

**English Policy**

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**1. Introduction**

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum and has a special place in the curriculum because all learning takes place through the use of language. It is during a child's primary education that the foundations of all aspects of English, both spoken and written are laid.

In the literate society in which we live, an ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing is essential. The proficiency to read a wide range of different types of text is vital if children are to achieve their full potential throughout their time at school and into adult life.

Our school views the acquisition of language and literacy skills to be of the utmost importance and therefore the teaching of all aspects of English will be given a high priority.

**2. Speaking and Listening**

Good speaking and listening skills are fundamental to a child's learning in all areas of the curriculum and at all stages of their school life. Children must be given the opportunity to talk for a range of purposes and in a range of situations. They need to be taught to listen carefully in order to communicate with and respond to the people around them.

Aims

- To ensure that the use of verbal language and the ability to listen are fundamental to every activity undertaken at school.
- To give children a variety of opportunities and experiences to speak and listen, both as individuals and in group situations.
- To emphasise the importance of clear diction and audibility and for the children to begin to use Standard English.

Objectives

To provide a wide range of activities at various levels designed to develop children's ability to speak.  
For example

- Listening and responding to stories, rhymes, poems and songs that are familiar and unfamiliar. These should include examples from different cultures, a wide range of authors and from children's own work.
- Securing responses to visual and aural stimuli, e.g. pictures, television, radio, film, computer, telephone, making use of audio and video recordings where appropriate.
- Discussion of work and ideas with other children and adults.
- Collaborative planning and carrying out of activities in a way that requires children to talk and to listen.
- Talking about experiences in or out of school such as school trips, family activities in different situations e.g. paired news telling, group work, whole class discussions.
- Retelling and re-enacting stories, improvised drama including hot-seating and conscience alley.
- Imaginative play.
- Giving and receiving instructions, simple explanations, information, asking and answering questions.

Cross curricular links

Speaking and listening skills are vital components of every part of the curriculum and opportunities should be taken to include speaking and listening activities as part of the delivery of the foundation subjects.

ICT

ICT provides valuable resources for reinforcing language and listening skills and opportunities should be provided for each year group to use ICT to develop these skills.

SEND

When planning programmes for speaking and listening development children's varying levels of need will be considered. Tasks may be differentiated in order to take account of the wide range of ability. Children experiencing difficulties when speaking and listening may be identified as having a special educational need. These children may be withdrawn in small groups for sessions that develop these skills. They may also be supported in the class with a particular focus on speaking and listening.

Assessment

- Teacher assessment of level of attainment is made at the end of Key Stage One.
- Children in Reception are assessed on entry. They are then assessed using ongoing observations which are recorded in their Learning Journey. The speaking and listening elements mostly fall within the Communication and Language area of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

### **3. Reading**

Children become successful readers by learning to use a range of strategies to read and understand the text. The range of strategies includes: phonics, word recognition and graphic knowledge, grammatical knowledge and context. Successful readers use as many of these strategies as possible.

Therefore, reading is a multi-strategy skill to make sense of and appreciate text. It is not simply the decoding of marks on the page but involves the ability to read with understanding a wide range of texts including fiction, non-fiction, labels, captions, lists and print in the environment.

Competence in reading is the key to independent learning and therefore the teaching of reading is to be

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given high priority by all staff. Success in reading has a direct effect upon progress in most other areas of the curriculum and motivation.

#### Aims

- To develop a positive, enthusiastic and confident approach to reading.
- To promote reading for pleasure and enjoyment and to develop a love of books.
- To raise attainment in reading.
- To create a supportive climate in which reading can flourish.

#### Objectives

- To deliver the requirements of the Early Years Outcomes and National Curriculum in an effective manner appropriate to the needs of our children.
- To provide experiences which enable each child to;

- ⇒ Develop the motivation to want to learn to read.
- ⇒ Have reading modelled to them by an experienced reader.
- ⇒ Read at a level which provides challenge but not frustration.
- ⇒ Share their reading with peers and adults.
- ⇒ Discuss their reading in order to read between the lines.
- ⇒ Read a variety of texts with understanding.

- To provide teaching which enables each child to reach their highest potential.
- To develop links with parents, volunteers and libraries in order to support reading.
- To be able to access other areas of the curriculum through reading.

#### Implementation

- It is our policy to follow the National Curriculum and this describes what must be taught in Key Stage One. Guidance is also taken from the Early Years Outcomes in Reception.
- Our phonics is taught discretely using the Letters and Sounds programme.
- Children read with an adult every week and their banded book is changed.
- During Reading Time activities are differentiated to ensure that all children, including those with special needs are supported within the classroom.
- The school has an excellent library resource. The library is available for use by classes and groups and the books can be easily accessed by the children.

#### Cross curricular links

- Our planning ensures that cross curricular links are utilised whenever possible. The non fiction genres for each year group are organised in line with foundation subject themes.
- The cross curricular areas of PSHE are met and discussed within the wide variety of reading material available to the children.
- Reading skills are taught and learnt throughout the whole curriculum.

