



English Policy

English Statement of Intent

At Bankfields Primary School, it is our intention to provide pupils with an engaging and aspirational education in English that will develop our pupils' ability to communicate in debates and discussions with great fluency; master the mechanics of both reading and writing to develop a love and a true passion for English; so that they can share their thoughts, ideas and emotions effectively in school and the wider world. It is our intention to immerse pupils in the wonders of high-quality books to instil a love of reading-not just for childhood, but for life!

Through our creative English curriculum, it is our aim to ignite a love of writing underpinned by a sound understanding of grammatical constructs and spelling strategies. Writing is an integral part of our whole curriculum; all pupils are provided with many opportunities to develop and apply their writing skills across the curriculum. It is our intention that pupils develop a clear understanding of the writing process to establish themselves as independent authors. Pupils are taken on a writing journey through writing projects, which build their knowledge of writing in context and establishes a clear purpose for writing.

Pupils are provided with opportunities to explore a variety of genres through text interrogation of model texts to develop their knowledge of language and organisational features for a range of genres. It is our intention to broaden our pupils' exposure to high level vocabulary to allow pupils to apply their understanding of vocabulary and grammatical features within and across the English curriculum to enable our pupils to communicate creatively and imaginatively using Standard English.

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 literacy 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 debates

Implementation

English Teaching in the Foundation Stage

In the Foundation Stage children are given opportunities 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 Individual Learning Journey and workbook.

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 they will embark upon the school's Sounds-Write phonics reading system before moving onto our main Accelerated Reader scheme. 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 EYFS are all given a home/school book bag to encourage reading at home.
- In EYFS 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 EYFS are introduced to phonics through the Sounds-Write 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 approach to the curriculum 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 intervention 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 progression maps of the key skills 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
- Editing and improving

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. Oracy underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary, 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. In KS1, pupils are taught synthetic phonics by advancing through the units of Sounds-Write where they are taught vital skills of segmenting, blending and phonemic manipulation alongside the Initial and Extended Code.

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' imaginations and opens up a treasure trove of wonder and joy for curious young minds. Therefore, at the beginning of Year 2, children embark on the Accelerated Reader Program, which encourages children to read for understanding and pleasure whilst allowing teachers to closely monitor progress.

Reading Interventions

Sounds-Write Phonics and Lexia Reading are both used to identify struggling readers. Diagnostic baseline tests identify areas of weakness, and these issues are then targeted by qualified Sounds-Write practitioners in LKS2 and UKS2.

In UKS2, Reading Plus assesses efficiency, measures and increases motivation and comprehension. Pupils are given choice and control to practise at their own pace with a program that uses adaptive technology in a meaningful way. Reading Plus empowers pupils and teachers by connecting rich assessment data to personalised digital learning and teacher-led instruction, making it a useful reading intervention tool for vulnerable readers in year five and year six.

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 two 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, which was designed in conjunction with the National Curriculum and the Writing Framework. All staff at Bankfields Primary understand that writing is essential for success. We want to enable our children to develop the ability to express themselves clearly and fluently as we know this enables young people to take advantage of opportunities in education and employment.

Writing places demands on working memory, requiring writers to manage everything consciously, from holding the pen correctly to forming letters legibly and then combining them accurately into words. These are the necessary precursors to expressing ideas effectively. This guidance recommends sequenced teaching to provide pupils with the best chance to master written language and understand the writing process. Motivation is both a driver and an outcome of learning. It makes a difference to the writing pupils produce. It is therefore vital to nurture their belief in their own potential as writers through encouragement, helping them to manage their emotions, and ensuring they have successful writing experiences.

Guidance from the Writing Framework highlights the important role of the reception year in building the foundations for writing. These foundations support children throughout primary school and prepare them for secondary education. To ensure children get off to the best start and have the best chance of later success in writing, it recommends a focus on building these foundations through oral composition and through developing handwriting and spelling. This means keeping things simple and doing them well. Children need to be able to compose orally (say out loud what they want to write) and know how to form letters, spell and punctuate correctly. Handwriting instruction will start at the beginning of reception, alongside phonics, and continue throughout the reception year and beyond. The guidance explains that pupils should not be expected to produce extended pieces of writing. Rather they should be given plenty of opportunities to practise handwriting and spelling, write dictated sentences and develop oral composition.

The guidance explains the importance of teaching spelling and handwriting effectively to reduce the cognitive load on pupils and ensure they become skilled writers who write fluently and legibly. It emphasises the importance of teaching handwriting regularly, explicitly, precisely and cumulatively. There should be a clearly sequenced progression. Handwriting teaching and practice should be in addition to phonics teaching and should begin at the start of the reception year. The guidance explains how to support pupils with the physical demands of handwriting. It recommends implementing 'ready to write' routines and provides guidance on the choice of writing implement, the classroom set-up and adaptations for left-handed pupils. The guidance emphasises the importance of teaching spelling systematically, starting with phonics in reception, and the need for pupils to have plenty of practice in applying spelling knowledge. It recommends dictation as a way for them to practise spelling.

