

GLAPTON PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL
ENGLISH POLICY
January 2004

STATEMENT OF BELIEF

At Glapton we recognise that English is a high status, core National Curriculum subject.

We recognise that the ability to use Literacy skills effectively through speaking, listening reading and writing is a valuable life skill. To be an effective reader is a skill, which enhances good communication and can bring quality and pleasure to a child's life.

We believe that the teaching of literacy and literacy skills is crucial to the healthy development of each child as learner. Literacy is the key to successful learning for the great majority of children. We recognise the high curriculum value that needs to be afforded to literacy.

We believe the teaching of Literacy and literacy skills should begin as soon as each child begins its learning career with us at Glapton. We actively seek to encourage parents to begin the process of acquiring preliterary skills before the children join us in the nursery aged three. This is done by holding an induction meeting for parent to explain the work of the nursery and the role of the parent in supporting their child.

We endorse the philosophy behind the National Literacy Strategy (1998) and in accord with that philosophy, we plan a structured programme of learning for literacy throughout our school.

Aim

We want our children to be enthusiastic, responsive and knowledgeable communicators. We want them to use their skills with English to be successful and to enjoy the world around them. We aim to continually strive to raise standards in English at Glapton School.

Objective.

To achieve our aims we will give our children opportunities to develop their understanding and use of English. We will do this through planned schemes of work based wherever appropriate on the National Literacy Strategy framework for teaching.

It is our policy to teach English (Literacy) by methods, which are structured, and teacher led. We believe teachers are the essential resource for the teaching of Literacy.

We will measure achievement through regular assessment and testing of the children's achievements. Standards are measured against our own and National achievements. We set targets based on our previous performance for raising achievement across all year groups in English.

Assessment on entry to and exit from our nursery informs our teaching and enables us to set targets for individual children within the Foundation Stage. The L.E.A. Foundation Profile assess the children on entry and enables staff to set targets for individual children throughout their time in the Foundation Stage. They are assessed through planned observations in the

nursery setting, these are recorded on their Pupil Progress sheets and by more formal assessment culminating in the NFER 5 test at the end of the Reception year.

The Planned Scheme of Work

Overall language skill and development

Nursery / Reception:- ‘The Foundation Stage’

Children learn language and literature through working towards the Early Learning Goals within the Foundation Curriculum. Work is planned long, medium and short term. Stimuli come from a variety of resources and materials. The main resource is Yr R Collins Focus on Literacy and Progression in Phonics. In consultation with the literacy co-ordinator Jolly Phonics may be introduced as an additional resource to support less able children. Older children take library books home weekly to share with parents. We give parental involvement a high value from the very beginning. Story sacks provide an opportunity for parents to share books and reading related activities with their child. We provide a continuing programme of literature based events to stimulate the children’s imagination and interest. The Framework for teaching Literacy is used as a base for planning literacy instruction in the second Nursery Year and into Reception. We believe this prepares the children for the main school environment. The Nursery and reception class form the Foundation Stage unit. They plan and work closely together.

Key Stage One

The scheme of work for Key Stage One is planned in a highly structured way following the guidelines and expectations of the National Literacy Strategy. The Medium-term planning is taken from the Collins ‘Focus on Literacy’ scheme for Year One and Year Two. The weekly planning is delivered from this and also from a variety of other sources. Where appropriate we use blocked unit of work modelled on ‘Developing Early Writing’. Cambridge ‘Cornerstones in Writing’ also supports and develops writing at KS1. Other materials used are the Oxford Reading Tree scheme, Letts comprehension, and teacher produced materials.

Reading books are sent home for practice and sharing with parents. Children are expected to reinforce and build a wide sight vocabulary, individual reading skills and understanding of text. Phonological knowledge and high frequency words are assessed regularly and lists of words are sent home to learn.

To improve standards in writing children are set in Key Stage One and in Year Two are given an additional writing lesson each week, there are also booster sessions in the Spring term. The purpose of this is to reinforce essential skills.

Children in Year Two are sensitively and thoroughly prepared for National Testing at the end of the Key Stage. Preparation is planned as part of the day to day curriculum.

Key Stage Two

The Medium-term planning for the Literacy Hour is taken from the Literacy Strategy and is then planned as a three week unit of work, each unit of work covering a specific genre. Throughout the unit development of writing will be supported by guided reading and writing sessions. At the end of the unit the children will do a timed writing exercise in the given genre.

