



Rich fields of learning



Butterknowle Primary School English Policy

1 Aims and Objectives

1.1 The study of English develops children's abilities to write and speak fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Reading allows pupils to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. It also enables children to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know

1.2 The aims of English are to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, both for pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of English grammar, punctuation, spelling and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literacy 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
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

2 Teaching and learning styles

2.1 At Butterknowle Primary School we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English lessons. Our principal aim is to develop children's abilities in reading, writing, grammar and speaking fluently. We do this by a daily Literacy lesson, guided by the principals of the National Curriculum (2014).

Children have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts and to use a range of resources to support their work. Children use ICT where it enhances their learning, as in

drafting their work and using multimedia to study how words and images are combined to convey meaning. We also encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

2.2 There are children of differing ability and Year Groups in the three classes at Butterknowle Primary School, which are separated into EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. We therefore provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this by providing differentiated work and including challenges for higher ability children. We also use teaching assistants to enable us to fully meet the needs of individual pupils.

3 English curriculum planning

3.1 We use the New National Curriculum (2014) as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study.

3.2 We carry out the curriculum planning in English in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The planning is related to a Creative Curriculum and, at Key Stage Two, the planning for each term is linked to a particular text as a starting point. Our yearly teaching programme identifies the range covered.

3.3 Our medium-term plans detail the main teaching objectives for each term. The plans define what we teach and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term.

3.4 Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan for the teaching of English. This details the specific learning objectives and activities for each lesson, allowing an element of flexibility to enable us to take into account ideas and initiatives led by the children.

4 The Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (Pre-school and Reception), children are given opportunities to speak, listen and represent ideas in their activities. They use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum. They become immersed in an environment rich in print and with opportunities to communicate.

In pre-school our children focus on phonological awareness. Through a balance of adult-directed and child-initiated opportunities children learn about different sounds and begin to discriminate between them. Many are also able to hear initial sounds in words and begin to have some awareness of phoneme-grapheme correspondence, particularly in relationship to familiar words, e.g. their own name.

In Reception children have daily discreet phonics lessons following the RWI synthetic phonics approach. Set 1 and Set 2 Sounds are taught in Reception. Guided reading sessions are based around RWI Ditty and Reading Scheme Books and consolidate and support phonics for both reading and writing. Children have opportunities to develop their communication, language and literacy skills on a daily basis, both adult led and through child

initiated activities. Children in the Foundation Stage take home a book from school and parents are encouraged to read the book with their child and then record which book they have read and to add any comments. We encourage teacher/parent communication.

Handwriting: Reception children are taught to form capitals letters and lower-case letters in print form (precursive). We use the RWI writing mantras (e.g. *'round the apple and down the leaf'*) to help children form their letters correctly. Joining letters to form digraphs and trigraphs may be taught to children who have mastered the correct handwriting formations and have sufficient fine motor control.

Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1 daily discreet phonics lessons based on Read Write Inc. continue. In principle Year 1 pupils revise Set 2 and are taught Set 3. Guided reading and writing tasks are based around RWI Ditty and Reading Scheme Books and consolidate and support phonics for both reading and writing.

Handwriting: Pupils revise and practise correct letter formation frequently. They are taught to write with a joined style (cursive) as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.

Children take part in both guided and individual reading session (e.g. with teacher's, TA's and volunteers) and have a regular story time to develop a love of reading. Literacy skills are developed across the curriculum. Provision is made for children who have additional needs through intervention programmes, differentiated class teaching and differentiated phonics.

Key Stage 2

Guided Reading sessions are taught as a discreet Literacy lesson at least once a week; allowing time for discussion and interpretation of the text, as well as encouraging independent reading and comprehension exercises. The school has invested in Accelerated reader to encourage enjoyment of stimulating and varied texts. A range of higher level reading skills books are ordered each term from Durham Learning resources, to enable stretch and challenge. The children have a 'home/school' reading book, at a stage appropriate to their reading level and they are encouraged to read aloud at home for a minimum of three times each week. The child's progress through the scheme, to more challenging books, is monitored by the teacher and additional support is provided where necessary. A volunteer provides additional support to the children's learning one afternoon every week, by listening to children read aloud and encouraging discussion around the text. Library books are also available for the children to borrow. The pleasure and enjoyment of reading is encouraged; a class novel is ongoing and the teacher regularly reads fiction and poetry aloud to the children. In addition, we celebrate World Book day with a variety of activities and arrange trips to stimulate and inspire e.g. to the 'Seven Stories' in Newcastle. We also invite the local library to visit the school to tell the children about the opportunities that a library provides.

