

Our Approach to Teaching English at Ellingham

"Reading stories is magic. Everyone knows that. Reading a good story takes us into another world where anything can happen. Lost in that other place we see words on the page, yet in our minds we live in a stronger place - *the imagination*." *Pie Corbett*

At Ellingham C of E Primary School, we want to make learning vivid and real. We want to show children the way to this magical world and to open other doors as well! English is the key to a world of new experience. It can unlock the imagination and open the door to untold knowledge. It is a foundation stone of learning.

We aim:

- To provide a language rich environment that promotes a culture of reading and writing;
- To develop in pupils an interest in, and a love of, books and literature that will not only support their learning across the curriculum, but also enrich their lives
- To teach children the craft of writing, in order to develop in children the confidence and skills to write well for a range of purposes and audience;
- Teach the basics - spelling, handwriting, grammar and punctuation - to liberate creativity;
- To foster in pupils the confidence, desire and ability to express their views, opinions and imagination, both orally and in writing;
- To value and celebrate diversity in culture and language.

Teaching and Learning Strategies:

Knowledge, understanding and skills are taught daily through a text based approach. Quality texts are used throughout school and are, at times, linked to the creative curriculum topics being studied.

We teach phonics using the Read, Write, Inc. synthetic phonics approach, to pupils from early years. Daily sessions take place, including small-group and 1:1 sessions, as needed.

Children in Y2 - 6 are taught spelling through the 'Raintree's No - nonsense' spelling programme which focuses on the strategies, knowledge and skills, pupils need to learn. Spelling assessment resources are from the Gateshead TIPP's programme.

Additional extended writing sessions are also taught during the course of the week and children are encouraged to use IT in English sessions to enhance learning. Teaching Assistants are used to support children to enable work to be matched to their individual learning needs, as well as to deliver interventions, such as Talk Boost, Fresh Start and IDL.

"It has become evident that around sixty percent of the population will never read widely enough, regularly enough, at a high enough challenge level or with enough pleasure to

subconsciously absorb higher order structures and consciously apply them in their writing." Ros Wilson.

"All children's lives are a red-hot resource of experience, a seedbed for their writing. We have to help children become magpies and steal from their own lives - to use places they know, people they know, events they know, feelings they know..." Pie Corbett

We strive to create an environment that will promote both reading and writing. We want to turn children onto books so that they develop a love of reading that positively impact on their writing. However, in order to ensure that all children learn to be confident writers, including those whose reading does not fully support their writing, we teach key writing skills explicitly and systematically.

We use our own cursive handwriting scheme using homemade rhymes to teach correct letter formation. We encourage children to join from the word go and this strategy is well regarded by our secondary school colleagues, who say our pupils are well prepared for secondary, with noticeably good cursive handwriting.