



The Edward Betham CofE Primary School

English Policy

Ratified on	4th December 2017
Signed by Chair of Governors	<i>P. Hounsell</i>
To be reviewed on	Autumn 2020

Rationale

At The Edward Betham CofE Primary School, we are committed to creating a secure, caring and stimulating learning environment based on Christian values. We actively promote the principles of positive behaviour management that enable effective teaching and learning to take place.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Marking and Feedback and SEND Policies.

Statutory Requirements

A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually (National Curriculum, 2014).

At The Edward Betham CofE Primary School, pupils receive a stimulating and enriching experience in English, developing the skills necessary to master the English curriculum. Through high-quality teaching, well-planned and organised lessons, we ensure that the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum 2014 are met, alongside its aims:

- to promote high standards of language and literacy;
- equip pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language; and
- develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

Curriculum Content

Reading

All teachers are responsible for providing a stimulating reading environment, promoting book ownership and recommending books to pupils. Classroom and central displays are language-rich and special displays should promote authors and books.

Reading at home is regarded as an important part of reading development. Parents are encouraged to listen to their child read every day and respond to their child's reading through Home-School Reading Record Books.

Much of the Programme of Study is taught through English lessons. Additional time is provided on a regular basis for reading at other times. There is time set aside for independent reading, listening to whole-class stories and research linked to other subjects.

Guided Reading

As a school our aims in teaching Guided Reading are to:

- provide a rich and stimulating reading environment;
- enable children to read with confidence, accuracy, fluency, understanding and enjoyment;
- foster an enthusiasm for and love of reading for life;
- ensure that all children are taught to read at the appropriate level and that reading with a teacher is not simply an opportunity to practise;
- identify accurate levels of attainment in reading for each child;
- ensure that all children make accelerated progress; and
- develop comprehension skills, including inference and deduction.

Guided Reading is the method used to teach individual children to become fluent in reading and comprehension skills, including inference and deduction. Children are taught in small groups, set according to ability.

Guided Reading sessions take place four times a week in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 for a duration of 30 minutes each. The books used for Guided Reading sessions are selected to match the group's reading level and are sometimes more challenging than the level that the child has for their home reading book. The Class Teacher or Teaching Assistant aims to work with each group at least once a week. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 each child has a Guided Reading Journal to record any work carried out (pre-reading, guided reading, follow up work, independent work). Planning and assessment sheets are completed for each group by the adult leading. Each class has a 'carousel' type timetable that allows for four sessions across the week. Each child must have at least one Guided Reading session a week with an adult, and additional sessions can be carried out independently. The carousel of activities that the children complete independently has an English focus.

Teachers working with less fluent readers may choose to have a 'word reading' focus. If this is the case, each child in the group will be required to read some of the text aloud. This will enable the teacher to work on decoding skills. For fluent readers, the focus of a Guided Reading session should be the use of challenging questions generated from the teacher, plus opportunities for reflective independent study of a text.

Many other opportunities are provided for pupils to practise and extend reading in other subjects. Pupils select texts under the guidance of the teacher for independent and home/school reading. Most fiction books are colour-coded according to the school's banding system. Teachers monitor independent reading and discuss progress with individual pupils on a regular basis.

An additional comprehension session is timetabled once a week in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, for the explicit teaching and learning of reading skills, including; inference, deduction, author style and text style.

Parents/carers or members of our school community volunteer to read with children. This provision is timetabled across the school. Volunteers are given guidance when listening to readers and discussing the text. Our Volunteer Handbook provides further details.

Phonics

As a school our aims in teaching Phonics are to:

- blend and segment sounds easily;
- learn that segmenting words into their constituent phonemes for spelling is the reverse of blending phonemes into words for reading;
- spell words accurately by combining the use of grapheme-phoneme correspondence knowledge as the prime approach, and also morphological knowledge and etymological information; and
- use a range of approaches to learn and spell irregular words.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, children have discrete Phonics lessons. Classes are ability-grouped across year groups and focused activities are planned using the Letters and Sounds programme. These lessons take place four times a week for a duration of twenty minutes each.

Year 1 Phonics Screening Check

The Year 1 phonics screening check is not a formal test, but a way for teachers to ensure that children are making sufficient progress with their phonics skills to read words and that they are on track to become fluent readers who can enjoy reading for pleasure and for learning. The test is delivered over a week in the Summer Term of Year 1. Year 2 children who did not reach the expected standard in Year 1 are tested again in the same week.

Spelling

In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 a new spelling pattern is explicitly taught to the children each week. The children are introduced to example words which contain this pattern and will have several opportunities to practise the spelling of these words using an appropriate strategy chosen by the teacher or themselves. A list of ten words, which contain the spelling pattern, are practised and sent home each week as part of Home Learning. These are assessed the following week.

