

## The English Curriculum at Northleaze - Intent

At Northleaze, we understand the power of the English language, both in communicating our thoughts and opinions and in sharing our creativity and imagination through the written word. These skills lie at the heart of our curriculum and play a vital role in allowing our pupils to develop as successful learners. We strive to nurture reading for pleasure within our children because this not only develops vocabulary and self-confidence but it also teaches empathy and a greater understanding of the world. We hope to help our children find their voice and become fearless writers who are able to adapt to this ever-changing world. We offer them the opportunity to write using a variety of media so they are able to express themselves orally, in writing, as well as using images and sound. Our overall aim is to enable Northleaze pupils to speak, listen, read and write with creativity, control and confidence.

## Key features of English lessons at Northleaze – Implementation

- The English leaders have a map of English coverage to ensure that the children have the opportunity to study both fiction and non-fiction as well as a variety of genres.
- Teachers plan using their Year group KPIs as guidance. They use the Literacy Tree resource as well as other relevant /new quality texts based on child interest and teacher experience.
- Teachers use carefully chosen books for their whole class Guided Reading sessions. These might be informed by The Literacy Tree and the sessions always link back to their Year Group KPIs.
- Phonics plays a key role, particularly in KS1 and daily phonics happens in Reception & Y1.
- Babcock's No Nonsense Spelling is used across the school to inform teachers planning of their spelling input, which includes four short sessions a week in Y2 and 5 short sessions over a 2 week period in KS2.
- Teachers ensure that the purpose of each lesson is clear (LF)
- Teachers use a variety of teaching methods to engage the children and to make lessons accessible to all. These methods include oral storytelling, story mapping, drama, visual stimulus and SPAG activities.
- Vocabulary development is an important part of the working week and teachers use Vocabulary Ninja's 'Word of the Week' to introduce pupils to new words.
- Teachers aim to provide the children with a rich experience of literature and therefore read a story to their class daily.
- Teachers work hard to give writing a purpose by using real life experiences or school trips to inspire writing.
- English Working walls are used in every classroom to allow the children to see where their learning journey is going. They are also used as a reference to provide ideas and support for that specific unit.
- Teachers assess the pupil's knowledge by using their Year Group KPIs and updating this at key points throughout the academic year.
- AfL strategies are used throughout the learning and children are well trained in self and peer assessment.

## **Thematic Weeks:**

We always aim to create inspiring and exciting writing opportunities for our children but we also take on an annual whole school project where all the children are involved in a particular type of writing based on a wow launch. In recent years, we have staged alien landings, left a mysterious magical door in the playground for the children to discover, found dragon eggs in the playground and had a visit from a dragon expert! The children then write about these exciting events in the same genre at an age appropriate level. The parents are invited to see the progression in this writing from Reception to Year 6.

This year, we have also enjoyed a Reading week where we welcomed guest readers from our school and local community. Each class took part in writing book reviews, shared their book recommendations with friends, made bookmarks, designed book covers, dressed as book characters, as well as plenty of reading for pleasure and much more.

## **Professional development for all staff:**

The English curriculum lead/s attend termly English Network Meetings. Key information from these are then passed down to all staff during Professional Learning Time. Subject link Governors meet frequently with the English leads to ensure the Governing body are kept up to date with what is happening in English lessons in school. Our Writing link governor has also been involved in Learning walks and book looks so they have a clear handle on what is happening in school.

Learning walks happen regularly with our English leaders, our Head and our School Improvement partner. The ensuing discussion is then summarised for staff so they have specific areas to focus on so we can always ensure best practice and consistency.

All staff recently attended specific year group training for our new scheme 'The Literacy Tree' and all staff also attend the regular moderation meetings for their year group so they can ensure they are pitching their assessments fairly in comparison to other Trust schools. We also moderate writing as a staff team during professional learning time so we can look at the year groups above and below us. The English Leaders make sure they provide support with this to any new staff or NQTs.

The staff have been recently audited by the English team so that we can target any training to specific areas of need. As a result, a grammar workshop will be led with staff in the near future.