



HEARTS ACADEMY TRUST

English Policy

Adopted: January 2017
To be reviewed: January 2021

HEARTS Academy Trust is committed to providing a happy, caring and safe learning environment for all within a values led context, where everyone feels valued and grows in confidence and independence.

We promote **HAPPINESS** through a creative, exciting and practical curriculum, which generates a love of, and interest in, learning and a resilience and hope which supports us through challenging times.

Great value is placed on pupils' self **ESTEEM** which is developed through a positive and motivated attitude to learning, a healthy lifestyle, good social skills, self-discipline and a positive self-image.

We promote the highest standards of **ACHIEVEMENT** in all areas of the curriculum and help all pupils to fulfil their potential regardless of gender, race or ability.

We foster **RESPECT and RESPONSIBILITY** for all by establishing good relations between the school, home and community. Pupils are taught respect for themselves, others and the environment. They are also taught to take full responsibility for their own choices and responsibility for themselves and their community.

We encourage **TRUTH** and honesty in all aspects of school life – relationships, work and the curriculum and learn to trust and accept others' individuality and uniqueness.

We develop **SPIRITUALITY and SERVICE** so that calm, quiet, reflective times which support deep thought are part of school life and beauty is appreciated. We promote a service culture that reflects our duty to support and show compassion to all members of the community and not just ourselves.



Children at the HEART

English Policy

Rationale

This policy provides a set of principles on which we base our practice reflecting the requirements of the New National Curriculum 2014.

Aims

To provide:

- preparation for the future, enabling our pupils to be clear thinking and as literate and articulate in speech, reading and writing as possible.
- a rich and stimulating language environment, where speaking and listening, reading and writing are integrated.
- opportunities for pupils to be confident and reflective users of language, able to analyse and evaluate features of language.
- Opportunities to develop as people, applying the HEARTS values to their own lives.

Values

Happiness – reading is taught in a way which allows children to enjoy the pleasure of stories, poems, plays, non-fiction, instructions, talking books, e-books, labels, signs and much more. Children are given good quality literature to read and have a range of texts read to them. Our library provides a variety of reading material for children to take home and engage in. Writing supports pupils thinking and helps build resilience in tackling the challenges of transferring thoughts and feelings to words.

Esteem – the structured teaching of basic skills encourages confidence in tackling texts from the early years in school. Peer and self-assessment of writing enables children to take pride in their work. Positive attitudes to, and a curiosity about, diverse characters, settings and vocabulary support pupils' healthy and hopeful thinking. Effective displays and learning environments celebrate pupils' successes and model high expectations of what all can achieve as well as an excitement about the written word.

Achievement - individual achievement is recognised with regular basic skills assessments, individual targets and the celebration of success. All adults have high expectations of what all children can achieve and the highest achievements are displayed as models to others.

Respect and Responsibility - pupils are taught the value of books from an early age and the well-kept book corners and displays of new materials encourage a love and respect of books. Pupils are taught to be responsible, look after their book bags, the reading trolleys and general areas of the school. Positive relationships, healthy attitudes and respect for all are key features of texts chosen. Texts reflect key aspects of HEARTS values.

Truth – pupils are encouraged, through guided reading and individual reading, to discuss and evaluate books and reading material and give honest and evidence based assessments of what they have read. The discussions that we have around literature focus on key aspects of honesty and empathy and the attitudes that we value.

Spirituality and service – pupils are encouraged to listen carefully and contemplate quietly when listening to stories and poems. A range of creative resources are used as stimuli for writing and children are given time to reflect on them. Pupils are encouraged also to reflect constantly on what reading teaches them about themselves and the world that they inhabit, including our relationships with, and attitudes to, others.

We encourage our pupils to:

- read and write with confidence, fluency, understanding and enjoyment
- be able to use a full range of reading cues, (phonic, graphic, syntactic, contextual) to monitor their reading and correct their own mistakes
- use a wide range of reading materials, including electronic material.
- understand the sound and spelling system and use this to read and spell accurately.
- have fluent and legible handwriting.
- have an interest in words and their meanings and a growing vocabulary
- know, understand and be able to write in a range of genres in fiction and poetry, and understand and be familiar with some of the ways in which narratives are structured through basic literary ideas of setting, character and plot.
- understand, use and be able to write a range of non-fiction texts
- plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing
- have a suitable technical vocabulary through which to understand and discuss their reading and writing
- be interested in books and read with enjoyment and evaluate and justify their preferences.
- through reading and writing, develop their imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.

