

Birch C of E Primary School 2023-2024

English Policy

1 Aims and objectives

1.1

The study of English develops children's abilities to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes. Children are taught and encouraged to use language to learn and communicate ideas, views and feelings. It enables children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as non-fiction and media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations.

1.2 The aims of English are:

- . To enable children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners;
- . To encourage children to listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard;
- . To enable children to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands;
- . To develop children's abilities to reflect on their own and others' contributions and the language used;
- . To enable children to evaluate their own and others' contributions through a range of drama activities;
- . To develop confident, independent readers through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text-level knowledge;
- . To encourage children to become enthusiastic and reflective readers through contact with challenging and lengthy texts;
- . To help children enjoy writing and recognise its value;
- . To enable children to write with accuracy and meaning in narrative and non-fiction;
- . To increase the children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work.

2 Teaching and learning style

2.1 At Birch Primary School we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English lessons. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in English. There are children of differing ability in all classes in our school. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by adapting our lesson plans and activities or supporting the children where needed. We use Teaching Assistants to support some children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals in literacy tasks across the school curriculum.

The teaching of reading

2.2 The teaching of reading has a high priority in the school and a wide variety of books are used to stimulate interest and enjoyment. We teach children to be confident and fluent readers who will have a lifelong love of books and reading. We understand that reading unlocks the world around the child and enables them to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially, spiritually and imaginatively.

Our aims are for pupils to:

- Read fluently and confidently at and beyond age-appropriate expectations
- Enjoy reading and develop a love of books
- Acquire a wide vocabulary and develop an interest and love of words
- Understand fully what they read
- Be able to use reading independently across the curriculum
- Monitor and self-correct their own reading
- Understand how authors craft their writing
- Know and understand a range of reading genres

General Information for the teaching of reading

- In EYFS we refer to 'Development Matters' when planning and delivering the curriculum.
- In years 1-6, our reading curriculum is planned out by teachers referring to Target Tracker and our 'English Planning Kit.' This sets out the reading objectives that each year group teaches and shows the progression within and across year groups.
- Teachers plan opportunities for reading across the curriculum. These enable pupils to apply the skills they are learning in English.
- A reading record diary is used by parents and children in every year to make comments on the child's reading. Teachers record notes in their own reading folders and in KS1, staff also make notes in the children's reading records.
- Children bring books home with them from school to practise what they have been learning and parents are encouraged to read with their child at least four times a week. The children are praised within their classes for achieving four home reads and children are also expected to read independently at home.
- The reading books are banded throughout EYFS, KS1 and in KS2 the class libraries have a range of books which are suitable for the ages and abilities of the children in the class.
- The children in EYFS and KS1 have a colour banded book and a guided reading book to take home with them each week, which matches their phonics learning. The same book is shared in school.
- Every class has a reading area or class library
- Teachers regularly read aloud to the children through 'story times' or class book reading.

- In Reception and KS1 the children are heard read their colour banded book at least once a fortnight by a member of staff. Their sound cards and red words are regularly looked at with a Teaching Assistant.
- In year 3 and 4 the children are also heard once a fortnight by a member of staff. In years 5 and 6, the children have more of a 'reading conference' with their teacher when they are heard read. If a child in any year is struggling with their reading, they will become a 'regular reader' and are heard by an adult on a more regular basis.
- Children read independently in class at least 3 times a week. The children are encouraged to build their reading resilience by learning about ways they can keep focused during quiet reading times.
- Reading fluency is a focus throughout the school and teachers are able to use a combination of modelling, echo reading, choral reading and paired reading to teach fluency.
- Reading for pleasure activities are planned throughout the year. For example, an author or may visit the school, the staff or parents may share their favourite books with groups of children during National Book Day or the children may organise a Book Swap throughout the school. The children also regularly take part in virtual lessons with authors, illustrators and poets.
- The children in some classes have younger/older Book Buddies they can share books with a few times each half term.
- We have an attractive school library that the children can access during lessons for research purposes or during break and lunch times. Some children access the library before or after school. We usually have a team of librarians who help to tidy and organise the books throughout the school and supervise in the library area. They also have a rota for supervising the children with reading and writing activities taking place in our Shepherd's Hut.
- Parent workshops are offered at the start of the year to update their knowledge and the school expectations on how to support their children. Information for reading and writing is also put on the school website.

