculum can be seen not only in our children's English books but also through classroom displays our pupils' conversations and the school environment. Close monitoring of English ensures that standards in teaching and learning remain high. The children's outcomes in English are also evident in the data which is inline with National statistics. This data enables us to reflect on the intent of the English curriculum and how it is being implemented, eg are our teaching strategies helpful. Regular analysis of pupil attainment and progress data also ensure outcomes from starting points follow an expected trajectory against the termly milestones as well as identify specific groups or individuals in need. This ensures children are on track during the year. Interventions provide opportunities for specific children to 'close the gap' and address any misconceptions.

Our children are given a broad range of experiences in English. The children are able to use English to help express their feelings and be unique.

Appendices:

A. Overall School Curriculum Intent

B. English aims/end points of specific stages of curriculum

- EYFS Framework and National Curriculum

C. Progression for Learning Framework for Writing, Reading, Spelling, Phonics which overarching maps that show the sequence and progression in learning from the beginning of Reception until the end of Year Two.

Arden Forest Infant School – Curriculum Intent

What do we know about our community of learners? What opportunities/experiences have they had already and what have they not yet benefited from?

Our pupils start Reception from a large number of different pre-school settings. They have a diverse range of cultural and family backgrounds which are valued and shape our unique relationships with our school community.

Communication skills vary on entry, children are often reluctant to engage in extended conversations or articulate their thinking. Children often need support to identify and moderate their own feelings and are not able to solve minor disagreements.

We have an increasing percentage of children with additional needs compared to the national average, including those with ASD. As such, communication and language, physical development and personal and social and emotional development is significantly lower for these children. Recently, many children have not been able to access outside agency support due to COVID restrictions.

When our children begin Reception, they are often confident, show curiosity and are eager to explore their environment. However, our pupils' often lack sustained thinking and focus. Children are reluctant to be independent in their learning and life skills, and often their resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge is low which is a barrier to success. They lack experience of opportunities to take calculated risks.

Children typically have good access to outdoor spaces which enable a knowledge of the natural world around and gross motor skills to be typically at age related expectations. However, children's fine motor skills are typically not as developed.

Children generally access books and stories at home. However, the ability to blend and segment in phonics is a barrier for most children which impacts on their reading and writing on entry. Most parents generally take an active role as partners in their children's learning. The majority of children show everyday application of skills in mathematics. Children usually have access to technology at home. Imagination is often good in small world and role play but children lack creativity and skill with music, art and design. We have observed that our children tend to have a limited cultural experiences of the arts or awareness of their wider community.

In September 2021, some children starting with us will have lived nearly half of their life with the pandemic.

Our Year One children spent a third of their Reception Year Learning remotely and missed a significant part of their pre-school experience due to lockdown. Our Year Two children spent a third of their time in Year One being taught remotely and missed a significant part of their Reception Year due to lockdown.

Appendix B

English aims/end points of specific stages of curriculum

EYFS Framework (September 2021)

ELG: Comprehension

Children at the expected level of development will: -

- Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary;
- Anticipate – where appropriate – key events in stories;
- Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.

ELG: Word Reading

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs;
- Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending;
- Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.

ELG: Writing

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed;
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters;
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

English STA Teacher Assessment Framework at end KS1

English Reading

Working at the expected standard

The pupil can:

- read accurately most words of two or more syllables
- read most words containing common suffixes*

- read most common exception words.

In age-appropriate¹ books, the pupil can:

- read most words accurately without overt sounding and blending, and sufficiently fluently to allow them to focus on their understanding rather than on decoding individual words
- sound out most unfamiliar words accurately, without undue hesitation.

In a book that they can already read fluently, the pupil can:

- check it makes sense to them, correcting any inaccurate reading
- answer questions and make some inferences
- explain what has happened so far in what they have read.

Working at greater depth within the expected standard

The pupil can, in a book they are reading independently:


- make inferences
- make a plausible prediction about what might happen on the basis of what has been read so far
- make links between the book they are reading and other books they have read.

English Writing

Working at the expected standard

The pupil can, after discussion with the teacher:

- write simple, coherent narratives about personal experiences and those of others (real or fictional)
- write about real events, recording these simply and clearly
- demarcate most sentences in their writing with capital letters and full stops, and use question marks correctly when required
- use present and past tense mostly correctly and consistently
- use co-ordination (e.g. or / and / but) and some subordination (e.g. when / if / that / because) to join clauses
- segment spoken words into phonemes and represent these by graphemes, spelling many of these words correctly and making phonically-plausible attempts at others
- spell many common exception words*
- form capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters

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- use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

Working at greater depth

The pupil can, after discussion with the teacher:

- write effectively and coherently for different purposes, drawing on their reading to inform the vocabulary and grammar of their writing
- make simple additions, revisions and proof-reading corrections to their own writing
- use the punctuation taught at key stage 1 mostly correctly^ • spell most common exception words*
- add suffixes to spell most words correctly in their writing (e.g. –ment, –ness, –ful, –less, –ly)*
- use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join some letters.