Dictation

The children complete a weekly dictation so that their teacher is able to assess their knowledge of the spelling pattern that has been taught during the previous week. Each dictation is then self-assessed or peer-assessed and each child made aware of which words, if any, they have spelt incorrectly. The children are encouraged to make a note of these words and practise them at home.

The dictation also assesses each child's knowledge of five common-misconception words or extra words from the National Curriculum word list which do not contain a taught spelling pattern.

At the end of each half-term children complete a spelling assessment of the words taken from the National Curriculum word list. The assessment scores are recorded and progress is tracked throughout the year in each class and year group.

Handwriting

As a school our aims in teaching Handwriting are that the pupils will:

- experience coherence and continuity in learning and teaching across the school;
- develop a recognition and appreciation of pattern and line;
- understand the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning clearly;
- take pride in the presentation of their work and therefore study handwriting with a sense of enjoyment and achievement;
- be supported in developing correct spelling quickly through the teaching of cursive writing;
- be able to write quickly to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes; and
- develop a fluent, cursive handwriting style by the end of Year 3.

Pen licences are awarded from Year 3, based on evidence of the child both forming and joining letters consistently in the Nelson Handwriting Cursive Style. For most pupils, pen licences are awarded during Year 5. The Junior Deputy Headteacher will agree with the class teacher's assessment before the licence is awarded. If the child's handwriting deteriorates, the licence will be rescinded until the child improves sufficiently. It is expected that all pupils will use pen by the end of Year 6, in preparation for high school.

Progression of Skills

Early Years Foundation Stage

- Use a pencil, and hold it effectively to form recognisable pre-cursive letters (with 'kicks'/'flicks'), most of which are correctly formed

Year 1

- Write all pre-cursive letters, correctly formed and orientated, using a comfortable and efficient pencil grip
- Write with spaces between words accurately
- Children who are ready to start joining their letters in a cursive style may begin to do so in the summer term

Year 2

- Children start learning how to join their writing in the school's cursive style
- Write legibly, using upper and lower-case letters appropriately and correct spacing within and between words

Key Stage 2

- Children write in the school's cursive style, making sure all letters are correctly formed and orientated
- Most children should start to write in pen in the summer term of Year 3.

Children are taught Handwriting across three sessions of ten minutes duration. The teacher models the letters or joins to be practised using a variety of methods, e.g. in the air, on the board, on a wall. Children practise and then complete a short exercise in their handwriting book. The teacher ensures that children's posture and pencil grip is appropriate whilst the children are writing.

Writing

As a school our aims in teaching writing are that the pupils will:

- write in different contexts and for different purposes and audiences;
- be increasingly aware of the conventions of writing, including grammar, punctuation and spelling;
- plan draft and edit their writing to suit the purpose;
- use ICT as a literacy medium for presenting work and manipulating text; and
- form letters correctly, leading to a fluent joined and legible handwriting style, giving increasing regard to presentation.

Teachers promote writing and look for ways to inspire and motivate pupils so that they see themselves as 'writers'. Teachers establish the purpose and audience for writing and make teaching objectives explicit to pupils so they know why they are studying a particular text type, the kind of writing activities they need to undertake and what the expected outcome will be.

Subject-specific and quality texts that link to work being undertaken in other areas are used in English lessons to support the wider curriculum. Teachers deliver lessons during the unit which build up the children's writing skills, culminating in the Extended Writing session every Friday. Teachers use Shared Writing to model the writing process. Shared Reading and Writing provide a context for discussion and demonstration of grammar, spelling and composition. Teachers support groups through Guided Writing as part of the Extended Writing session each week. Activities are differentiated through the use of writing frames, spelling banks, collaborative work and peer or adult support. Teachers encourage 'Talk for Writing' as an integral part of the process. The writing process is broken down into number of steps that are taught and practised regularly: planning, drafting, proof-reading and editing and improving.

Spoken language

As a school our aims in teaching Spoken Language are that the pupils will:

- communicate effectively, speaking with increasing confidence, clarity and fluency;
- participate in discussions and debate in a variety of contexts;
- listen to the views, opinions and ideas of others with increased interest;
- articulate ideas and thoughts clearly with appropriate tone and vocabulary recognising audience;
- respond to questions and opinions appropriately;
- retell stories and poems which are known by heart; and
- ask questions with increasing relevance and insight.

Teachers provide a wide range of contexts for spoken language throughout the school day. Teachers and other adults in school model speaking clearly. This includes clear diction, reasoned argument, using imaginative and challenging language and use of Standard English. Talk Home Learning is set weekly

across the school. Listening is modelled, as is the appropriate use of non-verbal communication, respecting the views of others. Teachers are also sensitive in encouraging the participation of retiring or reticent children. Spoken Language outcomes are planned for in all areas of the curriculum. Roles are shared amongst pupils: sometimes a pupil will be the questioner, presenter, etc. Learning takes place in a variety of situations and group settings. For example, these could include reading aloud as an individual, working collaboratively on an investigation, reporting findings as a newscaster, interviewing people as part of a research project, acting as a guide for a visitor to school or responding to a text in shared or guided reading.

