

# Richmond Avenue Primary and Nursery School

## Subject Rationale



### English

#### **Ethos**

Our aim is to create a rich learning environment, enabling every pupil to fulfil their potential. We are committed to the highest possible educational standards, with a matching concern for the personal growth and development of each pupil.

#### **Intent**

At Richmond Avenue Primary and Nursery School, we aim to create a positive reading and writing culture where both are promoted, enjoyed and considered a pleasure for all pupils. We have a rigorous, well organised and progressive English curriculum that provides many purposeful opportunities for reading, writing and discussion. Our book-based curriculum gives pupils access to a wide variety of high-quality texts so they will develop a love of reading and a good knowledge of a range of authors, genres and text types to ensure they develop a cultural and diverse understanding of the world around them.

#### **Implementation**

We ensure that the teaching of English provides many purposeful opportunities for reading, writing and discussion using a wide variety of experiences, high quality texts and resources to motivate and inspire our children.

All pupils receive a daily English lesson. Teachers also ensure that cross curricular links with concurrent themed work are woven into the long and medium-term plans.

Early reading is supported through the teaching of a systematic, synthetic phonics approach which is prioritised from nursery onwards. This approach allows on-going assessment and early intervention where necessary. In EYFS and KS1, children receive a daily phonics session and, while at this stage of reading, have access to phonically decodable books in order to allow them to practise and improve their reading skills. This is combined with age appropriate high-quality class texts which are used to improve and develop comprehension, language and vocabulary skills. From Year 1 onwards, and where appropriate in reception, spellings are sent home weekly for pupils to practise, these spellings are linked to the spelling pattern and/or sound/phoneme that is being taught that week.

Regular whole class guided reading is taught across the school to develop comprehension skills (through the VIPERS approach) and ensure all children are exposed to a vocabulary-rich reading experience. Pupils are then encouraged to be adventurous with vocabulary choices in their own writing. Vocabulary is promoted through displays in class, all curriculum areas, enhancing and encouraging a wider use of vocabulary.

Reading for pleasure is also promoted through teachers reading out loud regularly to their classes as well as regular author visits, reading newsletters and whole school book weeks.

In order to help us to develop confident, enthusiastic writers who can express themselves in a variety of different styles and across a variety of contexts, our teaching of writing is often cross-curricular and linked to our class topics. This provides our children with regular opportunities to write for a range of purposes and audiences. Writing tasks are specific and meaningful, and often

meet a purpose to engage children and to illustrate how their writing skills can be applied to real life contexts.

Teaching a range of genres across the school (progressing in difficulty) both in English and other curriculum areas, results in pupils being exposed to, and having knowledge of, a variety of literary styles, authors and genres. They can express preferences and give opinions, supported by evidence, about different texts.

Early writing begins in nursery with children being encouraged to 'mark make' and talk about their work. This progresses to writing of individual sounds and words in phonics lessons.

Writing sequences are planned to incorporate modelled, shared, guided and independent writing which lead up to a final, edited composition.

Pupils discuss and present their ideas to each other by talking to a learning partner, being able to elaborate and explain themselves clearly, make presentations and participate in debates.

Grammar and punctuation skills are taught in targeted grammar lessons as well as within the writing sequence. The skills being taught are selected to work within the particular genre as well as being progressive across the school.

Handwriting is taught through the development of fine and gross motor skills in the early years, allowing children to develop more pencil control and finally form letters. The Penpals handwriting scheme is used across the school with the expectation that by year 6, children maintain legibility in joined writing when writing at speed.

### **Impact**

Pupils at Richmond engage well within English lessons and enjoy the class texts that are central to their curriculum. The progress they make is tracked and, together with formal and informal assessments in reading and regular moderated writing tasks, form the basis of professional discussion in, staff meetings, teachers 'Teaching and Learning' meetings with senior leaders as well as across the trust. Each pupil's attainment of lesson objectives is also tracked on target sheets in their books so that next steps can be planned for and children are aware of them.

Outcomes of work show evidence of the high quality of work and the impact of varied and cross-curricular writing opportunities.