The Writing Framework explains that writing depends on articulating and structuring ideas, which the national curriculum refers to as composition. It recommends that the best way to teach pupils to write is by teaching them to master sentences. Sentence-level teaching, which focuses on pupils' understanding about how to construct sentences, should be a key component of any writing curriculum. The guidance highlights that, in the early stages of learning to write, sentence-level composition should be practised orally. Once pupils have a good understanding of how to write a sentence, paragraphs can be composed with much greater ease.

Creating coherent texts relies on pupils' firm understanding of both sentence structure and paragraph organisation. The guidance explains that teaching approaches that gradually transfer responsibility from the teacher to the pupil have proven effective. Additionally, it emphasises the importance of teaching grammar in the context of a sound understanding of reading and writing and how a broad and deep vocabulary enables pupils to communicate accurately, concisely and creatively. The guidance stresses the importance of understanding the different phases of the writing process – planning, drafting, revising, editing, and sharing – and the value of each phase.

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 joined handwriting.

Our approach to the teaching and learning of writing is to create a community of writers in which teachers write alongside children. We aim to create a writing culture where there is a love of writing from both adults and children and where children's creativity is encouraged along with regular opportunities to practise different elements of writing throughout the process. This will allow them to master age-appropriate knowledge and skills as children are taught in sufficient depth and have opportunities to practise and apply their learning.

Quality teacher-led instruction at each stage of the writing process will form the basis of effective teaching and learning. Teachers will write and share in class their own pieces in relation to topics, modelling and sharing the strategies they employ as well as appraising a range of high-quality model texts. The Writing Framework emphasises the importance of high expectations and the need for teachers and leaders to be ambitious for all pupils to ensure they get the best possible opportunity to achieve in writing. High-quality teaching is central to this and every pupil, including those with more complex needs, should receive and be included in writing instruction.

At Bankfields Primary, teachers are proactive in identifying when pupils need support in an aspect of writing and, recognising limited capacity, that they provide support within the writing lesson to ensure pupils' progress. By having a sound knowledge of the pedagogy of teaching writing, teachers respond flexibly to the challenges particular pupils face. When pupils need further support, teachers focus on understanding the specific barriers they face with writing, ensuring they are taught in a way that is accessible for them and enables them to make progress.

Teachers will ensure children have sufficient knowledge and background information of topics to support them in the writing process. Staff will take ownership of planning and resourcing, ensuring lessons are adapted and responsive to meet the needs of all children. Children will have the opportunity to write for sustained periods most days through mini-writing lessons focused on the different elements linked to a writing genre and they will develop the skills to talk and present their writing in positive and constructive ways.

Three Stage Writing Process

There are three stages to the writing process:

Stage 1 – The Investigation Stage

Stage 2 – Teaching and Collaboration Stage

Stage 3 – Show Me Stage

Stage 1 – The Investigation Stage

- The class will discuss the genre, audience and purpose of the text. Teachers will show them model texts and the class will analyse the text. In addition, children will explore a range of other texts within the genre including examples that the teacher has written. This may include examples that have different purposes, audiences.
- Children will explore techniques, discuss preferences giving reasons why and make reasoned judgements on effectiveness.
- They will explore techniques used in reading and writing in greater depth such as, facts and opinions, chronology, making predictions, summarisation, authorial intent, inference and the expression of feelings.
- The class will explore other genres/writing opportunities that cross over into the topic being taught.
- Children will be taught to read as writers, collecting ambitious words and phrases along the way in vocabulary books.

Stage 2 – Teaching and Collaboration

- Modelled and shared writing will ensure that children have examples of what a great piece looks like.
- Teacher led instruction through the teaching model: I do, we do, you do or shared, guided, independent will build confident and creative writers across school.
- This is done through mini lessons where a different component of the writing is taught each day.
- Taking examples of children's work and identifying strengths and making improvements.
- Focusing on different elements each day through short writing pieces e.g. setting the scene, character description, introductions, conclusions, argument for and against, presenting evidence, development of points
- Bringing in other genres that link for opportunities for short pieces of writing.
- Editing and improving short pieces.
- Extending vocabulary on working walls.
- Drama, discussions, hot seating, marketplace research activities.

Stage 3 – Show Me Stage

- Box planning for final piece.
- Children have a range of options to choose from linked to the project area.
- Children write their sustained piece of writing linked to the given genre.

Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation

Spelling from year one to year six is taught consistently in school following the principles and objectives outlined in the National Curriculum. 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 in order to enhance the quality of writing produced.

Children in KS1 and KS2 follow a specific year group grammar programme underpinned by 'The Grammar Dictionary', where children are taught to define grammatical terms at speed before applying them to solve grammatical errors or misconceptions. Children are taught a specific skill which is then incorporated into the success criteria for

independent writing through our Magic 20 Sentence Techniques, which can also be linked to their own individual targets.

