



Beaver Road Primary School

English Policy

The Contribution of English to the School's Curriculum

Article 29 (Goals of education) Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.

At Beaver Road Primary School we recognise the crucial importance of studying the English language. Improved performance at reading, writing and spoken language will enable our pupils to express their thoughts and ideas more fluently, accurately and, ultimately, to their greater satisfaction. This will also help them to deal more successfully with other curriculum subjects, while enriching their lives beyond school. The teaching and learning of language skills are therefore, given a high priority in our school and where possible the creative curriculum and ICT will be used as tools.

Our overarching aim for English is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

We aim for our pupils to:

- 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
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

At Beaver Road Primary School we encourage all children to become independent learners and be confident in all strands of learning. The children will be given opportunities to speak in a variety of contexts and learn to listen to and value the views of others.

Statutory Requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum in England: Framework Document (2014).

Curriculum Delivery

In reception through to Year 6, children are taught English within their classes. Through differentiation and the support of Teaching Assistants, all children will receive high quality teaching and appropriate support in order for every child to reach their full potential. Children may receive additional support if necessary outside of the English lessons. Children that have an 'Access to Learning Plan' or are identified as making less than expected progress may receive interventions both in and out of the classroom that focus on the child's more specific individual needs.

A Learning Question and success criteria are a feature of all English lessons. Working walls are central to learning in the classrooms. Verbal feedback is given in lessons and marking identifies next steps for development as explained in the Feedback and Marking policy. Assessment informs planning and reference is made to the National Curriculum in medium term plans. The use of computing enables children to use and apply their developing skills in English in a variety of ways. We encourage children to use ICT as a resource for learning, whenever appropriate.

We provide a rich and varied experience for pupils to draw on in their writing and reading which should include the whole curriculum.

Approaches to Communication and Language

At Beaver Road, Communication and Language form the foundations of all learning in English and across the curriculum. A whole school approach is taken to fostering a love of language and an appreciation of the power of the spoken word. Beginning in the Early Years, we create and facilitate opportunities for conversation, discussion and talk around learning. In Key Stage 1 and 2, 'Kagan' Structures underpin learning and collaboration forms the basis of our teaching. As a result, all children are encouraged to be inquisitive and to share their thoughts confidently in a supportive environment.

Children are encouraged to develop effective communication and language skills to express themselves and interact with others. Language is viewed as the foundation for exploring and sustaining personal growth; it is closely linked to the development of self-esteem, emotional wellbeing and the ability to make a positive contribution to society. We aim for pupils to speak clearly, fluently and coherently and to be able to listen to others attentively with understanding, pleasure and empathy.

At Beaver Road, children are encouraged to explore and 'play' with language through drama, role-play and poetry. In all year groups, language forms an intrinsic part of learning to read and write successfully.

How do we achieve this at Beaver Road?

- Teachers and staff value Pupil Voice, giving children confidence in themselves as speakers and listeners and valuing their conversations and opinions.
- All adults understand the importance of Communication and Language and act as positive language role models, modelling vocabulary, diction, intonation and grammar.
- Planning is designed to provide children with the opportunity to talk and formulate their ideas. Teaching staff provide meaningful purposes and audiences for talk within a range of formal and informal situations and in individual, partner, group and class contexts.
- The school provides opportunities for children to present and perform in front of an audience, where staff, parents, carers, visitors and peers acknowledge children's efforts and skills. This includes assemblies, class showcases, productions and performances.
- In following Talk4Writing, children are taught to "talk the text", retelling stories with fluency and subsequently inventing their own.
- Children are provided with ample opportunities for exploring different kinds of language in both real and imagined scenarios. Such interactions include role-play, drama, debates, hot seating, interviewing and discussion.

Approaches to Phonics

At Beaver Road we strive to ensure that all children become successful, fluent readers by the end of key stage one and believe this is achievable through a combination of strong, high quality, discrete phonics teaching combined with a whole language approach that promotes a 'Reading for Pleasure' culture.

The Rose Report (2006) emphasised high quality phonics as an important part of the word decoding skills required by children to develop higher level whole language and comprehension skills.

This policy is aimed at reinforcing a consistent, high quality approach to the teaching of phonics across foundation stage, key stage one and on into key stage two for children who still need this further support.

Objectives:

To provide consistent, high quality phonics teaching that ensures all children have a strong foundation upon which to tackle the complex processes of reading and writing.

To ensure that the teaching of synthetic phonics is systematic and progressive throughout the foundation stage, key stage one and key stage two for those children needing interventions to support phonetic knowledge and understanding.

To ensure that children have sound phonetic knowledge, understanding and skills so that they can decode words confidently and engage with higher order reading and writing skills.

