



COLLIS PRIMARY SCHOOL

LITERACY POLICY

MISSION STATEMENT

At Collis Primary School we believe that it is the right of every child to become a competent and confident user of the English language. We aim to deliver high quality teaching which takes different learning styles into account, and to support and encourage all children to achieve their full potential. We strive to cultivate a real enjoyment of reading and writing.

Our Literacy curriculum is guided mainly by the renewed literacy framework.

AIMS

Our aim is that, by the end of year 6, all pupils will:

- 1) Be able to read with confidence, fluency and understanding.
- 2) Be interested in and show an appreciation of books, read with enjoyment and be able to evaluate and justify their preferences.
- 3) Be able to communicate effectively in writing using a broad vocabulary.
- 4) Be able to write in a range of genres using suitable and appropriate VCOP (vocabulary, connectives, openers and punctuation).
- 5) Be able to listen carefully with understanding and empathy.
- 6) Have an interest in words and a suitable technical vocabulary to articulate their responses.
- 7) Be developing the powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.
- 8) Have fluent and legible handwriting.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum English Document (2000) and in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (2008).

Foundation Stage (The Early Years)

Children should be given opportunities to:

- Speak, listen to and represent ideas in their activities.
- Use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum.
- Become immersed in an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication.

At Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2)

Children should learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They should begin to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They should use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.

At Key Stage Two (Years 3-6)

Children should learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They should read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They should explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works.

SUBJECT ORGANISATION

The English Curriculum is delivered using the Primary National Strategy Framework. The Early Learning Goals are followed to ensure continuity and progression from the Foundation Stage through to the National Curriculum.

In the autumn term of year 1, the children generally sit in mixed ability groups for Literacy. However, they will sometimes be grouped by ability when appropriate. Towards the end of the year, the children are increasingly grouped by ability.

From year 2, Children are grouped according to ability within the class for Literacy and work is differentiated in many ways: by outcome, mixed ability paired work, setting different activities. The year 5 and 6 classes are supported by an extra teacher for two literacy sessions a week. This teacher works with a small group of children who require extra support.

Lessons are planned using the new primary framework.

Teachers ensure that a variety of genres are taught within each term. This is evident in medium term planning.

Each unit will include opportunities for speaking, listening, drama and group discussion activities where appropriate.

Within each unit, spelling and VCOP is explicitly planned for.

Teachers plan using the appropriate planning format for their key stage.

STRUCTURE

We believe that communication and language with opportunities to explore reading and writing underpins children's future learning.

The practice in The Early Years Foundation Stage will follow the EYFS Framework and will work towards meeting the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year.

Nursery and Reception

The daily routine will include planned and spontaneous activities that include:

- A wealth of opportunities to develop and experience speaking and listening;

- Experiences that develop gross and fine motor skills through play and handwriting activities e.g sand-tray writing, tracing;
- Sharing and enjoying a range of rhymes, songs, stories and books;
- Immersion in a rich print environment with opportunities for oral language and written communication;
- Opportunities for imaginative, structured play;
- An extensive range of literacy activities which will lay the foundations for the development of reading and writing.

KS1

The teaching of literacy in KS1 will include:

- Explicitly taught and planned daily sessions following the guidance and objectives of the New Literacy Framework;
- Speaking and listening, drama and group activities e.g. role play, pair/group talk, and hot-seating (interviewing a child in role as a character), in order to prepare pupils for the writing process;
- Word level work with daily teaching of phonics guided by ‘Letters and Sounds’ (DfES 2007) and ‘LCP Phonics’;
- Sentence level work led by quality texts to develop grammatical awareness and punctuation skills;
- Text level work using a range of genres to develop comprehension and composition skills;
- Letter formation and handwriting taught and modelled using the cursive script
- Immersion in a print rich environment that promotes a reading culture and develops children’s oral and written communication

KS2

The teaching of literacy in KS2 will include:

