



English Policy

June 2021

To be reviewed June 2023

Introduction

Here at Barwick and Stoford Primary School, English is obviously taught as a core curriculum subject with every child from Reception upwards receiving a daily one-hour lesson, plus daily phonics sessions in EYFS and KS1 and Spelling/Grammar sessions in KS2. However, we recognise that in order to develop reading, writing and speaking & listening skills effectively, children must be given a wide range of contexts in which to practice and consolidate their skills and understanding, which is why we place a strong emphasis on English within our creative curriculum.

Rationale

Teachers should develop pupils' spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for pupils, understanding the language provides access to the whole curriculum. Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects.

DfE 2013 National Curriculum (Language and Literacy section)

Our Intent

Our main aim is to ensure that every single child becomes primary literate and progresses to the best of their ability in reading, writing and speaking and listening by the time they leave our school in Year 6.

'If reading is breathing in, then writing is breathing out'

Intent

At Barwick and Stoford Primary School, English and the teaching of English is the foundation of our curriculum. Our main aim is to ensure every single child becomes primary literate and progresses in the areas of reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Staff at Barwick and Stoford feel it is essential to highlight and be aware of the differing groups of learners and vulnerable children in their class. Once this information is acquired, teachers can plan and teach personalised English lessons, which focus on the particular needs of each child. We recognise that each child has their own starting point upon entry to every year group and progress is measured in line with these starting points to ensure every child can celebrate success.

English at Barwick and Stoford will not only be a daily lesson, but is at the cornerstone of the entire curriculum. It is embedded within all our lessons and we will strive for a high level of English for all. Through using high-quality texts, immersing children in vocabulary rich learning environments and ensuring new curriculum expectations and the progression of skills are met. The children at Barwick and Stoford will be exposed to a language heavy, creative and continuous English curriculum which will not only enable them to become

primary literate but will also develop a love of reading, creative writing and purposeful speaking and listening.

When the new curriculum was implemented in 2014, many professionals commented that the creativity had been eliminated and children were expected to be taught a diet of very dry grammar and punctuation skills. At Barwick and Stoford, our vision is for the creativity to be at the helm of our English curriculum and for children to learn new skills in a fun and engaging way.

At Barwick and Stoford Primary School we intend to develop in our children:

- A positive attitude towards all aspects of English, including spoken language.
- A passion for the English language in all classes.
- The confidence to work with growing independence in the different areas of English.
- The competence to produce a high standard of work, with the majority of children meeting age related expectations or above.
- An awareness of audience.
- A fluent handwriting style containing correct joins and letter formation by the end of KS2.
- A good grasp of phonics, spelling, vocabulary, grammar and punctuation.
- The ability to apply these skills to sustained pieces of writing.

Implementation

We hope to achieve this by:

- Prioritizing reading, writing and speaking and listening at every opportunity.
- Providing stimulating environments in which all aspects of literacy can thrive.
- Developing trusting relationships in the classroom, involving good use of peer and self-assessment, so that pupils feel confident to express themselves without fear of embarrassment or criticism.
- Following a text-based learning approach within English lessons, linking texts to topics where suitable.
- Motivating children through exciting topics
- Making lessons highly interactive and productive, so children have time to **do, evaluate and improve.**
- Making sure that learning is personalised as much as possible to meet the needs of individual children.
- Following the Read Write Inc. Phonics approach. (RWI)
- Implementing the Letter Join Handwriting scheme from as early as the Early Years (if appropriate) to include flicks for joining letters.
- Giving the children the opportunity to read for pleasure through the use of our well-stocked school library.
- Providing opportunities throughout the school year to promote reading and writing (e.g. Book fairs, competitions, World Book Day, parent workshops, author visits, having TA librarians in all KS2 classes, reading incentives such as certificates and Book tokens,).

Teaching and Learning Principles

Our teaching and learning strategy at Barwick and Stoford School is based upon the 2014 National Curriculum for English. We teach children by year groups, although we do differentiate tasks to suit pupils who are working below age-related expectations. This will enable those pupils to develop basic skills, as well as their confidence and independence at a more manageable pace. We have also identified those pupils who would benefit from additional English support and they follow interventions, Colourful Semantics and Talk Boost in Nursery, one to one reading and phonic support and Listening Skills.

Planning

Planning guidelines for Years 1-6 are taken from the 2014 National Curriculum (published 2013). As teachers are covering aspects of the curriculum, they highlight areas of the curriculum in their planning files (Reading, Writing, GPS, Speaking and Listening). This is used alongside the school's assessment materials so that we can tailor lessons to meet the needs of our pupils. Teachers feel confident in choosing their own texts and materials to best support the teaching of a specific unit or to help achieve a learning objective. Writing should follow the Write Stuff process enabling children to rehearse structure, vocabulary and innovation in a fun and engaging way.