Curriculum, Teaching and learning Guidance:

At Beaver Road, we follow the Letters and Sounds document's principles and practice across foundation stage and key stage one – this is supported by teachers using elements from Jolly Phonics to support the effective delivery of phonics lessons by catering for all children's needs.

Teachers use summative assessment to inform effective provision for all children, using this to plan and deliver well differentiated lessons that engage and challenge all children within the lesson. This summative assessment should inform the rate at which children progress through the phases and secure a sound understanding of phonetics.

All year one children take the 'Phonics Screening Check' - a statutory assessment required by legislation. Those who do not meet the pass mark will be given support and intervention programmes in year two to provide them with sufficient knowledge and understanding to re-take the 'Phonics Screening Check' and obtain a pass mark. Those children who do not obtain the required level set by the 'Phonics Screening Check' will receive phonics teaching in the first term of year three – which will be further supported throughout the year and across key stage two with a phonics and/or spelling intervention programme.

Approaches to Reading

At Beaver Road, pupils have opportunities to undertake guided, shared and independent reading throughout the school. A diverse range of group reading books and a staged reading scheme are available. We do not use any one published scheme to teach reading, instead we believe that it is important to provide pupils with a selection of reading books and experiences from different genres and subject matter, therefore we operate using 'book bands' in line with Oxford reading tree complemented by thematic books.

When it is felt appropriate for individual children, they may become 'free readers' and choose from the class library and school reading corners. Reading age tests and half termly reading assessments are undertaken throughout the year to identify children who require extra support with their reading. Interventions are then put in place accordingly (see intervention timetable)

Staff are deployed throughout the school to work with children in order to improve their fluency, intonation, decoding skills and comprehension.

Home reading is encouraged and is an integral part of the child's development. In order to have strong communication between teachers and parents/carers, each child has a school planner where both the staff and parents can write comments about how the child is progressing with his/her reading. Children have the opportunity to change

their reading books when required and are always encouraged to select from a variety of fiction, non-fiction and poetry books.

Children have the opportunity to use books from the school reading corners for independent research. Reading challenges are offered within school and pupils are encouraged to undertake the annual county library reading challenge. An annual book week is held along with a book fair to further promote reading. Authors are welcomed into the school to promote books and the school have regular visits from the local librarian. Termly library visits also take place, to encourage the children of Didsbury to use their local facilities.

Approaches to Guided Reading

EYFS and KS1 all use a carousel system to deliver Guided Reading sessions. In KS2, whole class reading takes place when the majority of the class are secure and independent readers.

Guided Reading sessions should take place daily and should last about 30 minutes.

- The books used for Guided Reading sessions should be more challenging than the level that the children have for their reading book which they take home.
- The class teacher should work with each group at least once a week.
- Independent activities (those activities carried out when the group is not working with the teacher/teaching assistant in a focus group) should be of high quality and have a clear objective to move the children's learning on.

What is Guided Reading?

Guided Reading is the method used to teach individual children to become fluent in reading and comprehension skills of inference and deduction.

Children are taught in small groups set according to ability. Guided Reading is principally the class teachers' responsibility and must be planned and evaluated for all children by the class teacher. However other trained adults can also teach guided reading sessions.

Approaches to Whole Class Reading

Children in the Junior School at Beaver Road take part in daily Whole Class Reading sessions. These sessions encourage shared reading and whole class discussions of key concepts explored in texts. There is a focus on developing children's understanding of key question types included in Key Stage 2 Reading Objectives in the National Curriculum. For this reason, teachers have adapted a lesson model in which Vocabulary, Inference, Prediction, Explaining/Evaluating, Retrieval and Summary (VIPERS) questions are explored in each session. By the end of Key Stage 2, children are confident in specifying and answering VIPERS questions as well as creating their own relevant questions. Follow-up questioning from teachers leads to a

deeper understanding of books and children become independent in challenging the thoughts and ideas presented in texts.

Children work in Kagan groups and pairs and this encourages collaboration and sharing of a range of different ideas. With exposure to many different text types, children are excited about Reading and look forward to analysing texts and learning more about the world through fiction and non-fiction. Teachers using various high-quality resources including Reading Explorers, Cracking Comprehension and CGP.

What is Whole Class Reading?

Whole Class Reading Model:



Aims

As a school we aim to:

- Provide a rich and stimulating reading environment.
- Enable children to read with confidence, accuracy, fluency, understanding and enjoyment of reading

- Foster an enthusiasm for and love of reading for life.
- To identify accurate levels of attainment in reading for each child.
- To ensure that all children make accelerated progress.
- To develop comprehension skills of inference and deduction.

OBJECTIVES

Our objectives are to enable all children to:

- Learn to read following the guidelines of the Early Learning Goals and the National Framework for Literacy.
- Read for interest, information and enjoyment.
- Read a range of texts including fiction, non-fiction, playscripts and poetry appropriate to their ability, both in book format and on screen ICT texts.
- Read regularly at school and at home.

