



## **English at Southfields - Our Vision**

English is a requirement of the National Curriculum. At Southfields we encourage our children to be confident to use and apply their English skills, inside and outside of the classroom, thus developing their confidence in and enjoyment of the subject.

### About our Curriculum

We offer children an exciting, broad, balanced and engaging curriculum which takes account of National Curriculum requirements and recognises the individual developmental needs of our children. At Southfields we follow the age related expectations and programmes of study for Years 1 to 6 from the National Curriculum. Children in Nursery and Reception learn English skills as part of communication and language, and Literacy as set out in the Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2014.

### **The English Curriculum**

Key points:

- Children throughout EYFS, KS1 and KS2 have a daily English lesson. Speaking and listening underpins all areas of the curriculum.
- Children will regularly take their learning outside the classroom onto the school grounds or on trips as part of Learning Outside the Classroom.
- Children in Nursery and Reception classes learn English skills through directed play and small group work in a literacy rich environment inside and outside the classroom.
- English lessons incorporate: reading, comprehension, writing, phonics, spelling, speaking and listening, handwriting and grammar.
- Understanding English provides access to the whole curriculum. It is crucial that children apply their English skills to all areas of learning and not just during English lessons.

- We aim to develop a love for reading where pupils choose to read frequently for enjoyment and information.
- Children are provided with many opportunities to write for a range of purposes such as stories, poetry, information texts, letters, texts for debate, diary accounts, instructions, descriptions and explanations.
- It is important that children are able to communicate clearly and confidently, justifying their ideas and evaluating the ideas of others. Children are given frequent opportunities to participate in drama activities, build on ideas through discussion and rehearse before writing. We use strategies from 'Pie Corbett's Talk for Writing approach which values the importance of speaking and listening for writing.
- Throughout the school we have a comprehensive reading 'scheme'. Our books are graded into age appropriate book bands and are a vibrant mixture of genres and styles. We use a mixture of reading scheme books which include Oxford Reading Tree, from EYFS onwards, although throughout the school we have additional books from a range of authors added in. In addition to the reading scheme we also use the online reading resource 'Oxford Owl' which the children have access to at home. We have developed a Southfields Reading Spine for each year group to enable the children to experience a wide range of authors.

Throughout the year children are provided with opportunities, inside and outside of the classroom, to use and apply their English skills through our theme based curriculum. Additionally, we organise many inspiring whole school events where children can use their English skills in a range of contexts. For example, on World Book Day the children may be visited by an author and take part in book related workshops where they will have reading and writing opportunities. This is followed by a celebration of their work as they share what they have learnt with different classes while practising their speaking and listening skills. When children can use and apply their English skills in a real situation, they are more engaged, excited and motivated to learn and develop.

## **Phonics and Spelling at Southfields**

The teaching of Phonics and Spelling is an essential part of the work we do to encourage our children to develop their confidence and skills in reading and writing. The wide range of resources and teaching strategies we use sit alongside those we use for supporting our EAL pupils. Our school has a significantly high number of children and families for whom English is not their primary spoken or written language. We assess the children and they are placed in groups from phase 2 to phase 5 phonics or spelling groups. Every morning after registration the children have a phonics or spelling lesson for 20 minutes. The children are monitored closely to enable rapid progress. We have half termly assessments and the children are then regrouped.

We use a range of resources and schemes throughout the school, although the main ones are as follows:

- Early Years - 'Jolly Phonics' and 'Letters and Sounds'
- Key Stage 1 - 'Letters and Sounds'
- Years 2 to 6 - 'No nonsense spelling programme' and 'No nonsense phonics programme'

## **Support at home**

Regular reading at home is crucial from Nursery to Year 6. It is important that parents listen to children read and ask them about texts in order to develop comprehension skills. Sharing books is just as important as listening to a child read; this promotes a love of reading and shows the people around them as readers too. Alongside their school reading book the children have a reading journal to develop their comprehension skills. We encourage the children to read other texts such as a library book, a magazine or newspaper. Any reading at home is recorded in the child's reading record.

We provide online resources to support all aspects of English which children and families can use free of cost at home. Southfields currently provides access to Education City, Espresso and Oxford Owl.

Linked Home Learning Projects provide children and parents with opportunities for independent learning outside of school; choices that require the children to use the English skills that they have learnt in class. This practice of using and applying English skills, including outside trips or visits, is key to embedding and consolidating learning. Whilst completing these projects, as with any written homework, children should practise their handwriting skills.

Developing 'fluency and comprehension' in reading and writing is one of our key drivers that we focus on in school. Children will learn spelling skills in class and practise these in a variety of ways. Regular practice of spellings will help your child to become faster and more accurate when writing - helping them in every area of the curriculum.