ICT can play a big part in lessons, but only if it is the best option. We do not feel the need for over-use of ICT and value the importance of 'real' texts, with classes reading and analysing whole texts together.

Because 'personalised' learning is held with such high regard, teachers do a medium plan of the objectives to be covered during a unit. From this they will produce a weekly plan which can be adapted/amended as the week goes on through daily evaluations. This will ensure that the needs of the children are being met, for example either through more consolidation and practice or extension activities.

Nursery and Foundation Stage:

English in the Nursery and Foundation Stage, is taught as an integral part of the children's work. The children have experience of aspects of English every day, e.g. RWI letter shapes in Nursery, RWI phonics in Reception and Year One, Our Nursery and Reception classes follow the EYFS Curriculum 2020. Prime areas of English development are Communication and Language (Listening and attention, understanding and speaking) and Literacy Development (Reading and Writing of simple sentences by the end of Reception). Pupils are given 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 practice and exchange 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, through the carefully planned learning environment. We encourage the love of reading by continually updating our reading areas, through reading as a whole class and hearing children read individually at least twice a week.

We are establishing parent links enhanced through home-school records, Parent Workshops and organized reading events throughout the year. Guided reading is introduced in the Spring term of Reception class. Role-play is changed on a half-termly basis to enthuse and inspire children to be creative in their use of language, providing varied opportunities to read and write through play.

Reception and Year 1 teach daily phonic lessons. By the summer term in Reception, pupils begin to follow a more structured literacy lesson to aid with their transition into year 1.

Starting in the Foundation Stage and going up to Y2 all children must be systematically taught phonics using the RWI programme. This will be a 30-minute session per day. As much as possible the children's developing phonological knowledge needs to be applied in contexts outside this time. Children are taught to build and write words at the same time as reading them. RWI reading material is used consistently across EYFS –Y1. Books and reading materials are taught exclusively to correlate with the specific RWI stages. As the children become more proficient readers they can also read books which they choose themselves from the class reading shelves, along with their school library books. By Year 2 we would expect all pupils to be proficient enough readers to fully engage with AR scheme.

The daily English lesson will include:

Reading and exploring quality texts, developing children's knowledge of a wide range of vocabulary, punctuation and comprehension enhancing understanding. Children will be provided with exciting writing and GPS opportunities linked to the class texts. Teachers will model writing using the The Write Stuff process, whilst also allowing children to develop their skills and independence as they move through the school.

Model Texts should be chosen for each year group but there is scope for change if necessary. KS1 usually use one copy of a text whilst sitting on the carpet area, whilst KS2 have individual copies of the text to annotate as required. A wide range of effective questioning will be used during class discussions to challenge, probe and extend children's understanding and learning. To analyse the text, we respond in writing or by completing some explicit vocabulary teaching using words from the text or by answering comprehension questions. Guided writing sessions will be used to meet specific objectives for individuals or groups. Opportunities will be provided to reflect and edit their work whilst drafting – teachers gauge when these times are best. Opportunities will be given to act on marking. In years Rec – 6 teaching will take place as a daily lesson and in Foundation Stage elements may be taught throughout the day. High standards and general English subject knowledge will be reinforced continually throughout all subjects.

Spellings

Spellings are to be taught in separate spelling sessions but also continuously throughout the school day. All children are to be taught their year group word list, whilst also revising previous year's lists. Through RWI lessons in KS1 and spelling sessions in KS2, children are to be taught their year groups spelling patterns. We have additional streamed RWI intervention for children where extra support is required throughout KS1 and 2 (e.g. those

children who did not pass the Year One phonics screening test or the resit in Year 2). From Year 2 children who are ready, should follow The Spelling Book scheme for their particular year group.

Handwriting

All children in EYFS are taught to hold a pencil correctly and form all letters correctly. All children from Year one onwards are taught to use the pre-cursive handwriting script following the Letter Join handwriting scheme. Handwriting will be taught following the order of the phonic sounds in the RWI programme and will be recorded in English exercise books. All letters will start from the same entry point on the line and the pencil should not leave the page for each word. From Year 2 children are expected to join up their writing. All staff should model the handwriting cursive script when they write for any purpose within the classroom. All children should be expected to write in this style of handwriting whenever they write, in all subjects.

From Summer term in Reception the children are to use English books containing tramline handwriting paper. This will continue throughout Year 1 and until the children are forming their letters correctly (ascenders and descenders correctly formed). Children will then progress onto normal lined English books when their handwriting is at the expected standard.