Talk confidently about their reading.

- Be able to use a full range of reading cues (phonic, graphic, syntactic, contextual) to read and be able to correct their own mistakes. Our teaching will however reflect that phonics should be the prime approach children use in learning to read.

Approaches to Writing

To develop our children as writers we:

- treat children as writers, from the earliest stage, who have ideas that they will want to communicate, building on writing skills they have acquired and their knowledge of print from their environment.
- provide experiences where the children can acquire confidence and a positive attitude to writing.
- develop and sustain writing skills by providing opportunities for children to write for a range of purposes and audiences.
- use guided writing sessions to model writing skills, teaching children how to compose, amend and revise their writing.
- teach children to become critical readers of their own writing by using self-evaluation and checking their work independently for sense, accuracy and meaning.
- teach grammar and punctuation in the context of children's own writing, as well as through discrete lessons.
- teach children to develop their ability to organise and present imaginative and/or factual writing and poetry in different ways.

- teach strategies for spelling to enable children to become confident and competent spellers.

Writing units

Each writing unit begins with a hook – Who is the writing for? A WAGOLL (What a good one looks like) is also shared so that all children understand what they are aiming for. The WAGOLL should be written collaboratively by the class teachers and pitched accurately for the needs of the children.

Some units of work are taught using the ‘Talk 4 Writing’ approach which has three phases:

Imitation – Talking the text - Children are given a framework, the language patterns become internalised.

Innovation – Adapting the framework learnt to create something new.

Invention – Creating something new

Other units of work are taught using three phases:

Reading phase – Key features of the genre are identified.

Toolkit phase – Spelling, Grammar and Terminology

Writing phase – Planning, writing, redrafting, editing and publishing

Throughout both teaching approaches shared writing is used regularly to support the children. These writing sessions have pace and involve everyone.

(See ‘Essentials for Writing’ for more information.)

As the learning progresses, the English working wall exemplifies the days learning. The wall should be a journey of the learning that has taken place.

Verbal feedback is given to the children throughout the process to help them understand their next steps. (Feedback and Marking policy).

The school follows the ‘No Nonsense’: spelling programme which enables the children to recap on the previous year’s spelling patterns and then introduces new patterns and sight words. This programme is in line with the National Curriculum for spelling. Identified children receive extra spelling and phonics support which is organised by the Head of Year.

All children have a spelling notebook which they keep as they go through school. This is used to attempt unfamiliar words and check them in a dictionary.

Approaches to handwriting

Handwriting is concerned with individual expression and the conveying of meaning through fluent composition. Handwriting should become an automatic process, which frees pupils to focus on the content of their writing. In order for this to occur, handwriting is taught in ways that enhance fluency, legibility, purposefulness and the opportunity for creative expression. It is important that all adults model the correct formation at all times, when marking, teaching and for display.

National Curriculum 2014 states: 'Writing...depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting.'

Aims

We believe that effective handwriting is:

- Legible
- Presentable
- Comfortable
- Fluent
- Flexible
- Fast
- Automatic
- Sustainable

And that our children should progress through this list such that when they leave Beaver Road at the end of KS2 their writing is flexible and fast.

From the moment children begin to move and handle objects they are preparing for the act of writing. Handwriting begins in the E.Y.F.S with mark-making and patterns. All pupils are given access to a wide range of writing tools and mediums to practise the early fine motor skills.

The needs of left handed children, or those with physical difficulties are also taken into consideration and where necessary accommodated with resources or specific intervention.

Pupils are encouraged to develop fluent lines of correctly orientated letters from an early age and emergent writing is encouraged.

We believe that discrete handwriting sessions where children's formation and pencil grip can be readily overseen should take place at least twice a week and more frequently in the foundation stage and Key Stage 1.

Correct posture and positioning of paper or books are also emphasised during these sessions. Letter formation and handwriting is taught and modelled using a range of resources.

The national expectation at the end of year 6 is that children will join their handwriting. Staff use resources from Penpals to teach individual letter joins. This begins in EYFS and continues into Key Stage 1 with discrete lessons following a clear scheme of progression. As the children move up through the school they are encouraged to think carefully about the presentation of their work and to develop clear, legible and fluent hand-writing.

