

# Bankfields Primary School

## English Policy



June 2015

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### Introduction

English has an important place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others, and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently have a huge barrier to success and other aspects of life.

It is important to note that this policy must be read in conjunction with our Scheme of Work document which provides the agreed school approach to the delivery of English within our school.

### Aims and Objectives

The aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and English by equipping pupils with a secure understanding of the spoken and written language, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- develop competency in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate

## English Teaching in the Foundation Stage

In the F.S., children are given opportunity and encouragement to use their skills in a range of situations and for a range of purposes as part of the seven areas of learning and development as laid out in the *Guidance for the Early Years Foundation stage*. Through careful cross-curricular planning, teachers will ensure that Foundation Stage pupils' learning needs are provided for through structured activities. Early years learning concentrates on 7 areas split between prime and specific areas of learning.

The prime areas of learning are:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The specific areas of learning are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Children in Foundation 1 (Nursery) are assessed on entry to Nursery to gain a baseline and again as they leave.

On entry to Foundation 2 (Reception) a baseline is recorded and then children are assessed against the Early Learning goals at the age of 5 at the end of the Foundation Stage. Throughout the Foundation Stage evidence of learning and development is collected through observational assessment and monitoring and recorded in an *Individuals Learning Journey* and work book.

Speaking and Listening skills are vitally important as they underpin all learning at this early stage. The *Communication, Language and Literacy* strand of the Foundation Stage builds on the language skills that children bring from home. Development of these skills is encouraged through activities such as listening to stories and poems, joining in with rhymes and songs, participating in role and imaginative play, responding to simple instructions, talking to accompany play etc. Knowledge about books is developed through activities such as listening to stories and rhymes, retelling familiar stories in their own words, reading a big book with the teacher, re-reading favourite stories and listening to taped stories etc.

When a child is ready to begin more formal reading activities s/he will embark upon the school's reading system of coloured banded books. Children are given opportunities to mark make and write as part of their independent play and activities. Emergent writing is encouraged through multi-sensory experiences and children are encouraged to write in role. The learning environment provides purposes for writing e.g. shopping lists, signs, instructions,

recounts etc. As children progress with phonics and letter formation they are encouraged to attempt writing using their phonic knowledge.

- Pupils are provided with quiet reading areas to enjoy books, retell stories, and act out stories.
- Pupils in F.S are all given a home/school book bag to encourage reading at home.
- In F.S. pupils are taught Early Reading Skills in line with skills progression.
- Pupils in Foundation Stage 2 read on an individual basis with adults to develop word building, reading strategies and comprehension skills
- Pupils in the F.S. are introduced to phonics through the Letters and Sounds programme.

## English Teaching in Key Stage One and Two

### Time allocation

The time allocated for English is in line with the recommendations for key stage one and two. All children receive the basic entitlement of a daily English lesson, lasting approximately one hour. In addition, pupils will also be involved in activities which further enhance and develop these skills across the curriculum. Our long term cross-curricular planning approach has English at its heart and ensures regular opportunities to reinforce learning.

Furthermore, pupils will be involved in comprehension, guided reading, handwriting and spelling and grammar sessions outside of the English time allocation.

Where pupils need additional support to develop English skills, **careful planning for the deployment of** support staff alongside teaching staff will ensure pupils receive the necessary entitlement in order to develop those key skills for life in the future.

### Teaching and Learning

The English Scheme of Work in conjunction with the National Curriculum 2014 forms the basis of teaching and learning. The document includes stages of Speaking and Listening, Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation. Teachers plan for a variety of **groupings** including: whole class, small groups, paired and individual children. When the teacher works towards the child's independent learning they employ a range of teaching strategies to ensure a personalised approach which include;

- Instructing/directing,
- Modelling/demonstrating/scribing
- Explaining
- Questioning

- Discussing
- Role play and use of props
- Consolidating
- Evaluating

## **Speaking and Listening**

The national curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum - cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. Teachers ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills. Pupils develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write. Children are assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others, and teachers ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions. Pupils are also taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate.

All pupils are enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Pupils are able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role. They have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.

## **Reading**

The programmes of study for reading at key stages 1 and 2 consist of 2 dimensions:

- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading)

It is essential that teaching focuses on developing pupils' competence in both dimensions; different kinds of teaching are needed for each.

Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. This is why phonics is emphasised in the early teaching of reading to beginners (i.e. unskilled readers) when they start school.

Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills develop through pupils' experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction. All pupils are encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world they live in, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum. Reading widely and often increases pupils' vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. Reading also feeds pupils' imagination and opens up a treasure house of wonder and joy for curious young minds.

It is essential that, by the end of their primary education, all pupils are able to read fluently, and with confidence.

## **Writing**

The programmes of study for writing at key stages 1 and 2 are constructed similarly to those for reading:

- transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing)

It is essential that teaching develops pupils' competence in these 2 dimensions. In addition, pupils are taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. These aspects of writing have been incorporated into the English Scheme of Work for composition.

Writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription: that is, on spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words. Effective composition involves articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting.

To ensure that all of these elements are addressed across the school, writing is taught using the Pie Corbett approach of 'Talk for Writing' which includes the stages of 'Imitate, Innovate and Invent' which is outlined further in the English Scheme of Work.

## **Spelling, vocabulary, grammar and punctuation.**

Opportunities for teachers to enhance pupils' vocabulary arise naturally from their reading and writing. As vocabulary increases, teachers show pupils how to understand the relationships between words, how to understand shades of meaning, and how to develop their

understanding of, and ability to use, figurative language. Pupils are also taught how to work out and clarify the meanings of unknown words and words with more than one meaning.