- Explicitly taught and planned daily sessions following the guidance and objectives of the New Literacy Framework;
- A range of text types, including cross-curricular writing, modelled to promote sustained composition;
- Text level work involving reading a range of genres to develop comprehension skills and scaffold writing;
- Sentence level work led by quality texts to develop grammatical awareness and punctuation skills;
- Word level work with explicit teaching of spelling strategies and rules and phonics where required;
- A wide range of opportunities for speaking and listening, group discussion and drama activities;
- Regular opportunities for handwriting practice and an awareness of the need to adapt handwriting for specific purpose;
- Immersion in a text rich environment which promotes a reading culture

APPROACHES TO SPEAKING AND LISTENING

The four strands of speaking and listening: speaking, listening, group discussions and interaction and drama permeate the whole curriculum. 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. They play an active part in presentations, topic talks, group discussions, debates and drama activities on a weekly basis. All children take part in assemblies to the whole school and year 6 host an annual end of year production. Children in year 3 and 4 take part in a production at the end of the autumn term. Digital cameras and photos are often used as a means of capturing work and also enable pupils to evaluate their own performance.

APPROACHES TO READING

We believe in developing a reading culture throughout the school by creating welcoming book areas in classrooms, a very well-stocked infant and junior library and raising the profile of reading through a print rich environment and special events.

We use a systematic approach for teaching phonics and segmenting and blending in foundation stage and KS1, and KS2 where appropriate.

Reading is taught through:

- Whole class reading that develops listening skills, a love of story and reading for pleasure.

This is teacher led reading with children listening and responding to questions, predictions and vocabulary choices as appropriate to the level of the child.

- Shared reading that immerses children in the pattern of story and features of text types.

This happens in literacy sessions when introducing texts and prior to writing. The teacher models as an expert reader and draws out the key elements of the content. In KS1, this will often involve the sharing of a 'Big Book'.

Texts will be displayed on the interactive whiteboards where possible.

- Guided reading that targets children's reading skills

Guided reading takes place in small groups using a levelled text. There are sets of guided reading books available for each year group.

- Independent reading in school and at home.

Nursery children take home a book from their library at least once a week. They read the book at school with an adult first. Children who have more developed reading skills will be encouraged to change their books more often. In reception and KS1, reading scheme books are sent home with a reading record for communication with parents. In reception, children start to take a reading book or activity home from January twice a week. Children in year 1 take home three books a week. In year 2, the children begin to take more responsibility for their own reading; they take a book home every day and change it when needed. The reading books are colour coded using the Cliff Moon system. Children are moved up the colour bands when appropriate at the discretion of the class teacher. We use books from a range of different schemes including Jolly Phonics, Jelly and Bean, Floppy's Phonics, Oxford Reading Tree, Usborne and Rigby. Pupils also choose a book weekly from the infant library to look at with their parents

In KS2, children may choose their own books from the library. The books in the library are also colour banded and the teachers monitor the children's progress, moving the children up reading bands when appropriate. Some children are also given scheme books when necessary. KS2 classes have a daily time after lunch break for quiet, independent reading. Children are encouraged to read at home on a daily basis and to record their reading in their diaries which are checked by class teachers.

- The reading environment

The print rich environment encourages children to interact with displays, to follow instructions and signs, promoting functional language. Within the classrooms, there is a reading area which has a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books appropriate to the age group. Children are free to choose books from this area and may also take them home.

The school libraries provide reading materials for teacher and pupils.

- The junior library is open at lunchtimes for pupils to use either to change books or as a quiet area. It is also open during the afternoon session, when teachers can visit with their whole class or can send pupils independently to change books.
- The infant library is used by the reception and KS1 children weekly when they select a book. Classes also use the library for story sessions.

APPROACHES TO WRITING

We believe that writing should be a creative/developmental process both at a functional and an imaginative level. All attempts at writing are valued and we believe that all children have the potential to be successful writers. The compositional and transcriptional skills are taught alongside the creative aspects.

Writing is taught through:

1. Shared writing that is modelled by the teacher as the expert writer with contributions from the children.

This is teacher-led with children watching and contributing ideas. The emphasis may be on the generation of ideas, grammatical awareness, spelling and phonics, compositional, transcriptional, presentational and text level skills or other key strategies needed in writing.

2. Guided Writing

Guided writing takes place in small groups with a teaching focus using targets and writing already modelled.

