English at Monken Hadley

Curriculum Intent

English plays a central role in the life of our school and is a vital part of all lessons. By providing the children with the skills, knowledge and experience to become confident orators, writers and readers we will grow as a learning community and the children will be able to truly seek what is good, treasure what is true and do what is right. Our English strategy follows the 2014 National Curriculum and we aim to fulfil and in many cases exceed National Curriculum requirements and expectations. We ensure that we provide all children with depth, breadth and ambition in their learning – ensuring that our curriculum is well sequenced and building on knowledge and skills gained as children progress through the school. We promote a love of reading and writing whereby children want to read and write spontaneously; with enjoyment.

We encourage children to speak with clarity and confidence, developing a broad vocabulary in a range of situations from small informal groups to performances for a larger audience.

Activities are carefully designed so that children develop a passion for reading, gaining expression and fluency as they grow, showing a deep understanding of what they read and applying their reading skills in other curriculum areas. We provide a range of opportunities for children to become fluent writers: writing for a range of contexts and purposes; selecting language and styles that engage their audience.

The curriculum will engage all of our children in using these skills across our Curiosity Curriculum, providing rich opportunities for writing based on quality core texts. As a church school, the children are given regular opportunities to write in Religious Education lessons and to express their spirituality articulately. From the beginning of their journey at Monken Hadley, we encourage and equip parents and families to engage with our curriculum and extend their children's learning at home; so that we all grow as a learning community together We strive for our children to develop a passion for English to aid them in later life and to continue to grow as learners and live out our school vision for years to come.

Curriculum Implementation

English is the cornerstone of our Curiosity Curriculum and is delivered creatively. English lessons are based around quality core texts. The children's first year at Monken Hadley, in Reception, follows the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum which gives children the foundations to becoming successful readers and writers. To discover more about early reading and early writing, see our statement on EYFS. In Years 1-6, the children build on previous experiences, learning to improve their oracy (speaking and listening), reading (including word reading and comprehension) and writing (including spelling, punctuation and grammar).

Oracy: We create confident communicators through opportunities and activities planned throughout the curriculum and school life. We root English planning and lessons in the Talk for Writing approach, which gives children the opportunity to learn, perform and adapt texts. The children are also given to develop their oracy in: drama activities, class assemblies, presentations, school plays and debates; which will be in English lessons and across the curriculum. As part of oracy, the children are encouraged to develop their listening and response skills, as much as their speaking and presenting skills.

Reading: Reading begins in Reception with the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum (see our separate Early years and Early Reading documents). One part of this is systematic synthetic phonics sessions beginning in Reception and continuing throughout Year 1 and 2.

In Key Stage 2 phonics is still used as the bedrock of decoding and spelling. Children who need extra support will continue to access phonics interventions for as long as is prudent.

To give the children as much exposure to a variety of texts as possible, the curriculum includes opportunities such as reading to the pupils (in regular whole class story times), shared reading, buddy reading, guided reading, reciprocal reading and one to one reading. Reading is supported by a range of adults, including teaching assistants, reading volunteers and parent volunteers. Alongside this, children are provided opportunities to read and respond to what they are reading through activities such as meeting the author, writing a book review, showing empathy with the characters in the book, making links with similar authors or their life experience, predicting what comes next, inferring how a character feels, summarising or defining words or phrases in the text.

The children have a class reading area, which aims to motivate and inspire young readers. The school library includes a range of high quality fiction and non- fiction texts. We also have an inspiring book week every March.

Writing: Throughout their primary school life, children are given the opportunity to develop their writing through a range of genres including stories, poetry, reports, persuasive writing and factual accounts. We focus on the three purposes for writing: to inform, persuade and entertain. Ensuring the children understand their purpose for writing enables them to choose language and structures that not only match the genre but matches the purpose, engaging the reader and focusing their writing.

Writing opportunities are provided across the curriculum and the children's learning in English lessons can be applied across different subjects. Within writing lessons and via the Talk for Writing approach children: learn to plan their ideas, draft initial writing through rehearsal, edit and revise their writing and publish their work. Children are provided clear expectations on what language or structural features they should include to match the purpose of their writing and are afforded independence and creative freedom to show this how they want to as a writer.

The key to them being a good writer is the editing process and children are taught how to become reflective writers, who have the motivation, skills and experience to improve their own work. Our children are guided and challenged to understand how effective editing can successfully improve their work. This is done through checklists, peer marking, teacher conferences one to one with children and whole class feedback. Fundamental to creating fluent writers, is our teaching of spelling, punctuation, grammar and handwriting in a consistent and sequential way throughout the children's school life at Monken Hadley.

Families are equipped to support the children at home through parent workshops, parent consultations, open communication with the child's class teacher and the school Newsletter, which reinforces our desire for everybody in our community to grow as learners together.

Curriculum Impact

Children will enjoy English lessons and will have a love of reading and writing, which will equip them with the ability to be effective orators.

Children at Monken Hadley grow into confident and articulate readers and writers. They have a keen interest in understanding and shaping the world around them using their oracy, reading and writing skills in creative and inspiring ways. During their time at Monken Hadley we want the children to use the skills they have acquired in English to:

- Be fluent readers and writers, who are able to express themselves independently
- Recognise what information they need to answer a question/complete a task
- Have the tools to find out information
- Scrutinise/critique/challenge information
- Have a wide range of skills which they can use in a variety of contexts
- Work independently and cooperatively
- Have a good or better level of literacy and understanding of the English language

Teachers assess progress in a variety of ways and on a regular basis. Daily interactions and observations form the teacher's future planning decisions. Through more formal testing and teacher observation, teachers ensure children are responding to and meeting the early learning goals in EYFS and end of year expectations for the national curriculum and thereby maintain a very close eye on pupil progress over the course of the academic year and ensure that they are continuing to grow as learners.

Through high quality teaching and learning in English we aim that all children have the ability to *grow as learners; seek what is true and; do what is right.*