

BARNS GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

English Policy

Rationale:

The National Curriculum (2014) clearly states that teaching the English language is an essential, if not the most essential role of a primary school.

At Barns Green Primary School we recognise that without effective communication, little achievement can be made. We understand that high quality English teaching is a priority and we recognise that the teaching of English skills impact upon the entire curriculum, through-out school life and beyond. It is part of the 'essential knowledge' (p6 National Curriculum) that is needed in society:

'Teachers should develop pupil's 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.' (p10 National Curriculum)

Alongside equipping children for the role English plays in an ever changing educational environment and beyond we strive to develop confidence and enjoyment of reading and writing. We actively seek to provide a setting where children challenge themselves and feel that they can achieve highly whilst being supported at nurtured.

We are an inclusive school; we set high expectations and recognise the importance of accurate and regular assessment in order to support individuals at every part of their learning journey and in whatever circumstances. We use one to one support, small groups and cross-phase work to help with this. We plan teaching opportunities to help those for whom English is an additional language and those with disabilities outlined in the SEN code of practice. We agree with the statement of the National Curriculum, that 'pupils...who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised' (p13).

1 Speaking and Listening:

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be 'taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently in Standard English' (p10) They should:

- Justify ideas with reasons
- Ask questions to check understanding
- Develop vocabulary and build knowledge
- Negotiate
- Evaluate and build on the ideas of others
- Select the appropriate register for effective communication
- Give well-structured descriptions and explanations
- Speculate, hypothesise and explore ideas
- Organise their ideas prior to writing

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1.2 Our aims and connected provision:

We encourage our pupils to speak clearly and confidently and articulate their views and opinions. We teach that children need to express themselves orally in an appropriate way, matching their style and response to audience and purpose. Listening and responding to literature, giving and receiving instructions. They develop the skills of participating effectively in group discussions. We also embrace an approach in which the children become fluent in talking 'different' text genres before writing where appropriate.

1.3 Ways in which we support this include:

- Activities which are planned to encourage full and active participation by all children, irrespective of ability
- Children with specific speech and language and auditory problems will be identified and specialist help sought, where appropriate
- Encouraging reading and talk about books, which includes magazine, newspapers, comics and websites.
- School Plays
- Class debates
- Assemblies
- Events within the community
- School Council
- Talk partners
- Talk 4 Writing
- Drama / role play
- PSHE and circle time

2. Reading:

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose and be encouraged to read for pleasure. Reading is singled out as of extreme importance since through it 'pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually' (p13) Reading allows pupils to 'acquire knowledge' and to 'build on what they already know' (p13).

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Schools are expected to have library facilities and support and encourage reading at home.

The 2014 Curriculum divides reading skills into two dimensions:

- Word reading/ decoding
- Comprehension

We recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods. We recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, writing, grammar and vocabulary. We also understand that reading is a developmental process and part of life-long learning and we encourage and praise children at every stage of it.

2.1. Our aims and connected provision

- Reading lies at the heart of all we do at Barns green Primary School and staff work tirelessly to promote fluent, confident readers, who enjoy reading both for pleasure and to access the curriculum. We understand the important educational, social and psychological roles that reading plays both at school and throughout life. All staff are skilled in the teaching of reading and dedicated towards its promotion, both in its early stages, throughout the school and in preparation for Key stage 3 and 4.
- Through well-chosen and carefully tailored provision we aim for our children to develop a love of reading and to read confidently so that they are able to read for pleasure and engage fully with a challenging curriculum.
- We prioritise early reading to ensure that pupils learn to read easily and fluently through using the Read Write Inc phonics and when ready a guided reading programme in Key Stage One. We encourage and promote regular reading to adults in school and incentives to read at home. Where children struggle programs are put in place to encourage further progress and to close gaps.
- Pupils develop skills in reading for understanding through guiding reading sessions, class discussion and reading comprehensions. Children receive appropriate challenge and support at each stage of their reading development. We are ambitious in the texts that all children have exposure to.
- Pupils are encouraged to read widely, through our use of differing class texts, library visits, selecting books from the library van and high quality attractive books in classrooms.
- Pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure using reading partners, buddy reading, quiet reading time, listening to an adult read and the various reading incentives which are both whole school and class based.
- We recognise that children have to develop their reading skills for a variety of purposes including reading to find information and for which comprehension is assessed in a formal way; we will prepare our children thoroughly for these challenges.
- We recognise the importance of building up reading stamina and encourage children with the development of this.
- Pupils are exposed to a range of texts from their literacy heritage during their school career.

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- Pupils engage with a variety of texts in guided reading sessions
- Pupils who are struggling with reading or making slow progress are given additional reading support. (please also refer to SEN policy)
- We have a 'reading dog' that visits the school and further encourages targeted children.