Implementation

The HEARTS Academy Trust follows a Trust wide approach to English, which is consistent in all schools that are part of the Trust. Given that English is a core subject within the National Curriculum, all KS1 & KS2 classes have five English sessions per week.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, Communication and Language and Literacy are covered throughout all of the foundation curriculum in the course of a week through each of the prime and specific areas of learning and development. Communication and language follows the prime area of learning and literacy the specific.

Cross Curricular Opportunities

Teachers will take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. They will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

English lessons will generally follow the theme of the Termly topic. Also, reading and writing skills are taught within topic lessons, to ensure these skills are embedded throughout, and writing levels remain consistently high across all lessons in a day.

The Use of ICT

Opportunities to use ICT to support teaching and learning in English will be planned for and used as appropriate. Visual English resources such as video clips are used regularly as stimuli for writing and discussion.

Additionally, iPads or laptops are regularly used in the class (following E Safety guidelines). Children can research topics, create written documents using a variety of Apps, or research relevant subjects. These are used to enhance the learning of basic skills such as spelling and handwriting also.

Subject Organisation

In Key Stage 1 and 2 The English Curriculum is delivered using the National Curriculum 2014 guidelines. In EYFS, Communication and Language and Literacy are taught through the prime and specific areas of learning and development of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum (EYFS). This ensures continuity and progression from the Foundation Stage through to the National Curriculum. Lessons are taught based on the Year group expectations, with support and scaffolding provided to low attaining children.

All English plans are stored on each of the school's central network. There are shared whole Trust medium term overviews which identify which areas will be covered over a half term. There will be weekly plans (short term) which detail learning objectives, success criteria and opportunities for modelling and child / peer assessment. Throughout the Trust, a mastery approach to English is implemented. Children spend 2/3 weeks on a genre of writing, mastering the skills required and applying them in their own writing.

Effective planning ensures:

- that there are achievable learning objectives for all of the pupils.
- that work is matched to pupils' abilities and experience.

- that the teaching is differentiated through support and scaffolding through resources
- that the teacher's & LSA's time is employed effectively throughout the lesson;
- that there is progression and continuity related to previous learning, not previous teaching
- that there are exciting and engaging activities for pupils to learn from

Approaches to Spoken Language

We aim for pupils to be able to:

- Use speech appropriate for different purposes – particularly focusing on the use of Standard English.
- Understand the effect of speech on the listener.
- Use talk to develop and express ideas and use discussion in order to learn
- Communicate meaning effectively.
- Follow verbal instructions accurately.
- Understand the importance of good listening and how to respond during discussions.
- Acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for spoken language

Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. We provide quality and varied experiences of language so that pupils develop their vocabulary and grammar and understanding for reading and writing. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise reading and writing standards. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life. Additionally, we provide opportunities for the children to practise their presentation skills, both as a speaker and listener, in line with the New National Curriculum 2014.

Reading

Pupils are encouraged to become confident, enthusiastic, critical and independent readers. They should be able to cope with print produced in a variety of forms and for a variety of purposes and read for information, interest and enjoyment.

We aim for pupils to be able to:

- Understand the features of a book and how it works.
- Have an interest in words and their meanings.
- Use a range of strategies which will help them to read with meaning, fluency, accuracy and expression.
- Use appropriate reading strategies to find and interpret information.
- Reflect on their reading and offer a personal response to a wide range of texts.
- Understand how the format and language changes with different genre.
- Use inferential skills to find meaning beyond the literal.

- Appreciate the tools of the writer and the techniques used to involve the reader in the text. Build these strategies into their own writing.
- Appreciate the work of individual authors, illustrators and publishers.
- Read for and with other children and adults in a variety of situations, including adults at home.
- Read silently and in a group with a specific focus for the reading.
- Use a range of resources, including classroom materials, the school and public libraries for a range of reading materials.
- To use ICT based reference materials for information
- Have access to a wide range of quality reading materials in a variety of genres, which reflect different cultures.
- Develop a love of reading
- Comment on a book related to the HEARTS values

Personal reading: Personal reading encourages the children to develop their reading ability using the school's structured reading scheme. The children choose a book from the appropriate band which they are encouraged to read at home to an adult as one of their homework tasks and may also read at school. Children should be moved to the next band when, in the teachers' professional judgement, the child is ready for a new challenge. In both key stages the children have a Reading Record which the child/ carer is responsible for maintaining. Children also have the opportunity to borrow books from the school library. This is a free choice which encourages reading for pleasure and pupils to carry out additional research to support their classwork or homework.

In EYFS, the Foundation Stage curriculum is followed and Literacy is taught through the prime area of communication and language and the specific area of literacy.