This will then be assessed and levelled as a class activity. This enables teachers and children to monitor their progress and set short-term targets to raise standards.

Resources used in the planning of work includes 'Grammar for Writing', Key Stage Two Spelling Bank and a variety of other resources which includes Collins Focus on Literacy', Cambridge 'Passport to Literacy' and 'Cornerstones in Writing', these are used as appropriate. English Language is built around progression through the Nelson Primary Language scheme, Letts text, sentence and word level scheme and Collins pupil books. These schemes have been chosen because they are teacher led. Children do not progress individually through the schemes although follow up work from relevant teaching points will be differentiated to allow for individual needs.

Speaking and Listening

Our aim is that all children will become confident, thoughtful and purposeful speakers as well as considerate and active listeners. The ability to speak and listen is fundamental to pupils' language and social development. It is an essential tool for all areas of the curriculum, as talk underpins learning and thinking. Pupils need to be provided with many and varied contexts for speaking and listening, but they also need direct teaching in the skills of speaking and listening. All staff will receive copies of the DFEE 2004 publication on speaking and listening and use this as guidance

The breadth of study includes speaking, listening, group discussion and interaction and drama. There should be opportunities to teach and practice the four areas of Speaking and Listening throughout the curriculum and these opportunities should be highlighted in planning.

Reading.

We believe that all children should be encouraged to be independent and voluntary readers. It is our policy to promote reading whenever we can. For example, we hold regular book sales through our book club and book fairs. We have visits from the local librarian, authors and illustrators, we have also introduced class novels to give experience of complexity of language and range of genre.

Parents are encouraged to hear their children read. A reading record book for use at home goes home each night with the child and its reading book. The class teacher monitors each child's class reading record book in which there are six named titles for each stage of the reading progression. This is the minimum number of books a child reads before moving onto the next stage. Within the reading progression there are six units, each divided into colour-coded stages. A chart showing the progression should be clearly displayed in each classroom.

Labels and signs are used around the school and classrooms.

Reading is done through guided reading sessions, these sessions are usually planned outside the literacy hour. There is a programme of guided reading targets assessment sheets to monitor individual progress throughout Key Stages One and Two. To encourage the parent partnership we ask the parents to hear the children practice reading from their scheme readers. We have explained to the parents that there is now less opportunity to hear children read individually in class as more time is devoted to teaching literacy directly.

Opportunities are given for reading aloud, for example:

- Reading in groups/individually during guided reading.
- Reading to teacher/other adult
- Reading written work to class
- Reading comprehension passages around the class
- Reading in whole class literacy hour sessions
- Sets of whole class readers in KS2
- Text books to support other curriculum areas

Reading Scheme

Our reading scheme uses the Oxford Reading Tree levels as its core scheme. Reading levels are aligned to Reading Ages. It is made up of books from many schemes that have been categorised according to the following factors.

Factors we consider when differentiating reading scheme books

- Quality of print per page
- Size of print per page
- Level of repetition of words
- Complexity of words
- Complexity of sentence/language structure
- Balance of picture/print
- Phonic/whole word as basic approach
- Publishers' suggestions

Because the reading material is so varied and because the material itself varies within stages there should be a good range at each stage.

The development of reading is recognised as a high order skill. The children are encouraged to read and use literacy skills for many purposes and in a variety of curriculum areas.

Reading for information

Library skills enhance the children's ability to read, analyse and evaluate. There is a flexible library timetable which means staff can sign up for library session as and when appropriate on a weekly basis. This will give opportunities for research and to develop reference skills. There is a separate scheme of work for library skills.

Hearing the Children Read

What we look for:

- Does the child recognise some words consistently?
- Does the child use some phonic strategies to read words?

- Does the child respond to what she or he is reading through expression, pauses or laughter?
- Does the child read with some accuracy?
- Does the child use more than one strategy in reading unfamiliar words: for example, phonic, graphic, syntactic (grammatical) or contextual?
- Does the child combine strategies appropriately: for example, making contextually sensible substitutions, which show awareness of sound/symbol relationships?

Basic Language Skills.

Practice in basic skills is recognised as necessary to support overall literacy development. Work in these basic skills is planned into the weekly timetable and resourced appropriately. This work is individually assigned according to each child's needs and differentiated accordingly. The purpose of this work is to encourage:

- Increased rate of work
- Improved formal presentation
- Handwriting skills
- Accuracy
- Opportunity for teaching and discussion with individual children
- Independent learning and organisation.