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. As a school, pupils follow the Spectrum Handwriting Scheme. In KS1 children will be introduced to cursive style handwriting, where every letter begins from the line. In both key stages, 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 year three 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. Clear objectives, taken from the National Curriculum 2014, are set for the lesson and shared with the pupils. Teachers scaffold learning 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-Curricular Opportunities

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

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Marking is in line with the school's marking and feedback policy. Formative and summative assessments are made in line with the school's assessment policy for reading, writing, spelling, punctuation and grammar. A consistent approach to marking is a vital part of our children's continued development. In addition, writing will be marked against the success criteria generated prior to starting the task. The marking policy is regularly reviewed and updated. Teachers also plan opportunities in lesson time in order for children to respond to the marking; this will include opportunities for 1-1 feedback where appropriate and needed.

- At the Investigation Stage, the level of support is indicated with S/G/I and live marked as and when appropriate with a tick and LM. Teachers will respond promptly to misconceptions and common errors and address them throughout the lesson.
- At the Teaching and Collaboration Stage, the level of support is indicated, live marking, shared marking after completion of short tasks to address common misconceptions. Opportunities to edit and improve sentence or short paragraph independently within short pieces of writing. (This will be done after scrutinising examples of children's work and making improvements as a class). Children will rewrite the identified sentence/paragraph underlined in green pen again underneath the original piece indicated with the Title 'Editing and Improving'
- At the Show Me Stage, the level of support is indicated. The whole class writing feedback and assessment sheet is completed by the class teacher to identify common misconceptions/errors and any issues that have arisen. Misconceptions/issues addressed as whole class followed by **A, B, C** pupil response to marking. Sections of work that need to be improved will be highlighted by underlining in green pen. Children will rewrite selected paragraph/section underneath original piece.
Spelling errors of key words and key vocabulary displayed on working walls will need to be written out again by the children three times. However, ambitious vocabulary choices spelt incorrectly will also be given by the teacher to practise.

- **A**- Objective/technique mastered. Opportunity to extend deepen skill by exploring techniques further.
- **B** – Edit and improve a sentence/ paragraph independently linked to common misconceptions issues identified in on whole class feedback sheet.
- **C** – Shared improvements guided by teacher/TA

Children are formally assessed at the end of each Key Stage. However, termly assessments are also carried out throughout school within reading comprehension, writing, grammar, punctuation and spelling using SATs, CGP and TestBase SATs papers to support teacher assessment judgements. Independent tasks are used in all year groups to monitor ongoing progress in writing to provide evidence for the WTS/EXS/GDS at the end of each year. Data is inputted onto SIMs with a + representing the EXS.

Each term, teachers give their children a 'grade' for reading which is either:

- - minus (a pupil who has achieved up to 35 - 40% in their independent assessment)
- = equals (a pupil who has achieved 41% to 54% in their independent assessment)
- + plus (a pupil who has achieved over 55% to 79% in their independent assessment)
- Mastery (a pupil who has achieved over 80% in their independent assessment)

Each term, teachers give their children a 'grade' for SPaG which is either:

- - minus (a pupil who has achieved up to 35 - 43% in their independent assessment)
- = equals (a pupil who has achieved 44% to 54% in their independent assessment)
- + plus (a pupil who has achieved over 55% to 79% in their independent assessment)
- Mastery (a pupil who has achieved over 80% in their independent assessment)

KS1 and KS2 progress is recorded as data on the school's pupil progress grids 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.

Writing is assessed and moderated in school and across schools in the Steel River Academy Trust, and at Y2 and Y6 with schools across Redcar and Cleveland using the Steel River writing criteria.

Reading skills throughout and at the end of EYFS and year 1 are assessed against the Initial and Extended code, using Sounds-Write materials. At the end of year 1, all pupils are assessed using the statutory Phonics Screening Check. Ongoing formative assessment of reading is conducted using the individual Sounds Write Tracker and Accelerated Reader assessment tools while reading ages in year 1 to year 6 are ascertained using the AR Star Reader test. Our whole school reading criteria is used to support teachers with TA judgements in reading. 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. Analysis of assessment data is used to set curricular school targets and to inform the next steps in planning. Parents are invited to meetings three times a year and are sent an annual end of year report to share attainment and progress made in English each year.

Inclusion

All children receive quality first English teaching, which meets the needs of all pupils, on a daily basis. Activities are scaffolded and adapted 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 SEND Support Plans, LSA support, and support programmes in particular Early English Support (ELS) PIP's or programmes aimed at specific needs such as BLAST, Lexia, Sounds Write and Reading Plus.

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 scaffolded 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 Lead, supported by the Senior Leadership Team and allocated Governors.

Having identified priorities, the English Lead 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.

Revised September 2026

Mrs K. Lee

English Subject Lead

