



Abuja Preparatory School
Discover Develop Deliver

Dec 2018

LANGUAGE POLICY

The intentions of the policy

This policy is intended to be read by teachers, staff, parents and Board Members of the school. Furthermore this policy is intended to be a guide to the teaching of Language at Abuja Preparatory School.

How we view language

Our school's philosophy of language is that the teaching of English has a crucial role to play in equipping learners with the language skills they need to become effective members of their own communities, the world of work, and of society in general. It is important to appreciate the needs of our children, specifically in Nigeria, but more importantly in the Global Community as a whole.

Entitlement

Every pupil in our school is entitled to an experience of English that supports his/her development in areas of educational experience (particularly in aesthetic and creative, human and social, and spiritual and technological areas). The National Curriculum of England philosophy informs the development of language across the curriculum.

All our pupils, irrespective of age, ability and gender are entitled to participate fully in, and benefit from a broad range of appropriate English teaching and learning activities at every stage of their education. They are entitled to experience success rather than failure.

Attitudes and competencies to be developed

The importance of learning English

The learning of English is to develop communication in the school, in Nigerian public life and internationally.

In studying English pupils develop: -

- Skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing
- It enables them to express themselves creatively and imaginatively and to communicate with others effectively.
- Pupils learn to become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama as well as non-fiction and media texts.
- The study of the language helps pupils understand how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins.
- Using this knowledge, pupils can choose and adapt what they say and write in different situations.

By our own attitudes towards our pupils as language users, we endeavour to foster within them respect for each other's language. We do this by: -

- building on the successful language learning which pupils have already accomplished in their own homes and communities
- providing pupils with the best possible learning opportunities matched to their individual needs
- providing an apprenticeship approach to acquiring oral, reading and written language in which "the adult represents the success the child seeks and yet offers endless help"
- maintaining a constant respect for the pupil's language
- enabling pupils to reflect on themselves as language users

Key experiences

We guarantee to provide the pupils of our school with the following key experiences:

For all pupils:

- access to the library
- access to a range of fiction, non-fiction and multi-media based materials from the school's library and classroom stocks
- access to texts from the School's Library Service, through the Teacher Book Loans
- free access to choose, browse and read from a range of texts housed in an attractive and welcoming class book and ICT area
- access to a wide range of writing materials and implements, including ICT in the class writing area, for self-motivated and teacher directed writing
- access to a variety of radio, television, and ICT programmes to extend their language experiences
- the opportunity to make a book (as a class, group or individual) for a known audience every year and for the books to be displayed and read by the school community and visitors
- the opportunity to present writing in a variety of formats each year e.g. plays, posters, information leaflets, menus, comic strips etc

- the opportunity to engage in whole class, guided, paired and individual reading activities
- the opportunity to visit the theatre or to have a theatre company visit the school
- the opportunity to engage in various forms of drama and role play as a tool for learning and for presentation to a wider audience
- the opportunity to take part in a performance for parents and the wider community

Planning including inter-disciplinary opportunities

Every learning experience is a literacy experience. We think through language. We speak and listen through language. We read through language and we write through language. Every aspect of our lives is governed by language. The following points are important: -

- Each curriculum area has its own specialised language, e.g. investigations of a scientific or mathematical kind give opportunities for speaking and listening in discussion, for planning, for making suggestions, asking questions and reporting results.
- There are specific formats of reading and writing e.g. non-chronological reports, explanations and instructions. History gives the opportunity for developing research skills, chronological and story writing.
- Every subject within the curriculum contains opportunities for speaking and listening, reading and writing.
- These opportunities are clearly identified within the Curriculum.
- The teaching objectives in the Medium Term Planning are given detail in the Short Term planning, showing how and what pupils will learn and also how they will take ownership of that learning. It is in the Short Term Planning that differentiation is evident.
- Evaluation and assessment criteria are stated on the medium term planning.
- Year group and phase group planning ensures that pupils within each year band experience similar activities. Whole school planning is monitored by the specific Head of Department and the Head Teacher to ensure range, continuity, progression, differentiation and entitlement.

