

English Policy

Mission Statement

At Royal Cross we believe that communication is the key to personal and social development and academic success.

Aims

We aim to develop pupils' English skills within a personalised programme of communication, reading and writing [see separate communication policy].

All pupils will be given opportunities to develop their English skills through our topic based creative approach to the curriculum. Through whole school planning we ensure a broad and balanced approach to the teaching of English, with cross curricular links and reinforcement opportunities embedded throughout all lessons.

Through the above, it is our aim for each child to:

- Read and write with confidence at their level.
- Have an interest in books and read for enjoyment.
- Develop their vocabulary in speech/sign and writing.
- Experience and understand different forms of texts and genres.
- Develop their powers of imagination.

The organisation of English teaching

English skills are an essential tool for everyday life therefore using the Programmes of Study from the National Primary Curriculum and the EYFS curriculum it is our aim to develop each pupils' skills to their own maximum potential.

Communication and literacy skills are targeted through pupils' 'Individual Education Plans' and through daily class literacy lessons. All pupils also receive regular input from a speech and language therapist or British sign language tutor as appropriate to their needs. Pupil provision is personalised to developmental level and attainment, not age.

Literacy is an integral part of our whole school creative approach to the curriculum. There is a planned 4 year cycle of whole school themes with accompanying whole school long term plans. Class teachers write individual medium and weekly lesson plans according to the needs of their class group.

All children are provided with access to the English curriculum through appropriate learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity, or learning and communication needs.

Pupil Premium funding is used to provide additional 1:1 tuition where required.

Communication – Speaking and listening

Communication is at the heart of all teaching at Royal Cross and everything we do is geared to developing language. Royal Cross has a personalised approach to developing pupil's communication skills and speech / signing is used in whatever combination works best for each child.

This approach includes:

- Personalised communication targets
- An inclusive communication environment - speech, SSE, BSL, amplification and PECS
- Speech and language therapy programmes
- BSL / SSE tuition
- Developing vocabulary across the creative curriculum
- Specialist resources and equipment
- Drama activities to develop confidence in communication

See separate policy document for more detail

Reading

All children experience shared reading, guided reading and daily language activities which incorporate phonics as appropriate. All pupils have independent reading sessions using the 'Oxford Reading Tree' scheme and wider reading materials from the school and public libraries. Home reading is encouraged where appropriate and signed graphics are used to support early word recognition and word order. Resources used reflect the school and wider community e.g. deaf and hearing, cultural, disability, gender etc.

Phonics

Pupils are taught according to their ability levels.

Pupils, who are able, follow the Letters and Sound structured synthetic phonics programme. Other pupils follow the schools Visual Phonics programme. Some pupils use the 'look and say' method using flash cards and games that focus on key vocabulary. Key vocabulary includes high frequency words from Letters and Sounds and key words from the Oxford Reading Tree reading scheme.

Writing

Opportunities for writing are embedded across the whole curriculum in addition to IEP work and whole class lessons. It is important that pupils have a go at writing and that their attempts are valued. All pupils work on phonics, spelling, hand writing skills and creative writing at a level appropriate to their needs. ICT is used to support pupils' writing skills through text, story and power point activities.

Strategies to develop writing include:

- Modelled writing - where the adult models their ideas and then models the writing
- Shared writing - this is collaborative writing with the pupils contributing their ideas but the adult scribes
- Guided writing- where the adult guides the pupils in their writing
- Scaffolded writing - where the adult provides written support
- Independent writing- where pupils have a go and their attempts are valued

Spelling

At Royal Cross School we value all pupils' attempts to write for meaning. Some pupils will be taught spelling through a structured programme working through the Letters and Sounds phases.

Some of our pupils will learn to spell by sight recognition, these pupils will be taught the 'look and say' method of spelling.

Handwriting - see Handwriting Policy. Handwriting must, at the earliest stages of writing, be taught separately from composition.

Cross curricular literacy opportunities

Our creative approach to the curriculum and whole school theme approach gives teachers the opportunity to embed literacy across the whole range of curriculum subjects.

The Governing Body

The Curriculum Committee is regularly updated on pupil progress and achievement and improvement planning to raise standards.

Use of ICT

Opportunities to use ICT are well integrated into teaching and learning e.g. Use of iPads, access to the internet, literacy activities etc. Visual resources are helpful for deaf children to reinforce learning and acquire independent communication skills e.g. use of email, signed stories, subtitled programmes and interpreters. Amplification equipment enhances the listening environment e.g. personal hearing aids, radio aids and sound-field system support understanding of spoken English and development of lip reading.

Assessment and target setting

Achievement in English is formally assessed by class teachers using PIVATS twice yearly – prior to the Annual Review and at the end of each year. Annual targets set at the review are then broken down in IEP's and evaluated termly. Communication assessments are administered by the speech and language therapist or BSL tutor as appropriate. In addition, Teachers of the Deaf take part in a language assessment week in the spring term when individual assessments take place across the whole school. Outcomes are then discussed by specialist staff and teachers and new joint targets are set.

All these targets are embedded in teachers' planning and learning outcomes.

Monitoring and Evaluating English

Monitoring and evaluating to ensure and maintain high standards in the quality of teaching and learning is a vital part of the curriculum development process. Opportunities are made available to the subject leaders to evaluate teaching and learning within the school through peer to peer mentoring; monitoring planning; scrutiny of work and data analysis. This in turn affects future

planning and delivery of the subject through annual subject development plans and school improvement. Royal Cross School also takes part in the Special School Moderation Groups.

Role of the subject leader

The subject leader is responsible for improving standards of teaching in English across the school through:

- Monitoring pupil progress through assessment tracking and work sampling.
- Monitoring English provision across the school through peer lesson observations, regular discussions with staff and monitoring of teachers' planning.
- Auditing and ordering/updating resources.
- Regular liaison with the language specialist staff [Speech and language therapist and BSL tutor]
- Monitoring and developing English through annually reflecting and writing a subject development plan which contributes significantly to the overall School Development Plan.
- Keeping 'up to date' with recent literacy developments.
- Taking the lead in policy development.
- Supporting colleagues in their professional development.

Parental Involvement

Parents are asked to support literacy learning through communicating with their children at home as often as possible, reading with their children and helping with any homework tasks set. We celebrate events such as 'World Book Day' and end of topic 'Celebration workshops' and parents are invited to attend.

Conclusion

This policy summarises our whole school approach to English teaching and learning. However, it should be read in conjunction with whole school policies including:

- Communication
- Teaching and Learning
- Assessment
- Marking
- eSafety
- Equality and Diversity