



English at Ashmole Primary School

'Ashmole readers develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to establish an appreciation and love of reading.'

Intent

At Ashmole Primary School, we aim to provide our children with an English Curriculum that is fun, motivating, interesting and most importantly purposeful. We strive to develop high standards of literacy through a stimulating and inspirational English Curriculum, where every child fosters a passion for English, has the opportunity to shine and reaches their full potential.

We recognise that a good grasp of English allows children to access the whole curriculum. We want to equip children with a strong command of the written and spoken word, and develop a love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

At Ashmole Primary School, our broad and rich English curriculum aims to ensure that all our children:

- 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

Implementation

Reading

At Ashmole Primary School we understand that learning to read is the foundation for future educational success.

Being able to read is the most important skill children will learn during their early schooling and has far-reaching implications for lifelong confidence and well-being. The teaching of reading at Ashmole Primary School consists of two dimensions: Phonics and Comprehension. Reading focuses on developing children's competence in both dimensions.

Phonics

Systematic way-

We use a verified Synthetic phonics teaching programme- Little Wandle Letters and Sounds- it is used daily in EYFS and KS1 to ensure virtually all children can learn to read quickly and skilfully.

Children are taught the correspondences between letters (graphemes) and sounds (phonemes). They identify and blend different letter sounds and letter combinations together ('synthesise' them) to make a word – for example, pronouncing each phoneme in shop /sh/-/o/-/p/ and then blending those phonemes to produce the word. Through this, children take the first important steps in learning to read. They can also use this knowledge to begin to spell new words they hear.

The systematic approach to teaching synthetic phonics, in Reception and Key Stage One, means that a planned, thorough approach is taken, to teach children the simplest sounds first and progressing all the way through to the most complex combinations of letters.

Using a systematic synthetic phonics approach (Little Wandle), almost all children quickly become confident and independent readers. They soon move away from the mechanics of identifying and blending letter sounds (or 'decoding' words) and start reading fluently, even when they come across words they have never heard or seen before. Once the process of reading becomes automatic and easy, they can devote all their attention to understanding the meaning of what they have read.

Comprehension

Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills are developed through children's experience of regular Guided Reading sessions with the teacher, as well as from shared reading of high-quality texts.

At Ashmole Primary School, we take a personalised approach to the teaching of comprehension skills, with all children having a specially designed Reading Journal, with each child's personal reading targets, as well as home and school reading records, which are filled in daily.

All children are encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, and to establish an appreciation and love of reading. Reading widely and often increases children's understanding and vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. At Ashmole Primary School, we believe it is essential that, by the end of their time here, all our children are able to read fluently, and with confidence. Reading for pleasure is a whole-school priority here at Ashmole Primary School and we are committed to building a whole school community that loves reading.

Writing

High quality core books are used as stimuli for a creative and stimulating writing curriculum at Ashmole Primary School. Sequences of lessons are planned around an engaging text to make writing meaningful and motivational. Award winning author's works are used and analysed to engage all children in the writing process. A variety of narrative, non-fiction and poetry text types are taught within each year group. The children are taught the purpose, generic structures and language features of each writing genre.

In composition, children are taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing to gain competence in structuring their work effectively. We use Talk4Writing to promote and develop the children's writing skills. Each of the elements is important in the production of a finished piece of writing. Effective teaching often focuses on particular aspects of this process, e.g. planning a story, an explanation, an argument, or revising a draft to change or improve it. By structuring and restructuring ideas in writing, children extend their powers of imagination, learn to express relationships, develop skills of

reasoning and critical evaluation. This, in turn, feeds back into their competence as thinkers and speakers. All children at Ashmole Primary School will have experience of developing a piece of writing.

At Ashmole Primary we recognise that writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription, that is, on spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the morphological (word structure) and orthographic (spelling structure) patterns of words. Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting. Effective composition involves articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. We incorporate a skills based approach to writing, which explicitly teaches Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling and Handwriting systematically in regular short sessions within English lessons.

Grammar and Punctuation

We recognise, that explicit knowledge of grammar is very important, as it gives us more conscious control and choice in our language. Building this knowledge is best achieved through a focus on grammar and punctuation within the teaching of reading, writing and speaking.

It is important to make children aware of key grammatical principles and their effects and to increase the range of choices open to them when they write. We feel that, by gaining a clearer understanding of how our language works, children should also gain greater control over the way they shape words into sentences and sentences into paragraphs. We believe that the teaching of grammar helps our children to become more effective writers.

Spelling

At Ashmole Primary School we want our children to become fluent and effective writers. Competent spellers need to spend less time and energy in thinking about spelling to enable them to channel their time and energy into the skills of composition, sentence structure and precise word choice.

The two factors that make English such a rich language also define its complexity: the alphabetic system and the history of the language. The alphabetic system is efficient, 26 letters creating 44 phonemes in 144 combinations to form about half a million words in current use.

At Ashmole Primary School, the key to supporting our pupils to become confident spellers lie in teaching the strategies, rules and conventions systematically and explicitly, and helping pupils recognise which strategies they can use to improve their own spelling.

Handwriting

It is our aim that all pupils should develop a fluent and legible style of handwriting. Handwriting is a movement skill and one that is best taught directly by demonstration, explanation and practice. The principal aim is that handwriting becomes an automatic process, which frees pupils to focus on the content of the writing. The correct formation of all letters needs to become automatic and may require a lot of practice, particularly in the early years and Key Stage One. In order for this to occur, handwriting is taught in ways that enhance fluency and legibility.

Handwriting is taught regularly throughout the week in Reception and Key Stage One and Key Stage Two using Penpals. Explicit teaching and practise of handwriting skills occurs in short bursts, initially during phonics teaching. As pupils learn each phoneme, the correct formation of the graphemes is modelled and monitored. The expectation is that handwriting will be explicitly taught and practised in short sessions.

Speaking and Listening

Ashmole primary School's English Curriculum reflects the importance of spoken language in children's development – linguistic, cognitive and social – across the whole curriculum. Teachers ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are key factors in developing their vocabulary, grammar and understanding for reading and writing.

We ensure that children develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and poems, and to prepare their ideas prior to writing. They are assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others and teachers should ensure children build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions. Children are also taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate.

Impact

Each English lesson has a clear objective and set outcomes for pupils in terms of knowledge and understanding and skills acquisition. Lessons are differentiated to ensure that all children are challenged.

We ensure that when assessing pupils, evidence is drawn from a wide range of sources to inform the process, including interaction with pupils during discussions and related questioning, day-to-day observations, practical activities such as artwork and role play drama, the gathering, presentation and communication of information and writing responses. The outcomes of each lesson serve to inform the teacher's developing picture of the knowledge and understanding of each pupil and to plan future learning accordingly. Outcomes are used to build an emerging picture of what the pupil knows, understands and can do.

At the end of each year, we make a summative judgement about the achievement of each pupil. At this point teachers decide upon a 'best fit' judgement as to whether the pupil has achieved and embedded the expected learning goals, exceeded expectations or is still working towards the goals. These decisions are based on the professional knowledge and judgement that teachers possess about the progress of each pupil, developed over the previous three terms, which allows an informed and holistic judgement of attainment to be made. Achievement against the learning goals for English at the end of the year is used as the basis of reporting progress to parents.