



MALLUSK INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY POLICY

Rationale

In Mallusk Integrated Primary School we aim to provide a supportive, stimulating and secure environment where the children are encouraged to express themselves and where their contributions are valued. We will provide for the language development of pupils and will develop their ability to use language to think, to explore and to recognise and communicate their ideas, both orally and in writing. We will help them to understand and respond imaginatively to what they hear, read and experience in a variety of media, and to foster their appreciation and enjoyment of literature.

Principles

All children have the right to be literate.

Development in literacy is not simply the acquisition of new skills but a more sophisticated ability to handle familiar skills.

Talking, listening, reading and writing are inextricably interwoven.

All teachers in the school have a responsibility for the development of literacy.

Literacy is not a separate subject but is cross-curricular.

Our Aim

To raise the standards of literacy through:

- assisting pupils to express and communicate meaning in spoken language, listening to and interpreting what others say and matching style and response to audience, context and purpose
- providing pupils with opportunities to develop their ability to read, understand and engage with various types of texts for enjoyment and learning
- helping children to make and shape text in order to communicate meaning in written language appropriate to context, purpose and reader
- incorporating ICT where appropriate.

Talking and Listening

Rationale

Language is a basic medium of communication, thinking and learning. It is chiefly through the spoken language that children make sense of their world and establish relationships. They learn through talking and listening and demonstrate and refine their learning through talk.

Our overall aim is for our children to become efficient language users. This will be achieved by devoting time, energy and resources to the development of oral communication. Through purposeful interaction with teachers, classroom assistants and other significant adults, children will be provided with experiences that develop their skills.

We impress upon our children and their parents the value of developing talking and listening for social, communicative and cognitive purposes. We plan experiences and activities which promote a wide range of types of talk. We recognise the important role of the teachers and classroom assistants in modelling oral language in a variety of situations.

We provide a wide variety of resources to enhance the development of the children's oral language.

The classrooms are secure environments in which children are encouraged to experiment with talk and to express themselves. Within this atmosphere the teacher can share in the learning experience of the children, by showing them that there is a genuine interest in all contributions to class, small group and one-to-one discussions. The teacher helps the children to become efficient language users and to make sense of the world around them, by creating a variety of situations in which they can talk and listen. Children will be given opportunities to talk as individuals, in pairs, as members of a small group and as members of the class.

Foundation Stage

We recognise that children will arrive in school with different levels of language and we will build upon our observation of individual children gathered in the early stages. Through play, role play, discussions, group tasks, circle time, show and tell and shared reading experiences, children are encouraged to develop the confidence to:

- express ideas and opinions
- extend their vocabulary
- take turns in conversation
- give and follow simple instructions
- listen to and value the opinions of others.

Key Stage One

We recognise the need for our children to continue working in a range of situations, with different audiences and activities, developing their ability to:

- ask questions
- explain and present ideas
- give and understand instructions
- plan and tell stories
- share their work with others
- take turns
- join in exploratory and collaborative play
- listen and respond to stories, poems, rhymes and folk tales
- read aloud from a variety of sources
- express themselves audibly
- take part in Drama
- discuss with peers, the teacher, classroom assistant, other adults and older children.

Progression

During this stage, we will continue to encourage the children to develop confidence, precision and competence in reasoning, predicting and expressing feelings. We will ensure, through careful planning, that they develop an ability to adjust their talk to suit the audience and purpose, to respect others and to take turns. They will begin to discuss how they use language and to evaluate and reformulate it to help the listener.

Key Stage Two

During this stage the children will:

- extend their involvement in group work by contributing individually to planning and problem-solving and by preparing presentations
- be encouraged to develop confidence as speakers, using appropriate quality of speech and voice in both discussion and presentations
- respond to visual and audio-visual materials
- use appropriate ICT software
- begin to understand the importance of developing a train of thought
- have an increasing understanding of colloquial expressions
- begin to recognise Standard English
- take part in discussions involving opinions and beliefs.

Progression

The children will show more awareness of the views of others. Their questions will become gradually more reasoned and they will begin to take on individual responsibility in the group.

Reading

It is our aim to promote reading as a source of pleasure and a means of learning and to provide the pupils with a wide range of texts, which will both reflect and develop their own interests. Children will be read to regularly, will read with staff and will read independently. We recognise that our pupils have different needs and will progress at different stages. Therefore, a variety of approaches will be used in the teaching of reading throughout the school. However, in order to ensure consistency and progression within our reading programme, common strategies will be used and developed throughout the school.

Strategies

Modelled reading sessions, where the teacher provides a demonstration of reading aloud.

Shared Reading, when the teacher encourages participation while taking the lead role.

Guided reading, when the teacher groups the children according to developmental stage or needs. The teacher provides the opportunity for the children to use their knowledge and skills as independently as possible while she provides support. Group/individual discussion of strategies for decoding words or discussing aspects of the text will be encouraged. This will vary according to the needs of the children.

Independent reading, where the teacher provides the opportunity for independent reading of a wide variety of texts.

Writing

Within the classroom, there exists an environment which allows pupils to share the process of writing with teachers and peers.

We provide a wide variety of appropriate equipment, including ICT, to encourage children to take part in the process of writing.

All pupils will be given the opportunities to experience many forms of writing. They are encouraged to write for a variety of readerships.

We place emphasis upon the process of writing as well as the product, and pupils are encouraged and helped to redraft work where necessary. Time is spent in discussing with pupils the best ways in which to present work according to its purpose.

Pupils are encouraged to talk about their writing and to exchange ideas and develop gradually the ability to criticise constructively. Emphasis is placed upon this type of collaborative writing in Key Stage Two.

Writing is regarded as a cross-curricular skill, and contexts and purposes for writing are often embedded in other areas of the curriculum. The conventions of writing will be taught within the context of the pupils' writing.

Spelling

Key Stage One pupils are introduced to the most common patterns of words. They are encouraged to spell correctly a range of familiar words which occur regularly in their writing or reading. Key Stage Two pupils are helped to extend knowledge acquired in Key Stage One. Emphasis is placed upon independent searching for words in dictionaries and thesauri and on pupils discussing words with each other.

Handwriting

Pupils are taught the conventional ways of forming letter shapes in upper and lower case. When able to produce a legible printed style, they are taught cursive handwriting, usually during P5.

Drama

We recognise the importance of drama both within English and across the curriculum and include opportunities for:

- dramatic play
- role play
- storytelling/story making through drama
- acting out
- exploring themes in literature
- understanding characters from literature
- spontaneous or prepared improvisation
- scripted texts.

Responding to Pupils' Work

The teachers recognise that the most useful way of responding to the pupils' work is by talking to them about what they have done, discussing content and structure and encouraging them to be independent. The pupils themselves will be encouraged to look critically at their own work. Teacher feedback which pupils receive about their work is supportive and meaningful.