3. Writing:

The National Curriculum states that pupils should:

- Develop the stamina and skills to write at length
- Use accurate spelling and punctuation
- Be grammatically correct
- Write in a range of ways and purposes including narratives, explanations, descriptions, comparisons, summaries and evaluations
- Write to support their understanding and consolidation of what they have heard or read

The 2014 Curriculum divides writing skills into two dimensions:

- Transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- Composition (articulating ideas in speech and writing)

We recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods. We recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, reading, grammar and vocabulary.

3.1. Our aims and connected provision:

- We work to ensure that our children see themselves as writers, are confident to write and understand that writing is a process
- We teach grammar as a separate lesson where necessary and through our English and curricular provision. We value grammar and recognise that it provides the tools and language with which to discuss writing
- We correct grammatical errors through verbal and written feedback.
- We use high quality texts, modelling and shared/ collaborative writing to demonstrate good practice.
- We encourage and promote talking a text and articulation of writing at each stage of the writing process.
- A variety of resources are used to support the least confident writers, which include 'Speed Sound' cards, word banks and writing frames.
- We provide time for planning, editing and revising and value the entire writing process.

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- We mark using the 'tickled pink / green for growth' method and all children are aware of their next steps for writing.
- We encourage and promote self-assessment and peer assessment.
- We aim for all children to leave Barns Green Primary School with joined up handwriting (see Handwriting Policy).
- We use drama and hot-seating to help pupils to think about another point of view.
- We provide support for pupils with learning and motor difficulties, to encourage them to fully participate in all activities.

4. Vocabulary Development:

The National Curriculum makes clear that learning vocabulary is key to 'learning and progress across the whole curriculum' (p11) since it allows pupils to access a wider range of words when writing and for them to understand and comprehend texts efficiently.

Vocabulary teaching needs to be:

- Challenging
- Active
- Progressive/ systematic
- Make links from known words
- Develop understanding of shades of meaning
- Subject specific - grammatically accurate, mathematical and scientific vocabulary
- Linked to grammatical knowledge
- Rooted in key texts and quality written work

4.1. Our aims and connected provision:

We encourage our pupils to have a wide and growing vocabulary in a number of ways, these include:

- Each class will provide a language rich environment
- Spelling lists to take home and learn (from Y1)
- Current word lists will be on display to scaffold learning in English
- Display of key words linked to topics and subjects
- Using the correct vocabulary orally
- In-depth word-based lessons looking at patterns

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- Using dictionaries, thesaurus and similar electronic programs
- Carrying out systematic testing and providing feedback to pupils
- Targeted one to one/ small group support, where appropriate

5. Planning and Assessment:

5.1. Planning:

- Termly overviews can be found online
- Pupils are taught in mixed aged classes and planning takes into account differentiation by age and ability
- Medium term planning is stored centrally.
- English is planned for separately to other subjects and cross curricular links and opportunities are explored where appropriate
- Each term includes opportunities to write in a variety of styles and genre
- The RWI scheme of work is used to teach phonics and spelling throughout the school to ensure developmental learning building on prior knowledge
- Short term planning is flexible allowing for assessment for learning after each session/ group of sessions
- Pupils may be grouped by ability for some sessions
- Pupils with additional needs maybe given extra support the impact of which will be monitored

5.2. Assessment:

- Staff assess pupils learning during and as part of every session, they adapt their practice accordingly
- At KS1 phonics tests are undertaken termly
- The YARC reading test is taken by targeted children across the school in October and May
- NFER assessments of Reading Comprehension are carried out in KS2. The progress of groups and individuals is tracked and monitored
- Reading and Writing attainment is assessed against National curriculum standards six times a year using our 'Traffic light system'
- Parallel spelling tests are taken termly from Y2, which provide a spelling age and evidence of progress
- Pupils receive a weekly spelling test when it is assessed that they are ready for this
- Staff attend moderating and standardisation sessions within school and county
- Half –termly assessment data is analysed by the Subject Leader/assessment lead and feeds into the school self-evaluation, development plan and performance management. The data is also reported to the Head teacher, staff and governors

6. Professional development:

- The English Subject Leader shares updates from County with staff

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- Staff are expected to attend relevant courses during the school year
- Moderation takes place in house, within the locality and with support from County

7. Specific groups:

- Class teachers analyse pupil progresses at a class level looking for trends and identifying target children, these children will be discussed at pupil progress meetings.
- Analysis of data is used to identify children and groups of children who will benefit from short term targeted intervention.
- Pupils with SEN may have English based targets in line with the graduated approach outlined in the 2014 Code of Practice. These are reviewed regularly as part of the assess, of, review process.

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