Reading Lessons: In EYFS and Year 1, whole class reading is included in English lessons, Topic lessons and in class story sessions. Reading skills are taught explicitly in ERR sessions (see below) and in individual reading sessions. In Year 2, Reading lessons further develop decoding skills along with more formal skills in comprehension. These lessons introduce children to a similar format to the format used in KS2, ensuring a smooth progression between Key Stages.

In KS2, reading lessons mainly take place outside of the main English session for the day. In KS2, the four reading sessions are split into two types: shared reading and reading comprehension. During shared reading the children will follow a 'close reading' format of whole class exposure of a high quality text. During this session, the teacher will use pictures, drama and known synonyms to decipher the language in the text together. Additionally, reading with expression, the use of phonics to decode and fluency are taught and practiced in these sessions.

During the reading comprehension sessions, the children are taught how to answer questions based on the text they have been looking at. The reading skills required for this have been broken down into four sub groups – retrieval, inference, language knowledge and structure. One of these four skills will be the focus for the reading comprehension session, and the teacher will model how to answer such questions, before the children have a go. This work is evidence in the back of their English books or in a SPAG & Reading book.

Moreover, reading skills are incorporated into English lessons, where appropriate. Children use their reading skills when analysing a text or a film.

Phonics

Early Reading Research (or ERR) is used as the structure for teaching Phonics in both Reception and Year 1. Children are taught to read and spell through 3 daily sessions of 15 minutes. Children learn to read high frequency words through regular practice. They learn to understand that letters and letter combinations represent sounds in words (grapheme- phoneme- correspondences or GPCs). In ERR sessions they practise quick recognition of these GPCs. The sessions also give children consistent support and practice in skills of blending these sounds to read and segmenting words into sounds to help with spelling and writing. Within each session, children practise and apply these skills in games, reading texts or writing words or sentences. Children are taught on a group basis through a strategy known as “my turn” (where teachers model how to read), “let’s do it together” (where teachers and children read together) and “your turn” (where children read on their own). Children who are not secure in applying their phonic knowledge at the end of Year 2 will continue to have regular Phonics sessions throughout Year 2.

Writing

It is important for pupils to develop as independent, enthusiastic and expressive writers, who are able to write in a meaningful way. They should be able to use a range of forms for a variety of purposes and audiences. They should be confident in their choice of genre and language style for a specific purpose. Pupils should also regard themselves as writers and value their own work and that of others.

We aim for pupils to be able to:

- Use writing as a means to communicate ideas and information to a reader.
- Write in a grammatically accurate way.
- Develop an increasingly wide vocabulary suited to the purpose and genre.
- Write in a particular genre with a good understanding of the features of that genre.
- Understand the conventions of written language.
- Use teacher modelling as a means to understand the writing process- following the Pie Corbet *Talk for Writing* Model. Each teacher personalises this approach to meet the needs of their class.
- Understand how writers can have an effect on the reader.
- Incorporate ideas and skills of other authors into their own writing.
- Collaborate with others during the writing process.
- Draft and re-draft, making significant revisions where appropriate.
- Work collaboratively with other children to discuss the editing of written work.
- Use ICT as a tool for writing.
- Use spelling, punctuation and syntax accurately and with confidence.

The school has adopted the Pie Corbet *Talk for Writing* model, which uses a clearly modelled text (written by the teachers to meet the children's needs) careful planning and shared and modelled writing to guide the children. This model is adapted by the teachers to meet the needs of each class.

All pupils will be given the opportunities to experience many forms of writing. They are encouraged to write for a variety of readerships. We place emphasis upon the process of writing as well as the product, and pupils are encouraged and helped to redraft work where necessary. Time is spent in discussing with pupils the best ways in which to present work according to its purpose.

Writing is regarded as a cross-curricular skill, and contexts and purposes for writing are often embedded in other areas of the curriculum.

In EYFS, KS1 & KS2, writing is marked in accordance with the school's marking policy. It is expected that English books are marked on a daily basis, with a lot of the feedback taking place during a lesson. In KS2 each pupil also has a writing target which is displayed in the front of their English books. Teachers will work with pupils on individual targets throughout the year and move them on to the next relevant target as they progress.

In EYFS writing is taught in 4 main ways: guided, systematic, exploratory and independent. Lessons are planned for whole group teaching and to guide the children through the literacy process. The basic skill of writing is also taught in small groups weekly through the breakthrough systematic approach focusing on basic skills and muscle memory. Children are then given lots of opportunities to apply these taught skills in exploratory focused tasks and also in independent play.

Handwriting

The *Nelson Handwriting Scheme* is taught in EYFS, KS1 and KS2. This scheme is modelled by teachers in marking and during teaching. Handwriting is also taught as independent lessons in all Key Stages, to ensure presentational standards are high and remain there. During these sessions, children practise specific joins and words that include that join. This is evidenced in their English books, to remind the children to always write in this way. Some children require intervention for handwriting, which is evidenced in a handwriting book.

