



BARCOMBE C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

LITERACY POLICY

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Date: Sept 2014

Rationale

English makes the major contribution to the development of a child's language, which in turn contributes to the child's understanding of his or her world, the world of others and the world of imagination. We believe that language is the basis of all learning. It is language that allows us to share experiences and it is through language that we develop ideas and opinions. Language is a most important area of the curriculum as it is the key to all other areas of study. Since English is integral to the learning process throughout the curriculum, it follows that whenever anything is being taught or learned, there is potential for developing a child's written and oral language.

We wish to provide the best possible opportunities for children to learn to express themselves well in speech and in written work, including factual and imaginative work, prose, verse and drama. Reading is an essential skill which children need to master and every opportunity will be taken to encourage its development. The school will build on the language experience that children bring from home. Children have considerable knowledge and understanding about language and the way it works before they start school. Language development at school will be a continuation of pre-school language development. As a child moves through the school we will balance language activities which relate to the child's own world which introduce him/her to new worlds and we will make it clear that language continues to develop out of school as well as in school.

AIMS

Our English policy will enable pupils to:

- a) Use phonics to read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding;
- b) Use phonics knowledge to monitor their reading and correct their own mistakes;
- c) Understand the sound and spelling system and use this to read and spell accurately;
- d) Have fluent legible handwriting;
- e) Have an interest in words and their meanings and a growing vocabulary;
- f) Know, understand and be able to write in a range of genres in fiction and poetry, and understand and be familiar with some of the ways in which narratives are structured through basic literary ideas of setting, character and plot;
- g) Understand, use and be able to write a range of non-fiction texts;
- h) Plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing;
- i) Have a suitable technical vocabulary through which to understand and discuss their reading and writing;
- j) Through reading and writing, develop their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness;
- k) Experience the potential of drama as a creative art form and as a learning method;
- l) Enjoy the world of books and literature

READING

Aims:

- To teach children to use their phonics knowledge as their primary reading strategy, blending sounds to read words.
- To provide a school environment which is rich in a variety of genres
- To ensure that reading is an enjoyable and worthwhile activity and children read for pleasure.
- To develop pupils' advanced reading skills and comprehension, for example, evaluating a story, analysing style and structure, identifying implicit meanings.
- To involve the child's family through the use of home/school reading records.
- To ensure the children understand the variety of written language and the differences between fiction and non-fiction
- To ensure that the children can understand and respond to a wide range of books and media texts
- To ensure that the children improve their abilities in analysing, evaluating and criticising texts which they have read.

Methods:

Phonics

The Reception/ Year 1/2 Class will immerse the children in books, helping them to enjoy stories, rhymes, poems, songs etc. Letters and Sounds, together with Jolly Phonics' actions, images and stories, will be continued and/or introduced from the children's pre-school settings. The Letters and Sounds phonics scheme, which will continue throughout Key Stage 1 and into Key Stage 2, will teach the children the 44 sounds of English. The children will initially learn the most common ways of representing these sounds and ways to blend sounds together, and will then move on to learning alternative grapheme-phoneme correspondences. Alongside learning words that are made up of these sounds, the children will learn 'tricky words'/ high frequency words which they will come across on a regular basis in their reading. Within Key Stage 1 and early Key Stage 2, the children will have daily phonics sessions of twenty minutes. The children will be grouped by ability, with children swapping groups where needed and interventions happening where needed. Class environment will be rich with phonics displays and support for the children.

Power of Reading scheme

The school supports the power of reading scheme and staff have access to their website and schemes of work. Power of Reading encourages the use of high quality literature in English lessons and focuses on raising children comprehension skills and love of reading.

Guided Reading

Throughout the school, the children will take part in shared and guided reading sessions and will be encouraged to enjoy texts and apply their phonics knowledge to read fluently. Children will also be encouraged to use a range of strategies in order to comprehend texts.

Guided reading sessions will take place on a daily basis for half an hour, at the start of afternoon sessions. Within each class, the children are to be grouped according to ability. These groups are to take it in turns to complete a round robin of activities throughout the week. These activities include:

1. Guided/Shared Reading with an adult (with a focus on AF1 for children reading at Level 3 or below, or an alternative AF for children reading above this level).
2. Guided Reading Follow-up: Independent activities that focus on a different AF each week. Children are to complete these activities in designated Guided Reading Follow-up books, across two sessions, where needed.
3. Free Reading or Audio books: Children will have a choice of choosing their own book to read quietly in the class book corner, or to listen to a story CD or tape.
4. Shared reading in the school library. Older children to have a younger 'buddy' to read with.

Resources for Reading

1. Phonic phase books to be kept in reception classroom and used as home readers for children in EYFS and KS1.
2. Phonics resources/ displays to aid early readers with blending sounds.
3. Book corners/areas in each classroom containing a selection of fiction and non-fiction, and poetry books. A box of 'Boys books' to encourage free reading for boys could be used if boys are reluctant readers. This area should celebrate and encourage reading for pleasure.
4. A pleasant library area where children can choose from a selection fiction and non-fiction books, Big Books, poetry books and comics.
5. Sets of reading books for Guided Reading which cover a range of genres and are graded according to reading ability/phonics phase.
6. Material all around to develop reading, for example, indexing, captions, instructions, labels, CDs and children's own written work.
7. Regular purchase of new non-fiction and fiction books.
8. Book Fair Week.
9. Visitors e.g. authors and storytellers.
10. ICT (including daily use of interactive whiteboards in each class).

