



Neston Primary School

English



Rationale

'Reading is like breathing in, writing is like breathing out.'

Pam Allyn

'Writing floats on a sea of talk.'

James Britton

At Neston Primary School we are readers, debaters and authors! We want our children to love English. We want them to have no limits to what their ambitions are and to grow up wanting to be journalists, authors, teachers, playwrights, poets, lawyers, editors... We want them to embody our Neston Promise. We all believe that, "We explore, we discover. We unlock hidden treasures, we shine and reach the stars." Our English curriculum has been carefully crafted so that our children develop their reading, writing, speaking and listening capital. We want our children to remember their English lessons in our school, to cherish these memories and embrace the opportunities they are presented with! Bringing English alive is important at Neston Primary School.

Intent

At Neston Primary School, English and the teaching of English is the foundation of our curriculum. Our aim is to ensure every single child becomes primary literate and progresses in the areas of reading, writing, speaking and listening. We recognise that each child has their own starting point upon entry to every year group and progress is measured in line with these starting points to ensure every child can celebrate success.

English at Neston Primary is not only be a daily discrete lesson, but is at the cornerstone of the entire curriculum. It is embedded within all our lessons and we strive for a high level of English for all. Through using high-quality texts, immersing children in vocabulary rich learning environments and ensuring new curriculum expectations and the progression of skills are met, the children at Neston are exposed to a language heavy, creative and continuous English curriculum which not only enables them to become primary literate but also to develop a love of reading, creative writing and purposeful speaking and listening.

When the new curriculum was implemented in 2014, many professionals commented that the creativity had been eliminated and children were expected to be taught a diet of very dry grammar and punctuation skills. At Neston, our vision is for the creativity to be at the helm of our English curriculum and for children to learn new skills in a fun and engaging way.

We recognise the importance of nurturing a culture where children love to read, take pride in their writing and can clearly and accurately adapt their language and style for a range of contexts. We want to inspire children to be confident in the art of speaking and listening and to be able to use discussion to communicate and further their learning.

Our intent is to enable children to:

- Read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- 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
- Develop a love of writing and to be able to express their thoughts and ideas clearly and creatively through the written word.
- Re-read, edit and improve their own writing
- Confidently use the essential skills of grammar, punctuation and spelling
- Acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- Use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and clearly explain their understanding and ideas
- Become competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

Implementation

We ensure that our English teaching and learning provides many purposeful opportunities for reading, writing and discussion. We use a wide variety of experiences, quality texts and resources to motivate and inspire our children. All pupils receive a daily English lesson. Teachers also ensure that cross curricular links are woven into the programme of study.

- Teachers create a positive reading and writing culture in school, where both are promoted, enjoyed and considered 'a pleasure' for all pupils.
- Promotion of reading through teachers reading out loud daily during our Snack and Story sessions (research shows that the reading age of children who were read aloud to for just 12 weeks went up an average of 8.5 months while the poorer readers, on average, doubled their reading age on average).
- Pupils in EYFS and KS1 to have daily phonics sessions, following Letters and Sounds.
- Year 1-6, to use the Spelling Shed Spelling scheme, delivering weekly sessions.
- Age appropriate spellings sent home weekly for pupils to practise their words and these are tested weekly.
- Daily whole class reading sessions in all classes, using VIPERS (child friendly reading domain terminology)
- Pupils are being adventurous with vocabulary choices.
- Pupils to acquire strategies to enable them to become independent learners in English (spelling rules and patterns and how to tackle unfamiliar words when reading/the use of Personal Dictionaries).

- Pupils to discuss and to present their ideas to each other by talking, being able to elaborate and explain themselves clearly, make presentations and participate in debates.
- Working Walls – all classes aiding pupils and guiding them through the process of reading and analysing, planning and writing (All time and genre specific 'toolkits')
- Vocabulary promoted through displays in class, all curriculum areas, enhancing and encouraging a wider use of vocabulary.
- Vocabulary mats to be used where needed and thesauruses and dictionaries which are easily accessible for pupils to use.
- Teaching a range of genres across the school (progressing in difficulty) both in English and other curriculum areas; resulting in pupils being exposed to, and knowledgeable about, literary styles, authors and genres. They can express preferences and give opinions, supported by evidence, about different texts.

Impact

The impact and measure of the above is to ensure children not only acquire the appropriate age-related knowledge linked to the English curriculum, but also skills which equip them to progress from their starting points, and within their everyday lives.

Long term pupils will:

- be confident in the art of speaking and listening and to be able to use discussion to communicate and further their learning
- be able to read fluently both for pleasure and to further their learning.
- enjoy writing across a range of genres
- Pupils of all abilities will be able to succeed in all English lessons because work will be appropriately challenging
- have a wide vocabulary and be adventurous with vocabulary choices within their writing
- have a good knowledge of how to adapt their writing based on the context and audience
- leave primary school being able to effectively apply spelling rules and patterns they have been taught
- make good and better progress from their starting points to achieve their full potential

Assessment and Monitoring in English:

The children complete Rising Star 'Optional Tests' summative assessments in January and June. The assessments are used to inform teaching and learning and to identify weaknesses in individuals and the class. These are reviewed by teachers and subject leaders in follow up pupil progress meetings. The subject leader identifies whole school weaknesses and incorporates them into subject action plans. The June tests help to inform teacher judgements based on end of year age-related expectations (ARES).

The impact of our English curriculum is measured through the monitoring cycle in school, lesson observations, book monitoring and learning walks.

