English at Ditton Lodge Primary – using and adapting the ‘Success for All’ Programme

At Ditton Lodge Primary School, we adopted the Success for All (SFA) English programme in September 2019. SFA is a reading and writing programme devised to accelerate and challenge children’s reading and writing abilities. It lays strong foundations in both oracy and literacy and provides systematic teaching throughout the primary years.

SFA provides a wide range of opportunities for children to explore and develop phonic knowledge and comprehension strategies; develop vocabulary and spelling; improve grammatical awareness; analyse whole texts; and develop writing in a range of genres, all whilst exposing children to a wide range of interesting, bright and diverse range of literature.

Success for All makes reading the cornerstone of the curriculum. For children to succeed in school, they must be reading at the national curriculum stage of learning by the end of each year group. They also need effective teachers, so SFA includes intensive professional development and on-going coaching support.

Regular and consistent monitoring gives teachers feedback on their teaching, how children are learning, where they need additional teaching or extra help as well as ensuring the programme retains fideltiy. SFA involves the whole community in implementing effective teaching that is based on the best research on what works. Success for All makes learning fun and engaging for children and helps teachers become knowledgeable, skilled instructional leaders.

The whole curriculum is driven by co-operative learning which is embedded throughout the programme and focuses on individual pupil accountability, common goals and recognition of team success. The emphasis is on partner and team sharing, and the opportunities that children are given to work with peers. This enables them to master new skills, whilst encouraging them to develop into active thoughtful learners. Ditton Lodge liked this system so much, we have embedded it throughout our school day.

How does it work in our school?:

Children in year 1 to year 6 are assessed roughly every eight weeks to determine their progress with regards to reading and writing. This may take the form of a 1:1 assessment, group assessment, test, reading book assessments and teacher assessments. Children are grouped by reading ability, regardless of their age. This creates unique teams, where older and younger children work together to support each other in their learning. Teams are usually no larger than 20 children and may be taught by a teacher or a teaching assistant.

Children follow the Roots or Wings programme, depending on their reading age.

Roots - This programme builds on the systematic teaching of synthetic phonics in Reception whilst also developing a significant sight word vocabulary. The four basic components of Roots consist of Fast-Track Phonics, Shared Stories, Story Telling and Retelling, and Writing.

Wings – This programme has a strong focus on reading for fluency and comprehension. The main aim of Wings is to give children a love of reading and create fluent and confident readers by the end of Year 6, well-able to clarify and question a range of texts. Wings supports and challenges both basic and more competent readers. It develops their skills through reading a wide range of carefully selected literature including fiction, non-fiction and poetry.

Year 6 follow a separate SFA revision programme which provides opportunities for revising reading skills, test techniques and SPaG knowledge. Children are also given writing tasks based upon a variety of genres, allowing them to showcase their writing skills and knowledge.

SFA is taught four days a week for 75 minute sessions. On the remaining day each week, children are taught by their class teachers, alternating between writing and SPaG content. This allows class teachers to ‘touch base’ with their own class and to strengthen the teaching of writing.

Once a half term, each class returns to their class teacher for a full ‘writing week’ to allow time for detailed input and editing as well as feedback and assessment. Writing opportunities are also planned into our afternoon subjects to provide children with independent writing tasks. These are assessed once a half term.

Spelling is taught every day for 15 minutes before children move to their SFA groups. Each class follows spelling patterns provided by PiXL.

Reading and SPaG are assessed every term following the PiXL timetable and once a year using the PiRA assessments.