3. Opportunities for developmental writing

In Foundation Stage, children experience writing in a range of settings and opportunities for developmental writing are available through all areas of learning and throughout the learning environment.

Children's own attempts at early writing are celebrated and promoted, alongside the direct teaching of the key skills that will enable the children to progress through the stages of writing development.

In Foundation Stage and KS1, children's writing that needs interpretation will be transcribed by a teacher or adult working with the group.

Independent writing

Throughout the school, the children are given opportunities to develop their confidence and practise their writing skills. Wherever possible, writing activities are given a purpose and audience, e.g. through book making or presentations of their work. Independent writing will always be preceded by looking at similar texts and practising the skills necessary so that pupils feel confident to write their own texts. Independent writing is supported through the use of dictionaries, word banks, prompt cards, writing frames and I.C.T where appropriate.

Writing environment

The school environment celebrates quality writing through displays of work in both handwritten and typed form. Writing is an integral part of every day at school. Adults in the school act as good role models and functional and creative writing is demonstrated by staff and visitors.

Handwriting

Children in nursery and reception develop their early hand co-ordination skills through a variety of activities such as tracing, threading activities and pattern-making in sand, paint, shaving foam, chalk etc. Reception children are also taught handwriting more formally, practising the pre-cursive script on whiteboards and then paper.

Handwriting and letter formation is explicitly taught in KS1, and KS2 where appropriate. The school uses the cursive script with lead-ins and lead-outs to aid the development of joining. There is at least one session a week dedicated to practising handwriting. Children who need extra input will often take part in an additional small group session with a T.A. Pupils are taught that they may need to alter their handwriting for different purposes and are encouraged to use their best presentation when producing a final version of their work. Support is given to those with poor pencil grip through triangular pencils and pencil grips, writing slopes and a range of different handwriting paper. OT advice is sought regarding children who continue to experience handwriting difficulties despite extra support. Left-handed writers should be sat on the left hand side of the table. Children in Foundation stage and KS1 write in pencil, and handwriting pens are introduced from year 3 as appropriate. Some children may be permitted to use biros in special circumstances.

PHONICS/SPELLING

Phonics is taught explicitly in foundation stage and KS1 (using ‘Jolly Phonics’ and ‘Letters and Sounds’) and where necessary in KS2.

In nursery, the children develop their awareness of sounds with an emphasis on speaking and listening using songs, rhyme, story and drama. They develop their skills in orally segmenting and blending sounds. We believe that the more words children know and understand before they start on a systematic programme of phonic work, the better equipped they are to succeed.

In reception, children begin to receive systematic phonics teaching. The teachers deliver the first year of ‘Jolly Phonics’, covering all 42 sounds, some alternative vowel spellings and 60 tricky words.

In KS1 phonics is taught discretely for at least 10 minutes a day and is also integrated into other work as appropriate. Spelling homework is sent out once a week starting from the spring term in year 1.

By the end of year 2, the children complete up to stage 6 in ‘Letters and Sounds’. The ‘Letters and Sounds’ programme teaches synthetic phonics and is available to parents on request.

Children are grouped into 4 sets for spelling in years 3-6 depending on ability. Children are taught in these sets for one 40 minute session a week and are given spelling

homework weekly to complete in years 5 and 6, and fortnightly in years 3 and 4. Spelling work often takes the form of investigations and encourages children to take an interest in and be excited by words. Testing will be carried out when appropriate, usually at the end of a unit. Most sets in a year group focus on the same sound/rule but work is differentiated according to the group. Word level work within the literacy session also focuses on this sound/rule.

VCOP

VCOP (vocabulary, connectives, openers and punctuation) is explicitly taught to the children throughout the school as an aid to improve the quality of their writing. Classrooms contain visual prompts and VCOP is often highlighted within the marking of pupil's work. The older pupils are also encouraged to self mark for VCOP in their own writing. In year 6, this is extended to include figurative language (VCOFP).