2.3 Reading In Key Stage 1. The children are taught reading and writing in small ability groups following the Read Write Inc. programme. Read Write Inc. is a lively and fun phonics programme, which assists children with feeling more confident with their reading and writing. Read Write Inc. sessions take place 4 times a week for an hour's session. The fifth English lesson is usually taught using a cross-curricular approach.

'Read Write Inc. provides the structure and progression for our phonics programme.

The children work through the following sounds in each 'set'.

Set 1-m, a, s, d, t, i, n, p, g, o, c, k, u, b, f, e, l, h, sh, r, j, v, y, w, th, z, ch, qu, x, ng, nk

Set 2- ay, ee, igh, ow, oo, oo, ar, or, air, ir, ou, oy,

Set 3- ea, oi, a-e, i-e, o-e, u-e, aw, are, ur, er, ow, ai, oa, ew, ire, ear, ure, tion, cious, tious, ue, ie, au, e-e, kn, ck, wh, ph, oor

- Weekly teaching focuses are detailed in the group leader's weekly plans using the guidance provided in the Read Write Inc. scheme of work. They feed back to the Class teachers half termly or whenever needed.
- Group leaders will informally assess during their phonics sessions and pupils who are at risk of developing gaps in their phonics knowledge are given extra phonics support as soon as possible.
- Children who have not reached the expected standard during the year 1 phonics screening check will be provided with extra support. This could be in the form of intervention groups or tuition before school in year 2 to fill their gaps in knowledge and build their confidence. Pupils with SEND may access phonics interventions into KS2.
- In addition to this, pupils are assessed individually on a half termly basis. The results of these assessments may lead to some adaptation of the teacher's phonics plans and changes to the groups the children are in.
- Phonics is constantly applied and consolidated in other English lessons and across the curriculum.

2.4 Spelling in Key Stage 1 is taught separately from Read Write Inc. sessions. They have spelling sessions for 20 minutes, 4 times a week. There is a weekly test and a half termly assessment for the Year 2 children.

As well as the teaching of phonics in KS1, pupils are taught strategies to aid decoding, such as use of context and grammar, graphical representation and learning high frequency words. Some of these skills are developed through our Read Write Inc. reading sessions.

Use of phonics as well as morphology continues through KS2 when decoding new words.

2.5 English In Key Stage 2 The children remain in their own classes for their literacy lessons. They have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts and use a range of resources such as dictionaries, thesauruses and information texts, including the use of digital literacy, to support them with their work.

- In Key Stage 2 the children are also taught reading and comprehension skills through class 'Book Clubs'. These happen on a weekly basis. If children are not working at age-related expectations, they will work on reading comprehension in a smaller group at their level.
- The children in year 3 and 4 participate in a 'Keep On Reading' book club once a term. This is organised by a retired Head teacher who aims to instil a love of reading in our children and share his own passion for reading.
- The children in year 6 are invited to a weekly 'Book Café' with the Head teacher at lunchtime. They are provided with a wide variety of engaging and quality texts to read. They freely discuss the books they are reading.

2.6 Becoming a researcher

A distinct strand of our curriculum is dedicated to this important life-skill.

It is taught mainly through other subjects and it enables our children to research independently by the time they leave our school, therefore being prepared for the KS3 curriculum.

2.7 The Teaching of Writing

The teaching of writing also has a high priority in our school. The children at Birch are taught to write for a variety of purposes and for various audiences, using different forms of writing e.g. diaries, letters and stories.