How we teach handwriting

OVERVIEW

We use the Cambridge Penpals scheme to structure our teaching of handwriting from EYFS through to Year 6. Our focus is initially on legibility and presentation, ensuring that the child feels comfortable when handwriting so that fluency is achieved. At all ages/stages we make sure that children are given the opportunity to exercise the necessary muscles in order to be able to write comfortably; also we give the children the freedom to choose pen or pencil and to choose which kind of pen that they feel most comfortable using. We do not expect all

children to write in pen; however we do expect that they will be able to select the most appropriate writing implement for the task. (See attached guidance on furniture and tools)

When teaching handwriting we use 'self-instructional training' to support children to become autonomous. The steps that should be followed are:

1. Adult models task whilst talking aloud, *for example "to form a c I am going to start at one o'clock, curve round in this direction – to the left, and end here"*
2. Child performs task while adult provides instructions out loud, *for example "put your pencil at one o'clock, now curve round to the left and stop"*
3. Child performs task while verbalising instructions, *for example "I start at one o'clock, curve round to the left and stop"*
Then, when ready developing to:
4. Child performs task while whispering instructions
Then, when ready developing to:
5. Child performs task using private speech

We use a common language to teach handwriting, including the P checks and S factors (see attached guidance).

We always observe children while they write in order to identify anything that needs correcting at the point of learning – therefore we prefer to teach handwriting in small groups or 1:1 as this enables us to observe closely.

How we assess handwriting

Observing children as they handwrite is the primary way that we assess handwriting. In the first instance we are looking for correct letter formation (both lower case and capital letters) by observing how the letters are formed.

When we are confident that the children are forming their letters correctly we assess whether the children's handwriting is:

- Legible – EYFS/KS1/KS2
- Presentable - EYFS/KS1/KS2
- Fluent – KS1/KS2
- Flexible – KS2
- Fast – KS2

We use our assessments for the following purposes:

1. To identify next steps of learning (this is our priority)
2. To ascertain whether pupils are working at age-related standards for handwriting (as set out in the EYFS Framework and National Curriculum)
3. To provide evidence for end of Key Stage assessments

In order to assess whether handwriting is legible we look at (the S Factors):

Shape – From Year 1 onwards

Size - From Year 1 onwards

Space – From Year 2 onwards

Sitting on the Line - From Year 2 onwards

Stringing - From Year 3 onwards

Slant – From Year 4 onwards

Speed - From Year 4 onwards

Style – From Year 5 onwards

The children will be expected to self-assess against these 5 factors from Year 4 onwards (sheet in appendix).

In addition we use the National Curriculum end of Key Stage assessment criteria for handwriting.

Cross-Curricular Links and ICT

Cross-curricular Links Teachers seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links where relevant. They plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

Assessment and Target Setting

Work is assessed in line with the Feedback and marking Policy and Assessment Policy.

- Teachers use developmental feedback in order to identify where children have included elements of the success criteria, set next steps targets and to give children the opportunity to revisit their work in order to make improvements.
- Summative assessment is used three times a year in order to assess the children's writing against the objectives on the Pupil Asset grids.
- Reading ages will be assessed using PM Benchmarking particularly in KS1 and where necessary in KS2 depending on individual needs of children.
- Summative assessment is used three times a year in order to assess the children's reading against the objectives on the Pupil Asset grids.
- Spelling will be monitored and assessed throughout the year through discrete teaching of Spelling using a range of resources such as Spelling Shed. Teachers will regularly assess spellings in end of unit writing tasks.
- Year 6 pupils undertake SATs in May

Cross year group and whole school moderation occurs once a term and opportunities to moderate with other high achieving schools are used to ensure assessment is accurate.

Inclusion

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. We identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment. More able children are identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

- Children with identified SEND in English receive tailored support organised by the Heads of Year.
- Children who are identified as having additional needs with reading, spelling or writing receive extra support organised by the Heads of Year.
- More able children in English are identified and challenged appropriately. Challenges for these gifted pupils are provided within English lessons or in addition through a range of wider opportunities e.g. More Able Writers Workshops

Equal Opportunities

All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

Role of curriculum team

The English curriculum team are responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through the monitoring and evaluation of the subject.

This will involve:

- monitoring of pupil progress
- conference with pupils regarding all areas of English
- analysing data
- monitoring the provision of English in line with the subject monitoring policy
- taking the lead in policy development
- auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD
- purchasing and organising resources
- keeping up to date with recent English developments
- analysis of SATs results to identify areas for development
- checking that assessment for English is carried out in line with the school's assessment policy

Parental Involvement

Parents can play a vital role in the development of English skills. We aim to foster a strong home-school partnership regarding reading, using reading diaries. Parents also support the school by coming in to hear readers during the school day. Many parents support Book Week by offering to come and read stories to the children.

'Support your child's learning' event helps parents to provide support for handwriting, spellings and various genres of writing.

Conclusion

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Teaching and Learning Handbook
- Assessment Policy
- Feedback and Marking Policy
- SEND Policy
- Computing Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Health and Safety Policy This policy will be reviewed by staff and presented to governors for approval every three years.