Most children work from the Collins Basic Skills books. Other children will work from planned work, which supports their Individual Education Plans.

Spelling

It is our policy to teach spelling skills through a variety of strategies. These include:

- NFER-Nelson single word spelling test at the beginning of each term.
- Cripp's Hand for Spelling. This is based on good practice for spelling (i.e. letter strings/look cover write etc)
- Phonics
- Look and say (whole word approach)
- Spelling lists taken from the NFER spelling lists and there are weekly spelling tests.
- Practice with those words misspelt in day to day work
- N.L.S. Spelling bank up at Key Stage 2.

Quality Assurance

To monitor the quality of teaching and learning the following strategies are used:

- Regular testing of children's achievements through standardised tests including statutory and optional SATS. Standardised test scores are matched to National Curriculum levels. For example, a quotient of 100 equates to the appropriate National Curriculum expected level for age.

- Children’s work is marked by the teacher. (Teacher monitoring)
 1. To enable the teacher to record completion (or not) of a piece of work
 2. To confirm a child has achieved the focus of a lesson
 3. To acknowledge individual effort
 4. To give opportunity for praise
 5. To spot errors and correct them
 6. To show parents what we expect of the children
 7. To enable the teacher to make informed decisions about a child’s progress and ability
 8. To enable the teacher to set new learning targets for/with the child
 9. To enable the teacher to assess the effectiveness of teaching
 10. To enable teachers, parents and children to assess accuracy visually.

Subject Coordinators and the headteacher monitor children’s work for appropriate quality and standard. This is done once a term by monitoring children’s books and reporting back.

Work is marked in red by the teacher.

All teacher comments are written in Cripps’ handwriting style to set a model.

All spelling errors in free writing are marked. Some are written correctly in the margin. Errors are then corrected and practiced by the child.

The following marking key is used:

- S indicates a misspelt word
- ^^^ indicates a grammatical error
- 0 indicates a missing full stop and capital letter between sentences
- / indicates a new line should have been started.
- D find correct spelling in a dictionary

Assessment and Testing

We use testing to inform us about children’s progress and to identify those children with special educational needs. Results of testing enable us to set realistic measurable targets for school improvement.

Children in the Nursery are assessed using the L.E.A. Foundation Profile . This gives us a measure of ability on or soon after entry to nursery. The children are screened again at the end of their Reception year using NFER 5. We can evaluate a value-added progress throughout the Foundation Stage and identify children who need additional educational support.

Key Stage One children are tested annually using the NFER tests. The results are analysed giving a measure of pupil achievement and informing our target groupings. We use testing

materials that are diagnostic with remedial recommendations. Our test materials provide follow up support materials tailored to individual need.

At Key Stage Two we also test the children annually using the NFER English Tests. The results of these tests are analysed and provide us with information for pupil placement and school targets.

In addition to statutory SATS we also use optional SATS throughout Key Stage Two. We correlate NFER scores to match SATS levels. We are aware that a quotient range of 85-115 equates to a National Curriculum Level appropriate to age and stage.

Teacher assessments and professional judgements are also taken into account when assessing children's learning needs. In house assessment sheets track guided reading and guided writing, phonological knowledge and knowledge of key words. 'All, most, some' sheets are completed at the end of each unit of work

Provision is made for able and gifted children – ability setting, encouraging participation in writing competitions.

Identifying children (particularly boys) who need support in order to reach level 3 at Key stage one and level 5 at Key Stage 2. Use of boy friendly strategies to encourage and promote writing.

Special Educational Needs

Children with identified educational needs in English are given additional support through the school's Learning Support.

Children whose test results show that they are falling just below standard are given extra sessions of English to bring them up to standard.

Expectations

It is our policy to set high expectations for the children's achievement. We expect that by the end of each year group most mainstream children will be able to:

Year 1 (Level 1)

- Begin to know sounds for reading
- Begin to write with more confidence and accuracy
- Answer a question with confidence and relevance
- Use sounds to spell out simple words
- Attempts to use knowledge of sounds in writing
- Produce writing that uses phonetically recognisable clusters of letters to represent words
- Spell simple key words
- Leave spaces between words
- Form letters correctly

- Begin to understand proper use of upper and lower case letters
- Have pencil control in writing and used joined script for spellings and diary work.
- Notice full stops in print
- Tell and retell a simple story
- Read back their own writing
- Know a range of stories, poems and rhymes
- Know that some books are for information
- Know and read the high frequency words as indicated in the National Literacy Framework
- Listen attentively
- Speak and express ideas clearly

Year 2 (Level 2)

- Understand simple sentence construction
- Write in sentences showing an awareness of capital letters and full stops.
- Spell phonetically if not correctly
- Begin to understand story structure
- Attempt to write a structured story
- Join letters in handwriting in a clear way using the Cripps style
- Begin to use punctuation in writing.
- Know the high frequency words as indicated in the National Literacy Framework
- Identify non fiction material
- Begin to use a dictionary
- Obtain information from simple non fiction texts
- Understand that information can be obtained from pictures.