Pupils have access to a wide range of speaking and listening opportunities that include:

- talking about their own experiences, recounting events;
- participating in discussion and debate;
- Talk for Writing;
- Talk Home Learning;
- retelling stories and poems;
- expressing opinions and justifying ideas;
- listening to stories read aloud;
- presenting ideas to different audiences;
- taking part in school performances;
- responding to different kinds of texts;
- talking to visitors in school;
- listening to ideas and opinions of adults and peers;
- role-play and other drama activities across the curriculum;
- using dramatic techniques, including work in role to explore ideas and texts; and
- create, share and evaluate ideas and understanding through drama.

Organisation of teaching and learning

At The Edward Betham CofE Primary School we plan from the National Curriculum 2014 and the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework. Our medium-term planning is informed by these documents which map out the English curriculum for each year group. Phonics is taught in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 using the *Letters and Sounds* programme.

English is taught for one hour per day. Guided Reading is taught for a further 30 minutes four times a week in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. In addition Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar lessons are taught from Year 2 to Year 6 for up to a further sixty minutes per week. Handwriting lessons comprise a further thirty minutes per week. In Reception, 1:1 reading takes place with each child weekly.

All teachers plan using an agreed planning format. This includes learning objective/s, success criteria, teacher modelling and plenary. All of these will be used in the context of a key text. Each teaching sequence usually lasts between one and three weeks. There is a grammar or punctuation focus each week which pupils practise. The expectation is that they will then use this skill in their extended piece of writing at the end of the teaching sequence. A balance of reading and writing tasks will be taught during the unit to enable the children to become familiar with the text type. Quality texts are chosen specifically to enthuse the children and enhance learning in other curriculum areas. A range of drama activities are planned in order to develop the children's imaginations and deepen their understanding of the text being studied. Each term a 'Talk for Writing' unit (pioneered by Pie Corbett) is taught.

Learning Objectives are clearly displayed at all times. Success criteria are displayed clearly for all pupils to see and access throughout each unit. A checklist will sometimes be provided for technical features to enable children to judge their own success. The criteria are used to determine whether each pupil has successfully achieved the learning objectives.

English working walls are in constant use throughout individual lessons and across weeks focusing on a particular sequence of work. The learning journey is displayed and, by the end of the sequence, it shows the skills which are being taught and a good example of the piece of writing that is expected. Key vocabulary is displayed.

Assessment recording and reporting

To develop learning, pupils will be continuously assessed using a variety of strategies including: observation, questioning and marking in accordance with our school marking and feedback policy.

Specific assessments include:

- termly PIRA (Progress in Reading Achievement) tests;
- independent pieces of writing each half term;
- half-termly spelling tests; and
- termly Phonics assessments.

Teachers use effective *Assessment for Learning* to ensure planning is based on prior attainment and that pupils know what they need to do to achieve the next steps. Group or individual targets are set accordingly. Marking is in line with the school's Marking and Feedback policy.

Analysis of assessment data is used to set targets. Class targets are derived from the school's key skills ('non-negotiables') and are regularly reviewed. Where applicable, school issues are addressed through targets linked to Appraisal.

The teacher keeps records that enable them to deliver an effective, creative and relevant curriculum that builds on prior attainment and meets the needs of pupils.

Additional Needs

We aim to give all our children the opportunity to succeed and reach the highest level of personal achievement. At the start of each year, all pupils are set aspirational targets. We analyse the attainment of different groups of pupils to ensure all are achieving as well as they can. We also make ongoing assessments of each child's progress. The Senior Leadership Team and teachers use this information when planning differentiated lessons and interventions, enabling them to take into account the abilities of all their pupils. Evidence-based interventions are planned for pupils who need support to 'close the gap' (this may include children with SEND or EAL) or for children working at Greater Depth. Pupils are targeted to make accelerated progress and achieve their full potential.

Monitoring

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and of quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team, supported by the subject leader and governors. The subject leader for English and the Phase Leaders will monitor this curriculum area through monitoring pupils' books, talking to pupils and observing classroom practice through learning walks. In addition, the work of the subject leader involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English and informing teachers about current developments in the subject.

We judge the impact of our teaching of English by:

- end of Key Stage assessments;
- half-termly data check-points;
- book and planning scrutiny;
- lesson observations;
- pupil interviews; and
- learning walks and drop-ins.

The Governing Board will monitor the implementation of the English policy through its Curriculum and Standards Committee receiving regular reports on the curriculum from the subject leader. Link Governor visits will also focus on areas from the School Development Plan.