Home/School Reading

An important ingredient of reading with the children is the home/school reading scheme. Books are to be taken home regularly for the children to read, to or with their parents, older siblings or another adult, or independently. The children will all have a Reading Record Diary, in which comments can be made by both parents, the teacher, or, if they are older, by the children themselves. This provides an important home/school link.

'Real' books may be taken home as well as 'reading scheme' books. Within the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2, the Oxford Reading Tree Scheme, the Storyworlds Scheme and the Cambridge Reading Scheme will be used alongside phonic phase specific books.

WRITING

Aims:

- To develop pupils' writing skills so that they can:
 - express themselves clearly and precisely for enjoyment
 - demonstrate their understanding of how writing enables them to remember, communicate, organise and develop their ideas and information
 - write for an increasing range of purposes matching their language to the needs of the appropriate audiences
 - understand the appropriate use and purpose of an increasing range of written forms
 - use their phonics to segment and spell words.
 - write neatly and with accurate punctuation.

Children will learn to write gradually. Their writing will improve within a supportive environment where they are allowed to develop and make mistakes. Children's confidence will grow if the attitude of others is supportive, not only praising, but commenting constructively in a perceptive manner. Writing is closely related to reading and the two activities will reinforce each other in English lessons. Pupils need to understand that much of their writing will be read by other people. It is also very important that writing is valued within the class and school by displaying and publishing children's written work.

Methods:

At Barcombe the Talk for Writing scheme is to be used across the school for fiction writing. The talk for writing scheme enables children to learn new vocabulary and grammatical skills by immersing them in a chosen text. Together the class learn the story and begin using the rich vocabulary to re-tell the story. The children then move onto 'innovating' the story, e.g. making additions to it, re-writing it from a characters point of view, changing the genre of it, etc. Finally children should use the skills they have learned and picked up from the text to write their own story.

Rich texts, especially those recommended by the Power of Reading scheme, are used to support this scheme and are linked to learning journeys where possible.

During Key Stage 1, the teaching of phonics, spelling and handwriting are to be used systematically to support writing and to build up accuracy and speed. Through Key Stage 2, there will be a progressive emphasis on the skills of planning, drafting, revising, proof-reading and the presentation of writing. The range of reading and writing will increase and, with it, the need for pupils to understand a wider variety of texts, their organisation and purposes.

Modelling is to be seen in all writing lessons to show children what the writing process looks like and to model high level writing.

Independent Big Writing sessions are to take place on a weekly or fortnightly basis. All teachers are to follow the Big Writing Long Term Plan, ensuring that certain genres are covered in week three of each term and assessed using APP grids accordingly. APP sheets are to be moderated within school, three times a year, to ensure that levels and marking are consistent throughout the school.

Each child, from Year 1 onwards, is to have their own Big Writing folder which will contain their independent writing, together with the corresponding APP sheets. The children will have access to these folders, so that they can see the areas where they have been successful and the areas that they need to work on. These folders will go with the children as they progress through the school.

The children will have access to ICT for developing and extending the writing process, either through the use of class computers or during weekly laptop sessions.

HANDWRITING

Aims:

- To develop a handwriting style with flow, neatness, good presentation and consistency.
- To provide the children with a framework to allow progression throughout the school.

Methods:

1. The youngest children will have access to different types of pencils when they begin to write (rocket pens/handwriting grips)
2. The youngest children will also have the opportunity to make patterns with brushes, felt pens, crayons and other media, to encourage a flowing hand.
3. All children will have handwriting books, handwriting sheets and or tracing sheets for regular practice, at least three times a week during morning registration.
4. The Interactive Whiteboard and iPads will be used, wherever possible, to support handwriting.
5. Handwriting will be modelled by all adults working with the children.
6. The Write Dance programme will be used with children within the Foundation Stage and with children within Key Stage 1, if needed.
7. Left handed children will be encouraged to find a comfortable and convenient method of positioning themselves and their work.
8. Handwriting pens will be introduced when children have mastered neat, joined handwriting in pencil.
9. Laminated sheets, with single, lower and upper case letters, numbers, and handwriting joins, are to be available on each child's table for reference (See Literacy Coordinator folder).

Letter Formation:

Children are to be taught to form their letters in a coherent, structural style. Flowing letters help to give speed.

Children will practise single letters first, where emphasis will be placed upon ensuring consistency in size and proportions of letters and the spacing between letters and words. Once single letters are mastered, the children will then move on to joining, using learnt joins increasingly in their independent writing as they progress through the school. Children will begin by learning how to join digraphs and trigraphs, in the order that they are introduced in Letters and Sounds.