Our aims are for pupils to:

- Write confidently at and beyond age-appropriate expectations
- Enjoy writing and develop an interest in writing.
- Use a wide vocabulary and develop an interest and love of words
- Be able write independently across the curriculum
- Monitor and self-correct their own writing
- Understand how authors craft their writing
- Know and understand a range of writing genres

Children in both key stages regularly use Computers, laptops or Ipads in English lessons when it can enhance their learning, as in drafting their work and using multimedia to study how words and images are combined to convey meaning. Wherever possible we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

2.8 Spelling in KS2

For spelling teaching, the children in Key Stage 2 are put into mixed age groups for a fifteen-minute session three times a week. The sessions are planned following National Curriculum learning objectives. The children have spellings to practise at home for a test each week and there is a half termly assessment.

2.9 Speaking and Listening

Speaking and Listening is central to the children's learning in school. Children are given opportunities to talk for a range of purposes and to different audiences. They are encouraged to listen attentively and respond appropriately to a range of speakers.

3 English curriculum planning for writing

- 3.1 In Key Stage 2 we carry out the curriculum planning in English in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The National Curriculum for Teaching details what we teach in the long-term. It identifies the key objectives in literacy that we teach to each year. The English subject leader is responsible for checking and reviewing the long term plans for English at our curriculum planning meetings, alongside carrying out termly Book Scrutiny sessions with all of the staff.
- 3.2 In years 1-6, our writing curriculum is planned out by teachers referring to our 'English Planning Kit' for guidance. This is our medium term planning and it sets out the objectives that each year group teaches and shows the progression within and across year groups. We also have a long-term plan for the writing genres taught in each class throughout the year. Our short-term planning is through the teacher's weekly or unit plans, which are fluid so they can be tailored to the children's needs.
- 3.3 Teachers plan opportunities for writing across the curriculum. These enable pupils to apply the skills they are learning in English.
- 3.4 Class teachers complete a short-term plan for the teaching of English. This lists the specific learning objectives for each lesson and gives details of how the lessons are to be taught. It also includes details of what each group of children will be learning.

4 The Early Years Foundation Stage

4.1 We teach English in our reception class as an integral part of the school's work. The format for these lessons is similar to that used in the rest of Key Stage 1, as the children are introduced to their sounds and letter formation using the Read Write Inc. resources and scheme of work. The lessons are tailored to the children's individual needs and they are grouped accordingly. As the reception class is part of the EYFS of the National Curriculum, we relate the English aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the EYFS curriculum which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. We give all children the opportunity to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and extend their range of vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore, enjoy, learn about, and use words and text in a range of situations.

5 Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas

5.1 The skills that children develop in English are linked to, and applied in, every subject of our curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work in school. Language skills are also developed through the teaching of modern foreign languages. Specific vocabulary that is linked to subject areas is taught discretely during lessons.

6 Teaching English to children with special educational needs

6.1 At our school we teach English to all children, whatever their ability. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our English teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels.

6.2 When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors such as classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style and adaptation, so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

6.3 Teachers provide help with communication and literacy through:

- . using texts that children can read and understand;
- . using visual and written materials in different formats;
- . using computing and other technological aids;
- . using alternative communication, such as signs and symbols;

7 Assessment and recording

7.1 In reading and writing we track the progress of children throughout the year using our target sheets in books (in KS2) and by recording our on-going assessments on Target tracker. These short-term assessments help teachers to adjust their daily plans. Teachers match these on-going formative assessments closely to the learning objectives from the National Curriculum. They use medium-term assessments to measure progress against the targets set, and to help them plan for the next unit of work. We use Target Tracker to assess progress against school and national targets. Using our end of unit assessments, teachers are able to set targets for the next school year and summarise the progress of each child in the child's end of year report. The next teacher also uses these assessments as the basis for planning work for the new school year. Children undertake the national tests at the end of Year 6. We also carry out moderation meetings within the school and within consortium cluster groups for progression purposes and to track and monitor across year groups. We usually have these meetings for EYFS, year 2, year 4 and year 6.

8 Resources

8.1 There are a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have age-appropriate dictionaries and thesauruses. All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts. Children have access to the Internet through the laptops and Ipads and they have access to digital cameras to photograph evidence. The library contains a range of books to support children's individual research.

9 Monitoring and review

9.1 Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the English subject leader alongside support from all staff. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. We are aware of the need to regularly review our policies to take account of the new initiatives, changes in the curriculum or developments in technology.

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