Pupils are taught to control their speaking and writing consciously and to use Standard English.

Throughout the programmes of study, teachers teach pupils the vocabulary they need to discuss their reading, writing and spoken language. It is important that pupils learn the correct grammatical terms in English and that these terms are integrated within teaching.

Children in Key Stage One and Two follow a specific age related grammar scheme. Children are taught a specific skill which is then incorporated into the success criteria for independent writing and can also be linked to their own individual targets. To support this, children who would benefit, receive intervention outside of the English lesson to consolidate and stretch their learning.

### **Handwriting and Presentation**

Pupils are taught and encouraged to form lower and upper case letters correctly from their first days in school and as they develop, to write in a joined style. (See Appendix 1)

In Key Stage 1 children will be introduced to cursive style handwriting, where every letter begins from the line.

An agreed formation of joins will follow through Key Stage One and into Key Stage Two. (See Appendix 1)

In Key Stage One and Two, discrete handwriting lessons will be taught modelling the correct letter formation and joins.

They are taught to use a comfortable and correct pencil/pen grip and to use a handwriting pen for written tasks from Y3 upwards.

Pupils are also given opportunities to present their work on word processors.

Good presentation of written pieces is expected across the curriculum.

### **Planning**

Teachers use the National Curriculum 2014, alongside our own school based Scheme of Work to create English plans which form the basis of our cross-curricular approach to planning over a two year cycle.

Clear objectives, taken from the National Curriculum 2014, are set for the lesson and shared with the pupils. Teachers differentiate according to the needs of the children and set targets for pupils to work to on a regular basis.

Groupings vary to meet the needs of the children and allow the best possible opportunities for progression to occur.

ICT is used where it enhances, extends and complements English teaching and learning.

Additional adults are used to support the teaching of English. They work under the guidance of the teacher with small groups of children or individuals.

### **Cross Curricula**

Children are given opportunities across the curriculum to deepen and widen their experience of English. While great care is taken to ensure the foundation subject's learning objectives are at the forefront, English is used to present information in variety of ways and apply their English skills. This ensures children to embed their learning.

### **Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

Marking is in line with the school's policy and posters are displayed in each teaching area.

Assessments are made in line with school assessment policy.

Children are formally assessed at the end of each Key Stage. However, half-termly assessments are also carried out throughout school within reading comprehension, writing and spelling and handwriting.

Tasks are used in years 3, 4, and 5 to monitor ongoing progress.

At the end of year 1, all pupils are assessed using the statutory Phonics Screening Check. Results are reported to parents and the local authority.

Teachers use assessment to ensure planning is based on prior attainment and that pupils know what they are to do to achieve the next step.

Parents are invited to meetings three times a year and are sent an annual end of year report.

Analysis of assessment data is used to set curricular school targets and to inform the next steps in planning.

KS1 and KS2 progress is recorded as data on the school's assessment tracker and this information will be responded to by teams; reorganising groupings and support as necessary.



These include any information that enables the teacher to deliver an effective, relevant curriculum which builds on prior attainment and meets the needs of pupils.

A consistent approach to marking is a vital part of our children's continued development. All classrooms display the school's marking policy and work is marked in accordance to this. In addition, writing will be marked against the success criteria the children will have been provided with prior to starting the task.

Teachers will also plan **opportunities** in lesson time in order for children to respond to the marking; this will include opportunity for 1-1 feedback where appropriate and needed.

## Inclusion

All children receive quality English teaching, which meets the needs of all pupils, on a daily basis. Activities are differentiated accordingly to ensure personalised learning. Where identified pupils are considered to require targeted support, to enable them to work to age appropriate objectives, a variety of interventions are available. These include the use of IEPs, LSA support, and support programmes in particular **Early English Support(ELS) PIP's** or programmes aimed at specific needs such as Toe by Toe or Stareway to Spelling.

More able pupils are planned for in line with our policy for Gifted and Talented pupils and provided with opportunities to further develop their skills at a challenging and motivational level.

This is supported by our SEN, Gifted and Talented and Equality and Diversity policies.

It will be ensured that equal opportunities in English are addressed as follows:

- Pupils with special needs have equal access to the English curriculum through the use of differentiated learning strategies and tasks. These are based on individual needs.
- Specific teaching strategies are used to maximize access to the curriculum for pupils learning EAL.
- Respect for cultural and linguistic diversity is promoted through the use of resources on multi-cultural themes.
- An awareness of other dialects and Standard English encouraged through a range of texts.
- Gender equality is promoted by ensuring that both boys and girls have access to all aspects of the English curriculum, with tasks and activities planned which appeal to both boys and girls.
- Opportunities to address issues of gender, race etc. are provided through discussion, texts and resources.
- Through our Equality and Diversity Policy and its approaches we aim to address the gender issues which can be around boys' writing. For example, through the use of

multi-media stimuli, good quality texts, writing frames structured checklists and careful planning of the purpose of written tasks.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

English is monitored by the Head Teacher and English Leader, supported by the Senior Leadership Team and allocated Governors.

Having identified priorities, the English Leader constructs an action plan which forms part of the School Development Plan. This will form the basis for monitoring and will identify how this is to be implemented.

### **Parental and Community Involvement**

We highly value parent involvement in children's development of English and promote a home school partnership in the following ways:

- Sharing information - newsletters, parents' leaflets and reading diaries.
- Consultation evenings.
- Family Learning events.
- Homework - in line with our homework policy and home/school agreement.
- We ask parents to encourage and monitor home reading and discuss books and preferences with their children.
- Parents and CRB checked community volunteers are welcomed into the school to support children in English.
- Better Reading Partners.