

# English

English is a vital and integral part of the whole curriculum. We aim to promote high standards of literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the written and spoken word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

## Speaking & Listening

Speaking & listening are fundamental to children's learning. At Staples Road we value the child's home language and encourage home languages to be spoken through promoting different languages and cultures. They are encouraged to speak clearly and confidently in order to communicate ideas and feelings. As important is the need to listen to others carefully and to respond appropriately. All children are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to develop speaking and listening skills.

## Reading

One of the greatest gifts we can give children is the ability to read. Reading should be an enjoyable activity and we aim to develop a love of books and reading by providing a range of literature from all cultures.



All our classrooms are well stocked with books and other reading material for the children to explore and enjoy - with interesting and exciting book corners or reading areas for them to use on a daily basis. We now also have a fantastic, forest-themed library packed with interesting books and relaxing spaces to explore them in.

Reading is taught using a systematic and synthetic approach in order to develop the necessary skills that children need to read with fluency, understanding and enjoyment. We teach reading skills with the Essential Letters and Sounds scheme which we have found to be very effective. This is supplemented with Espresso and Phonics Play resources to be used at home. We use a variety of books for the teaching of reading - reading scheme books, such as Oxford Reading Tree, together with an exciting range of real books which are sorted into coloured baskets according to the level of difficulty and the sounds that have been taught so far. By the end of KS1 many of our children are independent readers who choose their books, with guidance, from the vast selection in School.

Early comprehension skills are developed through an introduction to whole class reading and to reading 'VIPERS' activities, focusing on Vocabulary, Inference, Prediction, Explaining, retrieval and Sequencing/Summarising.

Throughout KS2, whole class reading sessions are used regularly to develop comprehension skills (VIPERS) and fluency (by providing children with opportunities for reading aloud, chorally

and individually) as well as promoting a love of reading through lively discussion. Whole class book studies are a key element of our English curriculum and it is our aim that all children will have completed a minimum of 15 of these by the time they leave Year 6.

Reading across a wide range of genres is also encouraged. A wide range of high-quality non-fiction texts are used as writing models during IPEELL units and our brand new library is suitably stocked with an excellent range of factual books, with a large proportion being linked to the topic work being done in class. Our children also enjoy exploring poetry, listening to audio books and reading and acting out playscripts.

At Staples Road, we believe that home reading is a vital element in the development of our pupils' literacy skills. In EYFS and Year 1, reading diaries are used daily to monitor engagement and home reading journal work becomes more complex in Year 2 and KS2 with greater emphasis placed on VIPERS reading response work by the children. We also share recommended reading lists with parents and carers, which are regularly updated, and we hold an annual reading workshop to help them support their children's phonic and comprehension development at home.

We also celebrate World Book Day in great style every year with dressing-up activities, whole school projects and challenges as well as a Book Fair and Book Exchange, where children can purchase books or swap unwanted ones.

## Writing

At Staples Road, we aim to help children become confident, self-critical, independent writers who are able to express their thoughts and ideas across a wide range of genres and for varying audiences and purposes.

It is our intention to provide our learners with memorable 'real' experiences to stimulate ideas for writing and to maximise engagement. In Early Years and KS1, there is a strong focus on developing key transcription skills through daily handwriting and spelling activities as well as promoting a love for writing.

From an early age, it is our intention that children are encouraged to become 'proper writers', developing the key writing skills of planning, drafting, editing and publishing. This is implemented through half-termly 'Showstopper' writing. Children create and publish their writing in a published work journal which accompanies them on their journey through primary school.

Story writing is a key element of Showstopper writing in KS1, where staff use Talk 4 Writing models to help children develop their story writing craft. In KS2, children are introduced to a wider range of writing purposes and genres. Imaginative and engaging topic-related 'wow' activities are used to stimulate writing ideas and enable children to know 'what' to write. We

have implemented and adapted the National Literacy Trust's IPEELL writing scheme in KS2 to enable us to guide children on 'how' to write. At all levels, we place a huge emphasis on using guided and shared writing to help children develop the writing craft through watching their teachers in the act of writing.

At Staples Road, we emphasise the importance of correct letter formation and of producing fluent, legible handwriting - using the PenPals scheme from Year 1. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are taught progressively across the primary age range within learning sequences that build towards the production of a 'Showstopper' piece of writing. Children are also taught from an early age how to critically evaluate their writing and identify relevant next steps - a process developed from IPEELL that we call Rainbow Writing. All our children have writing target cards, which accompany them on their writing journey through primary school, charting their progress.