Teaching styles

To enable access to the whole curriculum for every pupil, to cater for the variety of learning styles within each class, and to ensure progression and reinforcement of skills and concepts throughout the year groups, we employ a variety of teaching styles: -

- Literacy is a basic skill and is key to creativity, imagination and critical thinking. We want our pupils to find learning exciting, compelling and intrinsically worthwhile. Therefore, we use a variety of interactive teaching and learning techniques so that pupils can respond successfully to their learning.
- We plan activities where pupils:
 - integrate prior and new knowledge
 - acquire and use a range of learning skills
 - solve problems individually and in groups
 - think carefully about their successes and failures
 - evaluate conflicting evidence and think critically
 - accept that learning involves uncertainty and difficulty

- We use questions as a tool for learning. Effective questioning models how learning evolves. Appropriately designed questions leads pupils from unsorted knowledge to understanding, teaching pupils how to use them for effective learning.
- We use a wide variety of materials to enable every pupil to access the planned learning experience and to achieve the planned teaching and learning objectives.
- We give pupils the opportunity to work in a variety of ways – whole class, groups (of differing sizes and composition), as pairs and individuals, according to their needs, the nature of the activity and the learning objectives.
- We build pupils' confidence and self-esteem, and enable them to become effective language users by:
 - sharing teaching and learning objectives and clarifying expected outcomes in a language that pupils can understand
 - teaching children to self-monitor
 - effective use of the plenary enabling children to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and process of learning orally as well as by writing
 - encouraging children to learn from and support one another, and to realise that they do not all have to be at the same level or arrive at the same point at the same time. There are many routes to the same destination
 - positive and constructive oral and/or written feed-back
- We create an environment where **all** children can make progress. We teach **all** children and ensure that **all** children know this.
- We enable pupils to develop written and spoken Standard English through the model we set as teachers, and through sharing and providing good quality reading and writing materials and texts.

Planning for progression and continuity

Teachers and Teaching Assistants work co-operatively to plan in phase groups and year groups:

- Formative and summative assessment is used to inform all planning.
- Individual Education Plans (IEPs), planned and agreed with the HoD are included in Short Term planning.

Rules and routines

- The school library is timetabled for class use.
- The central English and literacy resources are labelled and housed in the Resources Room.
- Should there be a shortage of any materials, staff are expected to inform the specific Librarian or the SLT

Assessment

Assessment provides information about what a pupil knows, understands, is able to do and where they go next. It is part of the teaching and learning process, and as such is a part of everyday classroom practice. The majority of assessments are part of a continuous process rather than a separate activity requiring the use of extra tasks and tests.

On-going assessment is used to inform medium and short term plans and thus highlight pupils' strengths and areas for development.

Teachers should consider the following, when assessing a pupil's progress:

- the assessment technique must match the learning objectives and the activities designed to meet them
- key assessment opportunities must be included in the medium and short term planning
- we must be selective when deciding who and what to assess
- we must be clear about what we are going to assess, i.e. we must identify the key learning objectives (what we want the pupils to know, understand and be able to do); outcomes of the lessons (what the pupils will 'produce'); and assessment criteria (how we will know whether the pupils have been successful in achieving the learning objectives).

Monitoring pupils' progress

Abuja Preparatory School has a policy for marking and responding to pupils' work. The following forms the basis for the school's routines for marking pupils' written English work:

- response is made to content linked to the learning objective, first
- marking is matched to individual pupil's targets, age and ability
- the pupils should clearly understand what the teacher is looking for (assessment criteria). This helps them to focus on the kinds of things they need to look for when they check/evaluate their own work
- pupils and parents are informed that not all errors will necessarily be corrected
- in the Infant section, teachers mark selected spelling mistakes linked to spelling targets. From Grade Y3 – Y6 errors are signalled rather than corrected
- teachers read, or get pupils to read their work aloud with appropriate expression, to help them to punctuate correctly
- teachers aim to mark some work each week **with** the pupil next to him/her.
- a written comment is frequently used and teachers should remember that the audience for these comments will be wider than the pupil to whom it is directed
- teachers try to develop the pupil's own response to a piece of work
- teachers try to make constructive intervention e.g. by posing a question
- In EYFS we use Tapestry