#### ICT

- ICT is an integral part of our English curriculum and contributes to reading development in a range of ways.
- The use of programs such as Word Shark and Oxford Reading Tree and online resources enable our children to experience a stimulating teaching media.

## Assessment, recording, continuity and progression

- Each child has an individual reading record. High frequency words are assessed in all year groups termly. Our reading scheme books are banded and children's book band levels are also recorded. Progress records are used in Key Stage One to level reading in line with National Curriculum levels. This information is entered onto a tracking grid.
- Children in Reception are assessed on entry. They are then assessed using ongoing observations which are recorded in their Learning Journey. The phonics elements mostly fall within the Literacy area of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.
- In Key Stage One, children's phonic reading skills are assessed summatively using the 'Year One Phonics Screening Check'.
- The Annual Report includes lists of criteria against which the children are assessed. These correspond with Early Years Foundation Stage and National Curriculum attainment targets.

## SEND

When planning reading activities, consideration is given to the children's varying levels of ability. English lessons enable children to work in differentiated groups at their current level of attainment, whilst allowing for a certain movement to other groups when necessary.

Some children in Years One and Two may receive additional support through the Personalised Support Programme.

## 4. Writing and Spelling

Writing is closely related to reading and the two activities reinforce each other. The National Curriculum ensures that children cover a range of writing.

The context of children's reading gives structures, themes and purposes for much of their writing, while focused teaching at word and sentence level contributes to the organisation and accuracy of their writing.

Children need to understand from an early stage that much of their writing will be read by other people and, therefore, needs to be accurate, legible and set out in an appropriate way. It is important that children learn to write independently from an early stage.

During the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage One, the teaching of phonics, spelling and handwriting compliments this process and should be used systematically to support writing.

### Aims

- To enable children to communicate through the written word and to raise attainment in writing.
- To develop a positive and supportive climate for writing, developing an enthusiastic and confident approach.
- To encourage children to see themselves as independent writers.

### Objectives

- To deliver the requirements of the National Curriculum in an effective manner appropriate to the needs of our children.
- To provide experiences which enable each child to;

⇒ Develop the motivation to want to learn to write.

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- ⇒ Have writing modelled to them by an experienced writer.
- ⇒ Share their writing with real audiences.

- To practise and learn compositional and presentation skills, including creative writing, handwriting, spelling and phonic strategies for writing.
- To write in response to a wide variety of genre.
- To be able to access other areas of the curriculum through writing.
- To enable children to learn various strategies and skills which enable them to become proficient at spelling.
- To enable children to be proactive and develop a correctly formed, legible style of writing.
- Where possible, to provide additional support to children with special educational needs.

### Implementation

- It is our policy to follow the National Curriculum and this describes what must be taught in Key Stage One. Planning is based on identified learning objectives.
- Children work in ability groups during guided writing sessions to ensure that all children, including those with special educational needs, are supported within the classroom.
- Handwriting is taught in discrete handwriting sessions. These sessions are differentiated and follow the Nelson Handwriting programme.
- Spelling strategies are taught throughout the school, with emphasis on learning to spell both high frequency words and words which demonstrate phonic strategies during discrete Letters and Sounds teaching sessions.
- Commonly used words such as high frequency words, days of the week, colours etc. are displayed around each classroom.

### Cross curricular links

- Our planning ensures that cross curricular links are utilised whenever possible. The non fiction genres for each year group are organised in line with foundation subject themes.
- Writing skills are taught and learnt throughout the whole curriculum.

### ICT

- A variety of programs are used to support different aspects of writing.
- Children use simple word processing programs to write their names, to type words and sentences and longer pieces of writing.
- The use of film as a powerful stimulus is used in our Visual Literacy teaching that occurs in each year group every term.

### Assessment, recording, continuity and progression

- Our system of record keeping is based on a collection of different kinds of evidence which provide a full picture of an individual child's learning for both teachers and parents.
- Each term samples of each child's writing are assessed. In Reception this is assessed according to the Early Years Foundation Stage writing area. Progress records are used in Key Stage One to assess the writing.
- Writing assessments are entered onto SPTO every term.
- Samples of writing are collected together to form a Writing Profile for each child. This is passed on to the Junior School when the children leave in Year Two.
- Staff meet to moderate writing levels.

## 5. Equal Opportunities

All staff are aware of the Birmingham Policy for Equal Opportunities and we have our own school policy. We actively seek to ensure that no child is disadvantaged because of background, language, disability, race or gender. Results are scrutinized to ensure that any child who appears to be disadvantaged is given appropriate opportunities to redress this.

## 6. Resources

Resources for English are held within individual classes, across year groups and in central resource areas. Individual classroom resources are checked on a regular basis and staff are asked about their resource needs. Big books and guided reading texts are held in a central resource and grouped by genre. Resources for Visual Literacy and boys writing initiatives are also held here. Each classroom has an alphabet line on display as well as small alphabet lines to be used by individuals. These alphabet lines are typed using Nelson handwriting font.

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