Spelling

Pupils should develop as independent and accurate spellers who are confident to use an evolving and adventurous vocabulary in their own writing.

We aim for pupils to be able to:

- Attempt to spell words for themselves using a range of strategies.
- Write an increasingly wide range of words from memory. There are focus spelling lists for each year group linked to the New National Curriculum 2014.

- Use a variety of resources to help with spelling e.g. dictionaries, word banks, classroom environment, computer spell-checks
- Develop an understanding of spelling patterns and rules.
- Use a range of strategies to learn spellings, especially those mis-spelt in their own work.

In KS1 there are specific lessons focusing on spelling patterns and spelling of High Frequency words and children are given regular opportunities to practise these spellings. In KS2 the children will have a list of spellings that follow a particular rule to focus on for a week. This rule is taught in 3 spelling lessons throughout a week, working on misconceptions, ways to remember words and common patterns. Children are tested at the end of the week and at the end of each half term to ensure this knowledge has been retained.

Homework

The school's Homework Policy lays down clear guidelines with regard to English homework. The specific requirements for each year group are explained to parents at the beginning of each academic year.

Assessment

- Foundation Stage pupils are assessed through observations, activities and work scrutiny which is then recorded onto their Foundation stage profile either by written comments or given as photographic evidence.
 - Pupils are formally assessed at the end of each half term in reading, using a variety of reading tests including PIRA tests (in KS2) and previous SATs papers.
 - In Reception and KS1, pupils' progress in recognising and blending with an increasing range of Grapheme Phoneme Correspondences is assessed half termly.
 - SPAG tests are completed in KS2 half termly, which relate to the medium term plan coverage and are used to identify gaps and track progress.
 - All Teachers make individual informal assessments when and where appropriate, to ensure that progress is regularly recorded and monitored. These assessments are used to inform future planning and to set targets. '
 - Each term the pupils write an *independent* piece of work which is then marked against the termly objectives that work towards the National Curriculum end of year expectations.
 - Samples of pupils' writing as well as English books from each year group are regularly collected for work sampling and scrutiny
 - Reading ages are assessed on a yearly basis and termly for those who are attaining below the age related expectations.

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN)

Termly individual education plans (IEPs) are discussed by the class teacher and the inclusion manager (SENCO). These are then referred to by learning support assistants (LSAs) and teachers when needed. English work is differentiated for SEN pupils depending on IEPs. See SEN policy for further details.

Additional support is provided for pupils who are struggling with their spelling or not making expected progress. These groups are then reviewed and discussed each term by LSAs, class teachers and the SENCO.

Intervention groups

Intervention groups take place during assembly times and afternoons, using a mixture of short term set groups and interventions that act on what happened in that lesson. Pre-teaching is also used to prepare some children for the English lesson beforehand.

Intervention groups are flexible depending on the needs of the year group. In Year 2 and Year 6, further booster groups take place if and where necessary, to ensure the children are prepared for the end of Key Stage assessments.

Gifted and Talented pupils

The English co-ordinator will liaise with the class teachers to ensure individuals' needs are met and that appropriate targets are set and reviewed regularly. Teachers will be mindful of the extra needs of gifted and talented children and will differentiate questions and activities to allow for further progression and challenge. Please also refer to the school's Gifted and Talented Policy.

Equal Opportunities

Equal opportunities in English are addressed as follows:

- Pupils with special needs have equal access to the English curriculum through the use of differentiated learning strategies and tasks. These are based on individual needs.
- Specific teaching strategies are used to maximize access to the curriculum for pupils with specific needs
- Respect for cultural and linguistic diversity is promoted through the use of resources on multi-cultural themes.
- An awareness of other dialects and standard English encouraged through using a range of texts.
- Gender equality is promoted by ensuring that both boys and girls have access to all aspects of the English curriculum.
- Opportunities to address issues of gender, race etc are provided through discussion, texts and resources.

Partnership with Parents

We believe in the importance of working together with parents in all aspects of school life. In English, one important way parents can help their children is by reading and sharing books with their children

regularly. We use an online platform (Dojo) to share spelling and reading resources with parents and children to keep them updated on the learning in the classroom.

Parents are updated on their child's progress in English as well as the other curricular areas in the form of written reports each term. The written report in July contains details of a child's effort and attainment in English over the year. Parent-teacher consultations take place twice in the academic year.

Teachers hold workshops for parents to inform them of key elements of the English Curriculum in that key stage and give suggestions of ways that they can support their children's confidence and progress in English.

The School expects parents to be actively involved in their children's learning.