Handwriting Checklist:

- Single letters, and letters that start a word, will not have lead ins
- In joining, the letter x will not be joined on to, but will be joined on from
- Small letters the same height (a, c, e, i, m, n, o, r, s, u, v, w, x, z)
- Ascenders are to be the same height (b, d, f, h, k, l, t)
- Descenders are to have the same length tails (f, g, j, p, q, y)
- Loop 'g's, 'y's and 'j's, but not 'f's and 'k's
- All ascenders and descenders are to be at the same angle

SPELLING

Aims:

- to segment words in order to spell them.
- to look at the internal structure of words.
- to study groupings of words and common structures.
- to realise that they can spell from memory and have the confidence to do so.
- to use word lists, dictionaries and thesauri.
- to learn the strategy of Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check.
- to learn a variety of other strategies as appropriate.
- to learn specific spelling rules.

From Key 1 Stage onwards, phonics and segmenting is to be the primary approach used, however, children are encouraged to 'have a go' at spelling unfamiliar words. In marking, emphasis is placed on positive re-enforcement of correct sounds used. 'Corrections' are pointed out as the year progresses, appropriate to development and ability, as children become more confident as writers and are able to understand some spelling rules.

The children will be encouraged to check their own writing for spelling mistakes and use word lists, word mats, spell-checkers on-line and dictionaries to support and correct their spelling as appropriate.

Weekly spelling tests will be given to children in Key Stage 2 and later on in Key Stage 1. Spellings will link with the children's phonics work, either from Letters and Sounds, or, for children in middle and upper Key Stage 2, from Support for Spelling. A range of strategies for spelling will be taught through the investigation, collection and classification of spelling patterns.

'Pens on Fire' spelling books and scheme is used to develop independence and ownership over the learning of spellings in some classrooms.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Aims:

- To ensure the development of effective speaking and listening so that pupils can:
 - formulate, clarify and express their ideas
 - express themselves in a variety of situations, using language which is appropriate to their needs and the intended audience
 - listen, understand and respond appropriately to others
 - use, with increasing confidence, the vocabulary and grammar of standard English
- To create an environment in which children feel confident to talk, and know that what is said is valued.

Opportunities for talk will be provided for a range of purposes:

- a) Describing
- b) Informing and expanding
- c) Instructing and directing
- d) Reporting and narrating
- e) Presenting arguments and debating
- f) Show and Tell sessions

There should be appropriate planned intervention by the teacher, as a receptive listener, as a catalyst, a facilitator, as a person who asks pertinent questions leading to clarification of thought and further ideas (not merely question and answer sessions).

Children should become familiar with tasks which support talk, and communicate their conclusions to Others, for example, reporting a group's findings to the rest of the class and taking part in plenary sessions. Adults must be seen by the children to value their achievements as talkers and listeners, as highly as their achievements as readers and writers. Where this happens, the children will be enabled to take a similar view of themselves.

The groupings of children will need to reflect the purpose of the activity; consideration should be given to special needs and equal opportunities. A guiding principal should be to ensure children learn to work harmoniously and effectively with a range of children

External audiences for children's talk may include:

- a) Parents
- b) Governors
- c) Members of the community
- d) Children from other classes and schools
- e) Other staff
- f) Other visitors

Monitoring Speech

Careful observation by the class teacher - reference made in the pupil's record if necessary and with recourse to the SENCO.

Monitoring Listening

This is an important aspect of child development and is encouraged in all aspects of the English Curriculum.

Ways to develop listening skills:

- Children to listen and learn poems/rhymes
- Drama and role play
- Use of voice to introduce variation
- Music, repeated melodies and phrases
- Action songs and miming stories
- Children telling news, others listening
- Asking questions about a story
- Giving an alternative ending to a story
- Puppet shows

PRESENTATION OF WORK

These guidelines aid children in all written work:

- Always put a title on every piece of work. The title should be underlined and separate from the main writing or illustrations. (WALT used. Stuck in for infants)
- Always write the date at the top of a piece of work. The date should be written fully in English (KS2) and numerically in Maths/topic.

- Always use a pencil (KS1)
- Always write neatly and carefully. Join your writing when you have learnt how to do so.
- Always write in complete sentences when appropriate.
- Always take care to spell correctly.
- Put a neat line through mistakes.
- Only use a rubber when drawing or for 'small' mistakes
- Never write or draw on the cover of your books; keep them clean.
- Write question numbers in the margin.
- In maths, always use a ruler for lines. Always set your work out clearly, using one digit per square.
- 'Final copies' of all work in exercise books should be presented neatly.
- Rushed or untidy work will not be acceptable.

CONCLUSION

- The English policy functions through effective teaching and learning strategies (see policy). We aim
- to promote enthusiasm and motivation and encourage positive attitudes to learning whilst ensuring
- progression in English throughout the school.
- Through regular reviews of the English policy i.e. staff meetings, INSETS, Governor Curriculum
- Committee, school monitoring, moderation, pupil target setting and achievement, the quality of
- language development will continue to be a high priority.

To be reviewed Feb 2015