Assessing speaking and listening, reading and writing

Speaking and Listening

- We need to be clear about what is being assessed. It is **not** the accent, dialect, length of contribution, opinion, confidence or leadership qualities. We assess:
 - the effectiveness of pupils' talk and its adaptation to purpose, context and audience

- contributions to and within groups
- clarity in communicating, including giving reasons, clear sequences of ideas and appropriate use of Standard English
- We make the assessment criteria clear to all pupils.
- We collect evidence in all subjects. For example, during the shared part of the Unit of Inquiry the Co-teacher could be assigned to focus on two or three children making notes of their specific contributions and detailing how well they listen. Or, pupils could be asked to give instructions during a geography, design and technology or science lesson, and the criteria would relate to the brevity and clarity of the wording, the sequence in which the instructions are given, and the choice of appropriate vocabulary to convey the technical information.
- Evidence takes the form of:
 - notes made by the teacher
 - notes made by the children in talk logs, group observations, notes for argument, discussion and presentation, and reflection on them
 - some taped work e.g. on video or cassette tape
- We collect evidence in specific drama and role play activities, class, group, paired and individual work.
- We collect evidence when it is recognised as excellent or significant for a pupil.
- We focus on two or three children each week.
- We use objectives for whole class monitoring.
- We integrate speaking and listening assessment into other records.

Reading

Assessment can take place whenever pupils are engaged in reading activities and whatever type of text is being read. A note is made of anything the pupil does which is new or significant to their learning, and/or anything which requires teaching.

Role play and early readers have individual reading conferences weekly. As children begin to read they have a running reading record. As children become independent readers individual reading conferences will take place twice every trimester. These assessments can take place during guided reading time.

Group reading, paired reading, individual reading and guided reading sessions provide the main opportunities for monitoring pupils' progress and achievements in reading and for setting targets for future teaching. Monitoring involves both pupil reading and discussion. Note is made of:

- evidence that the pupil has early concepts of print – e.g. orientation of book, that print is read
- reading strategies that the pupil uses – the pupil should use a range of strategies to decode unknown words e.g. graphic, phonic, contextual
- level and sophistication of understanding – literal, inference and deduction
- confidence and independence
- response to book
- fluency
- intonation and expression
- awareness of audience
- attitude to reading

A written record is made of every individual reading conference and for pupils with whom the teacher works during reading sessions.

As soon as pupils are able they should keep their own reading logs. All pupils in Y5 and Y6 should keep their own reading logs. These supplement individual reading records and may form the basis of teacher/pupil discussions.

Writing

Each teacher keeps (or makes a photocopy of) one sample of writing towards the end of each half term, linked to one of the key writing focuses for assessment. The key writing focuses for assessment are taken from the language curriculum document. Across the year there must be a balance between fiction and non-fiction, and between the various genres and text types. The non-fiction samples of writing should have links to the cross-curricular schemes of work being studied within that half term.

Each sample is annotated to provide a cumulative record and may include comments on the pupil's:

- effective communication
- confidence as a writer
- independence
- persistence
- writing preferences
- approach to editing and re-drafting

Comments should also be made on:

- accuracy of spelling – common sight words, visual patterns, self corrections
- vocabulary choices
- punctuation
- appropriate grammatical construction
- paragraphing
- audience and purpose
- handwriting skills

Spelling is assessed in the course of children's writing linked to individual and group targets.

In order to standardise assessments across the school, one Spanish and English staff meeting in each term is assigned for moderation of samples, with a mixture of teachers from across the school moderating one sample of work from various year groups.

Links with parents (see Homework policy)

Parents are asked to share home reading books with children and to write appropriate comments in the home reading diary. Teachers monitor these diaries and respond in writing at least once a week.

There is regular support for parents in parental workshops. Parents are given a booklet on how they can support their child's development of language and literacy, including

strategies for supporting the learning of spelling and how to help their children with handwriting.

Evaluation of Policy

This policy will be reviewed by teaching staff annually. The following criteria will be used to measure its success:

- How has the quality of children's learning been enhanced/improved?
- How has the quality of teaching been improved?
- Can we identify a range of teaching and learning styles in each classroom?
- Are staff and pupils following routines and rules?
- Is there clear evidence of assessment informing planning?
- Do pupils know what they are learning and why?
- Has any part of the policy been difficult to implement, or been ignored?