Year 3. (Level 3)

- Be able to answer a question with a sentence
- Spell in recognisable form
- Produce a sequence of sentences to form a storyline that has a beginning a middle and an end
- Handwriting that is joined and legible
- Capital letters, full stops and question marks are used accurately when attention is drawn to this aspect
- Begin to use imagination in creative writing

Year 4 (working towards level 4)

- Writing independently for a variety of purposes although this may be teacher led
- paragraphs

- Creative writing ideas are sustained and stories contain expressive description/vocabulary
- Spelling is more accurate
- Handwriting becomes quicker and more mature. It is always joined unless for a diagram or label.
- Tenses are used more frequently and with more accuracy

Year 5 (working towards consolidating level 4 and beyond)

- Precise use of vocabulary
- More complex spellings
- Speech marks used accurately
- Use of similes etc in writing

Year 6 (stretching the children beyond level 4 to level 5)

- Increased length of written pieces
- Greater focus

Written work will usually be in blue ink and in the Cripps' style of joined script.

Resources

Human:

It is our policy to value teachers as the most important and effective teaching resource. Classes are organised in a way, which enables teachers to be more efficient. At Glapton, we believe it is more effective to teach classes, which contain as narrow a differential spread as possible. This enables the teacher to spend more time interacting directly with the class and less time “troubleshooting” with individuals. For this reason, each year group is ability set which enables us to meet children’s needs and target resources more effectively. Children are set according to a combination of test results and teacher discussion, these groupings are reviewed regularly. During Literacy time and at other times the lower ability sets are supported by LSA staff and Literacy Volunteers.

Financial:

As English, including Literacy is highly valued as an essential curriculum component it is our policy to allocate as much money as we can to resource it appropriately. This may mean taking money from other areas if the need arises – needs and objectives are identified in the improvement plan for literacy.

Key Stage One

In 2003 additional reading books and support materials were bought.

- Cambridge ‘Pen Pals’ handwriting scheme
- Reading materials for ‘reluctant readers’
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Key Stage Two

The present focus is on building up the stock of reading books within the classroom and building up resource materials to develop reading and writing.

- A list of resources for each year group can be found in the mid term planning.

We use textbooks to assist teachers planning work at the appropriate level and pace. They are also very cost effective over a number of years.

Gender/ Equal Opportunities

We believe that equality of opportunity does not necessarily mean treating all children the same educationally. We modify our instructional techniques to encourage language development and literacy skills. This is particularly true for boys. Approaches are taken in the classroom which encourage the girls to “risk take” (speaking and listening) and boys to enjoy and succeed in reading and writing. Boys often respond to competition so we use that as a technique from time to time. We often explain gender differences to the children to make them aware of why we use certain strategies in the classroom. It also helps clarify our expectations of them.

Parent Partnership

We believe parental support enhances the children’s achievement not just in English but also across the curriculum.

We want parents to be well informed about and involved in their children’s learning. It is our policy to support this by providing:

- Reports to parents about children’s progress
- A regularly updated school web site
- Leaflets, newsletters and school newspaper
- Meetings
- Use of homework encouraging parental involvement
- A welcome in school for parental help in the classroom

Governors

Governors, through the strategic Planning sub committee play an active role in supporting the teaching of English including Literacy. There is a named governor for Literacy and a second named governor who supports English and Literacy through her role as SEN link.

Targets for Teaching 2003 /4

1. To continue regular monitoring of children's achievements and standards in writing through annotation and levelling of work achieved
2. To identify specific targets for each child based on analysis of Summer 2003 NFER test results
3. To inform parents and children of standards achieved.
4. To continue to test and assess spelling using the NFER-Nelson single word spelling test in order to monitor progress and spelling age.
5. To develop an overview of unaided writing topics throughout KS1 and KS2
6. To use Spring term 2004 as a booster term for Y6 and Y2