

Intent

At Pound Hill Infant Academy, we are proud to offer the pupils a text rich learning environment where imagination and creativity can be ignited. Through the English curriculum, we help pupils develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively through spoken and written language and equip them with the skills they need to become lifelong learners. Pupils at Pound Hill Infant Academy learn to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others, and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; only pupils who learn to speak, read and write fluently and are confidently able to effectively participate in wider society.

Aims

Through our English curriculum, Pound Hill Infant Academy promotes high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language. Pupils are supported to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment, as well as through our rich text approach to writing (Power of Reading). Our curriculum for English ensures that all pupils:

- Read easily, fluently and with good understanding;
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information;
- Acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language;
- 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;
- Use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas;
- Are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

Planning

At Pound Hill, we follow the Power of Reading programme where teachers plan their English sessions around a quality text that aims to engage and inspire learners. The writing process is supported by this approach, whereby, pupils can access and learn a wide range of quality stories, non-fiction texts and poems so that they internalise the structures and literacy language they encounter. They then draw upon these known structures in order to develop their own writing.

Implementation

Power of Reading

The academy follows the Power of Reading programme which aims to promote a passion for reading by immersing pupils in a range of rich and carefully chosen texts. The core texts chosen from the Power of Reading scheme are used to plan lessons that include:

- Modelled, shared and guided writing
- Modelled Writing – where the teacher models and highlights the strategies used by successful writers.
- Shared Writing – a teacher-led, whole-class or group activity which draws pupils into the writing process.
- Guided Writing – where pupils use their new skills to complete the activity in pairs or a group, focusing on targets and analysing their progress through teacher guidance;
- Independent writing opportunities.

Handwriting

We teach handwriting according to the Penpals scheme. Pupils learn the letters of the alphabet in families, according to letter formation. The academy focuses on correct formation of letters rather than ‘neatness’, although all pupils are expected to take pride in their work. Pupils are encouraged to use exit strokes before learning to join up their writing, always ensuring they can use ascenders and descenders correctly (refer to presentation policy for further information). We offer a range of interventions for pupils who are struggling at different stages of their handwriting.

Spelling

We teach spelling through Sounds~Write. The approach to teaching spelling is progressive throughout the academy and the curriculum in order to reinforce techniques and demonstrate the importance that spelling should be given in the creation and presentation of all writing. In addition, spellings for each year group are taken from the National Curriculum (see separate Early Reading and Phonics Policy) reinforced with a clear understanding of the most common spelling rules and exceptions within the English language.

Grammar, Punctuation and Vocabulary

Teachers understand, teach and demonstrate in their everyday practice the formal conventions of Standard English language. They emphasise their importance to meaning and effect. The teaching of grammar, punctuation and vocabulary forms part of the everyday English lessons, whether discrete or in active context and is developed across all areas of the wider curriculum.

Spoken Language

At the academy, we believe that speaking and listening form the foundations of all learning in English. In formal and informal situations, we create and facilitate opportunities for conversation, discussion and talk around learning. Questioning forms the basis of teaching and we strongly encourage pupils to be inquisitive and to share their thoughts confidently in a supportive environment.

Impact

During each English session pupils are assessed and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups. Through rigorous assessment, the class teacher decides whether further English

intervention is required or activities to enhance further development such as: handwriting interventions, phonics, focused reading interventions, focused writing interventions, speech and language, grammar interventions and fine/gross motor skills interventions.

Meeting the needs of all pupils

At Pound Hill Infant Academy, we believe that all pupils have the potential to succeed. To meet the needs of our most vulnerable pupils, we place a strong emphasis on the core skills of spelling, handwriting, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and composition where pupils are taught to articulate ideas and structure them in speech and writing. The learning provided for all pupils, including the most able, is consistently demanding in order to ensure that all pupils develop cumulatively knowledge and skills for future learning and employment. We aim to encourage all pupils to reach their full potential through the provision of varied opportunities to access English. We recognise that our planning for English must allow pupils to gain a progressively deeper understanding as they move through the academy to ensure all pupils are provided with the key tools needed to become confident within the English language. The academy has a variety of strategies to enable all pupils to have increased access to the curriculum through broad-based, multi-sensory, visual, auditory and kinaesthetically planned reading sessions.

Policy status and Review

Written by: Kerri Burns, Lead Practitioner-Primary

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