(See separate Handwriting Policy)

Entitlement and Provision

All children are entitled to an English curriculum that meets their needs. The following is done to try to ensure this happens:

- Differentiated activities will be provided to support less able and extend more able pupils.
- In extreme circumstances, a child may be allocated one to one in-class support.
- Parents will be kept informed and encouraged to assist in helping their children.
- Teaching assistants are used to support groups and/or individual children. This includes additional support outside of the daily English lesson.

Assessment and Recording

Writing and GPS

We firmly believe that the focus should be on 'learning' rather than teaching, and value the importance of our school assessment materials as a tool for all of our children in Key Stages 1 and 2. The assessment focuses in writing are made clear to children and they are included in the evaluating of their work and future target setting. Self-evaluation and editing is key in getting children to understand what they can do well and what they need to improve on further.

Assessment in writing is now firmly embedded. Our children have personal targets and especially in Year 6 children are expected to take an active part in the assessment of their own work.

Assessment is an ongoing process; though summative samples are also undertaken with the children each term. Children undertake half termly Writing assessment against year group objectives. Results are then plotted onto our tracking system where progress can be monitored. Assessment information is gathered from tests and work during Literacy sessions but also from the many opportunities we create for extended writing during our History, Geography, Science and RE work.

We regularly cross moderate children's writing samples within school and with other schools to ensure consistency.

Reading

The class teacher and TAs listen to children read on an individual basis as often as possible. Home-school reading journals are used to record comments and provide evidence of assessment and also provide a good home-school link. Our school library is also used regularly, with children choosing their own books to read and share at home with parents/guardians. (love of Reading books).

Shared reading is obviously done frequently during literacy lessons and comprehension activities are also used in other subjects, e.g. science, which gives teachers opportunities for more formative assessments, which they may choose to record. Class teachers also plan reading sessions as a whole class with the teacher and children choosing stories to read from recommended reading lists to read for pleasure. We also have access to audio books, which can be used in class.

Guided reading in either groups or whole class takes place daily within KS1 classes and whole class guided reading in KS2 focused around the class novel being studied within literacy sessions.

Children in EYFS / Year 1 should undertake an Early Star reader test half-termly in order to track progress. Once the child has reached the Transitional level the child should then move on AR star reader assessments half termly. We expect most children to achieve this by the end of Year 1 but all children by the end of Year 2. This ensures a continuous progression across the school, and a whole school approach to reading.

(SEE SEPARATE READING POLICY)

Speaking and Listening

We do not use any summative assessments or formal assessment materials for Speaking & Listening and purely base our judgements on how children respond during lessons. We report on their confidence levels, articulacy and ability to listen to others when we record our levels on the end of year reports.

For more information on assessment, recording and target setting please refer to the Assessment Policy and Marking Policy.

Monitoring

English and Foundation books/Learning Journals are selected for regular work scrutiny to ensure children are learning basic literacy skills and being provided with ample opportunities to produce sustained independent writing to put these skills in to practice.

Lesson observations can be carried out by the English co-ordinator, head teacher, SMT or School Improvement Partner, where the focus is primarily on the learning, progression and the rates of engagement and productivity of pupils.

We also know the importance of regular Pupil Voice questionnaires and Learning Environment monitoring and these findings also contribute towards our English Action Plan.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is expected that the English coordinator will fulfil the following role:

- Support colleagues in planning, teaching and assessing English
- Undertake any training, courses, etc. to keep teaching practice and knowledge of new initiatives up-to-date
- Keep colleagues informed of any changes in practice, providing training and/or information when appropriate.
- Monitor the planning and teaching of English throughout the school.
- Ensure that resources are appropriate, available and of good quality.
- Liaise with the head teacher, governors SENCO and SMT when necessary.

Impact

The impact on our children is clear: progress, sustained learning and transferrable skills. By the end of KS2 the majority of our children have made considerable progress from their starting points in EYFS. With the implementation of the writing journey being established and taught thoroughly in both key stages, children will become more confident writers and by the time they are in upper Key Stage 2, most genres of writing are familiar to them and the teaching can focus on creativity, writer's craft, sustained writing and manipulation of grammar and punctuation skills. Our children will also become more confident readers and they will realise the importance of reading for pleasure along with reading for information.

As all aspects of English are an integral part of the curriculum, cross curricular writing standards have also improved and skills taught in the English lesson are transferred into other subjects; this shows consolidation of skills and a deeper understanding of how and when to use specific grammar, punctuation and grammar objectives. We hope that as children move on from us to further their education and learning that their creativity, passion for English and high aspirations travel with them and continue to grow and develop as they do.