Children are encouraged and supported in continuing to apply phonic knowledge skills from Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 they are taught to apply their growing knowledge of root words, prefixes and suffixes both to read aloud and to understand the meaning of new words they meet.

Children are taught Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling each week as part of their daily Literacy lesson and the principles are embedded as part of normal classroom routine. Class displays also reinforce the rules of Grammar and spellings are displayed in the classroom.

Children increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting, by using the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined (cursive and continuous cursive).

Children are taught to plan, draft and to evaluate and edit their writing across Key Stage 2 and they have opportunities to write for a range of real purposes and audiences as part of their work across the curriculum. Their writing is, where possible, linked to the class text and/or to the topic which is set for the Creative Curriculum. The children are encouraged to write for a purpose, as in the annual BBC Short Story competition and other local competitions.

Children are inspired through music, visual artefacts and imaginative texts. In addition, the children complete an 'extended' piece of writing on a weekly basis. They are encouraged to expand their vocabulary by exploring new words from a thesaurus, playing word games and by communication through 'thought showers'.

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.

5.2 Mathematics

English contributes significantly to the teaching of mathematics in our school. Children in the Foundation stage develop their understanding of number, pattern, shape and space by talking about these topics with adults and other children. Children in Key Stage 1 meet stories and rhymes that rely on counting and sequencing. Children in Key Stage 2 are encouraged to read and interpret problems in order to identify the mathematics involved. They explain and present their work to others and they communicate mathematically through the developing use of precise mathematical language.

5.3 Computing

The use of ICT enables children to use and apply their developing skills in English in a variety of ways. Younger children use computers as a source of information and as a way of enabling them to present their completed work effectively. Older children use the internet when carrying out research, or when using software to produce different texts e.g. a

newspaper report. Children also learn how to write a simple computer programme, using the software 'KODU' which also encourages problem solving and independent thinking.

5.4 Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education (SMSC)

English contributes to the teaching of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education, in particular, by enabling and allowing children to express their opinions and thoughts on sensitive issues. We encourage younger children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues.

6 Teaching English to children with Special Educational needs

6.1 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 2014 allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress.

6.2 When progress falls significantly outside the expected age-related range, we look at a range of factors-classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation-so that we can take additional or different actions to enable the child to learn more effectively. In the first instance, a 'Short Note' will be produced, in consultation with the school's SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator).

6.3 We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning English. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example a theatre trip, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

6.4 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 ICT and other technological aids
- using alternative communication, such as signs and symbols
- using translators and amanuenses, where appropriate.

7 Assessment and recording

7.1 Teachers make formative, short term assessments to help them to adjust their daily and weekly plans to fit with the needs of the children. They use medium term assessments to help them to plan for the next unit of work. Teachers make termly assessments in Speaking and Listening, Spelling, Reading, Writing and Grammar to ensure that regular progress is being maintained. Teachers use long term assessments towards the end of the school year and these are used to assess progress against school and national targets. With the help of these long-term assessments, teachers are able to set targets for the next school year and summarise the progress of each child before discussing it with the child's parents or carers.

At the end of Year 1 all pupils complete the 'Phonics Screening Test' to assess their phonic knowledge. Pupils failing to reach the pass mark are required to re take the test in Year 2.

Children currently sit 'SATS' tests at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2) and also at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6). At the end of Year 6, writing is assessed by the teacher, based on work carried out by the child over the year.

7.2 Samples of children's work are kept in a portfolio. This demonstrates what the expected standard is in English in each year of the school. Teachers meet termly to review individual examples of work.

Every child completes a sample of writing each half term in their 'Writing Assessment' book. This allows the teacher and also the child, to see the progress made and to highlight areas where further support may be necessary.

8 Resources

8.1 There is a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. Dictionaries, thesauruses and age-appropriate small apparatus is available in the classrooms. The school has a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts. Children have access to the internet. The school has a dedicated ICT suite, for use by a whole class. The library contains a range of books to support children's individual research and reading. Our reading scheme for the younger children is Oxford reading tree which tracks children's reading ability allowing for staff to identify which can be matched to the ARE. Accelerated reader is used from Y1 – Y6 to track the ZPD of individual children. Lexia core 5 is used throughout the school from YR-Y6 to track and consolidate the children's learning. This allows staff to see at what level the children are working compared to their ARE and provide appropriate interventions.

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 Literacy subject leader. The role of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The subject leader undertakes regular observations of English teaching across the school. The named governor responsible for Literacy meets regularly with the subject leader in order to review progress.

Signed: Rachel Harmer

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