CROSS-CURRICULAR LITERACY OPPORTUNITIES

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. Cross-curricular links are identified on the Literacy medium term planning. Teachers will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through literacy lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

ICT

ICT is used to enhance the learning experience and support effective teaching. All classes have an interactive whiteboard and there are a range of literacy programmes available to support the teaching and acquisition of literacy skills (Literacy World, LCP phonics, 2 simple, Espresso, VCOP games and Story Starters). ICT links suggested in the primary framework are implemented where appropriate or possible depending on resources.

I.C.T may also be used for pupils to present their work when appropriate through the use of power-point, digital movies, recordings or word processing. Children may also use I.C.T programmes to target their individual needs e.g clicker, word shark.

ASSESSMENT

Work will be assessed in line with the school assessment policy.

The short-term assessments that teachers make as part of every lesson help them to adjust their daily plans. They match these short-term assessments closely to the teaching objectives. Written or verbal feedback is given to help guide children's progress.

Marking of written work provides a positive comment and a target where necessary in order to move the children on. Older children are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own work.

The children's writing is assessed in the autumn and spring terms (yrs 1-6) using the 'Criterion Scale'. Individual targets are then set which are shared with the children so that they are clear about how they can make progress across the next term (from the Spring term in year 1). These assessments are also used to inform future planning.

In the summer term, the children in years 3, 4 and 5 are assessed in writing using the optional national tests. Children in years 2 and 6 are assessed using the national tests. Children in year 1 complete a piece of independent writing which is assessed using the criterion scale.

The subject leader keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio. This demonstrates what the expected level of achievement is in English in each year of the school.

KS1 teachers assess pupils' reading termly in order to track their progress and inform planning. Pupils are assessed using informal observations, reading conferences, guided reading sessions, and their position within the reading bands.

In KS2, pupils are assessed termly in reading using testing and informal observations.

Writing and reading levels are recorded termly on a tracking sheet and children who are not 'on track' can then be identified and supported as appropriate.

Parents will be informed of their child's progress at parent/teacher consultations and in the end of year report.

INCLUSION

In all classes, children have a wide range of abilities, and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons we do it through differentiated group work, while in others we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use classroom assistants to support some children, and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment. Gifted children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided (see G AND T policy).

Intervention through School Action and School Action Plus will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs. The IEP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to English.

INTERVENTION/SETTING

Additional support is provided by a qualified teacher for those children falling behind age appropriate levels during 2 literacy sessions a week in years 5 and 6. This support takes the form of small group work, and broadly covers the same objectives as those being taught in class, but at a level suitable for the children involved.

Support Materials used:

In year 1, the ELS support materials are used in the spring term.

In year 2, booster sessions are provided in the autumn/spring terms.

In year 3, the 'Kit's Quest' support programme is used in the spring term.

In year 6, booster sessions are provided in the run-up to SATs.

Each year group also utilises their T.A as appropriate for their cohort, either to work 1:1 with identified children, or taking reading/writing skills groups.

The SENCO also undertakes some small group work with children in year 3/4 requiring extra support. The nature of this support and where it is targeted will depend on the needs of the children in the current years 3/4 cohort.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

ROLE OF SUBJECT LEADER

The subject leader should be responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in literacy through:

- Modelling good practice;
- Being responsible for the upgrading and ordering of resources;
- Keeping informed about developments and new initiatives to support the teaching of language and literacy and ensure staff are informed;
- Auditing needs and organising staff training;
- Training staff in the teaching and learning of literacy;
- Monitoring planning, scrutinising of books and observing lessons to provide constructive feedback;
- Organising literacy events to promote the subject across the school;
- Updating the school policy.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents' involvement with their child's Literacy learning is highly valued in the school. Parents are encouraged to read at home with their children on a regular basis and reading diaries are used throughout the school as a means of communication. Many parent volunteers come into school weekly to hear the children read or work with groups.

SPECIAL EVENTS

We hold many special events at Collis in order to promote literacy and foster an enjoyment of, and positive attitude towards the subject.

We celebrate World Book Day annually, when pupils and staff dress up as a book character for the day and children take part in a day of book related activities.

We also have many other Literacy related events throughout the year e.g. author visits, theatre group visits, sponsored reads and competitions (e.g. extreme reading, explore national writing competition).

Anna Silverman
Literacy Co-ordinator
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