

English

All areas of the curriculum involve both teachers and pupils using English. It is the principal means by which we think, define what we experience and feel, and interpret the world in which we live. It is the means by which we communicate with others. Therefore it is our aim to ensure that we enable all of our pupils to develop the use and understanding of Standard English to their full potential in all aspects of speaking, listening, reading and writing, including spelling and handwriting.

Every aspect of the children's work is influenced by the extent to which they use language with imagination and accuracy. Competence in reading, writing, speaking and listening is encouraged throughout the curriculum in order to enable the children to communicate appropriately and effectively.

However, we teach both English and Reading daily as a discrete subject from Year 1 to Year 6, following the objectives laid out within National Curriculum 2014. In the EYFS and KS1 phonic skills are developed through highly focused, short daily sessions using the recommended synthetic phonics programme. Phonics is the relationship between printed letters and the sounds they make. Children will first learn the most common letter sounds, and then look at more difficult patterns such as recognising that 'ow' sounds different in 'cow'

Teaching matches the needs and ability of individual pupils that supports appropriate progression.

Across the school guided, group and individual reading activities are used to develop pupils' reading skills that are further enhanced through all areas of the curriculum. The school offers a wide range of books including fiction, non-fiction and poetry. The system also supports the independent choice, by pupils, of reading books.

The school recognises and values the significant role of parents in further developing reading skills.

EYFS and Key Stage 1

In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, an emphasis is placed upon the teaching of phonics, as the children follow the Letters and Sounds programme. The scheme is a great success and our children surpass the national averages in both the Year 1 phonics test and the Year 2 SATs tests.

Key Stage 2

In years 3-6, through a variety of genre based units, children are taught the fundamental skills of reading, writing and speaking and listening. Units are based on poetry, narrative and non-fiction writing and class novels are often used as a context for a whole unit. There are also a number of cross-curricular units taught.

Reading

Reading takes place during Guided Reading sessions, throughout the school day, and learning outcomes linked to reading are taught within English and in other areas of the curriculum, where appropriate. During this time children are taught through the use of extracts and whole novels, where teachers and TAs model the reading process. Skills such as inference and deduction are taught, as well as grammatical and punctuation conventions. Poetry and play reading are taught with an awareness of final performance. Analysis and comprehension activities involving “real” texts are used to develop skills in these areas.

Writing

A major focus at Elmridge is on grammatically accurate and fluent writing. Teachers model the writing and planning process through shared writing sessions where ideas are collected and developed. Children work in pairs or individually to write narrative and non-narrative texts. Grammar and punctuation are contextually taught within English units, as well as during discrete grammar sessions. Objectives taught within English are used to develop writing across the curriculum. Word processing is developed using computer programs such as Word and Publisher where possible.

Speaking and Listening

Pupils are given opportunities to develop their competence in spoken language and listening to enhance the effectiveness of their communication across a range of contexts and to a range of audiences.

They have opportunities to work in groups of different sizes – in pairs, small groups, large groups and as a whole class. Pupils learn how to take turns and when and how to participate constructively in conversations and debates.

As children progress and move through school, they have opportunity within English and other lessons to perform poems, plays, make formal presentations, participate in discussions and debates and to explain their ideas.