



ENGLISH POLICY

Intent

At Boyne Hill Infant & Nursery School we recognise the fundamental importance of English as a subject in its own right as well as an integral part of all other subjects. Gaining and using skills in language not only affects a child's progress in school but also has a profound influence upon the course of his or her whole life. We aim to develop pupils' abilities within an integrated programme of spoken language, systematic synthetic phonics, reading & writing. Pupils will be given opportunities to develop their use, knowledge and understanding of spoken and written English within a broad and balanced curriculum, with opportunities to consolidate and reinforce taught literacy skills.

Aims

To enable our pupils to:

- acquire the specific knowledge and skills needed to be able to read and write in the English language using a validated Systematic Synthetic Phonics programme
- understand spelling conventions
- be effective, competent communicators and good listeners
- express opinions, articulate feelings and formulate responses to a range of texts both fiction and non-fiction using appropriate technical vocabulary
- foster an interest in words and their meanings and to develop a growing vocabulary in both spoken and written form
- enjoy, engage with and understand a range of text types and genres and develop the desire and passion to want to read
- be able to write in a variety of styles and forms showing awareness of audience and purpose
- develop powers of imagination and critical awareness in all areas of literacy
- use a range of independent strategies in developing their own learning, including self-monitoring and correcting their own errors
- be able to use grammar and punctuation accurately
- produce effective, well-presented written work

Statutory Requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum: English Programmes of Study – Key Stage 1 and in the Communication & Language and Literacy sections of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework.

Reading, writing and phonic skills are taught on a daily basis from Year R to Year 2. These skills are then applied in exciting and varied cross-curricular learning opportunities.

Curriculum Planning

Phonics

In order to teach all our pupils to become fluent, confident readers with a love of reading, all pupils within the Early Years Foundation Stage 2 and Key Stage 1 receive daily phonics teaching. In our Nursery, this begins with a focus on Phase 1 learning activities to develop early phonic skills: listening attentively; exploring and experimenting with sounds and words; distinguishing between different sounds in the environment and sounds in words (phonemes); developing understanding of rhyme and alliteration and the rich rhythm of stories; discriminating phonemes; talking about and joining in with stories, poems, rhymes and new vocabulary; showing an awareness of rhyme and alliteration; reproducing audibly, the phonemes they hear, in order, all through the word and using sound-talk to segment words into phonemes.

In Foundation Stage 2 and Key Stage 1, we follow a systematic synthetic phonics (SSP) programme called Reading Planet: Rocket Phonics. All pupils receive a daily phonics session within which the teaching & learning cycle of *revisit and review, learn, practise* and *apply* is followed. Phonics is taught at letter-sound, word, sentence and text levels. In order to meet the learning needs of individual pupils or small cohorts of pupils, adaptations may be made to the learning resources but fidelity to the programme will remain.

The teaching principles of this programme are:

- Knowledge of the English Alphabetic Code (150+ graphemes that represent 44 speech sounds)
 - see the letters, say the sounds for reading to automaticity
 - hear the sounds, recall the letters for spelling to automaticity
- Skill of blending for reading
 - oral blending
 - modelled blending
 - supported blending
 - independent blending at word, sentence and text levels
- Skill of segmenting for spelling
 - oral segmenting
 - modelled segmenting
 - supported segmenting
 - knowing which spelling alternative to use
- Skill of handwriting
 - pencil hold
 - letter formation
 - positioning on a writing line
 - print before cursive

Spoken Language

Spoken language has a big focus in our school and we recognise its importance in pupils' development across the whole curriculum as it underpins the development of reading and writing. Pupils are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life. Opportunities to develop these skills include talk partners, storytelling, role play and debating within lessons across the curriculum, class assemblies, School Council and school productions.

Pupils are taught to develop their vocabulary in all subject areas and termly tasks are set to support the development of their confidence to speak to an audience within their classroom and to ask and answer questions in full sentences.

We recognise the need for all pupils to speak, read and write Standard English fluently and accurately, whilst acknowledging that a pupil's own dialect or home language is of prime importance. All staff members are role models who promote Standard English and take care to sensitively correct pupils' misconceptions with language.

Reading

Throughout our systematic synthetic phonics programme, teachers model reading strategies during the shared reading session. Target Practice reading books are used to provide focused practice of small groups of target letter-sounds. The books are fully decodable and fully aligned with the programme and in Key Stage 1 are used for small group independent reading. These books are also available online and may be set for pupils to access at home.

In Foundation Stage 2, when pupils are able to blend initial sounds, they are given a decodable reading book aligned to the programme which they read with an adult in school and also take home for additional reading practice.

In Key Stage 1, pupils are allocated a decodable reading book in line with their reading ability. They read with an adult in class at least once a week as a guided reading session and spend time learning the many skills of successful reading whilst also having the opportunity to discuss the texts in more detail. The skills taught include using expression, intonation, inference and deduction and fluency, as well as the skills of comprehension. These books are taken home for additional reading practice.

Each pupil has a Reading Record book that teachers and parents/carers can use to share information about the child's reading. Parents/carers are encouraged to read with their child daily. Information is available on the school website to support reading at home and we run a workshop for parents/carers in the Autumn term on both phonics and reading.

To foster and sustain a love of reading, activities are arranged in school to promote the pleasure and knowledge that can be gained from books, for example World Book Day where pupils are immersed in storytelling, book discussions and reviews and the opportunity to dress up as a book character and share their favourite books; author visits; National Poetry Day; 'drop everything and read' days; home-reading challenges such as 'extreme reading' or reading lotto and library visits, both to the school library and at the local public library. In addition, every class has their own library box from which pupils are able to choose from a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts to take and read at home, or to have read to them at home, keeping it for as long as they wish. Each class also has a reading area and throughout the week, pupils are able to choose a book to look at or read, on their own or with a friend. Much pleasure can be gained from focusing on illustrations in a fiction book or photographs in a non-fiction book and it is important that pupils are given the opportunity to do this without the expectation of being able to read every word.

We recognise the value of adults, both in school and at home, reading aloud to children in order to improve their grasp of story language, enthuse them with a love of books and inspire them as writers and daily story time in class supports this.

Writing

We aim to develop pupils' ability to produce well-structured, detailed writing in which the meaning is made clear and which engages the interest of the reader. Attention is paid throughout Key Stage 1 to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling following activities which support emergent writing in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Teachers use talk for writing and model writing skills and the application of phonics and spelling strategies in shared writing sessions. Guided writing sessions teach specific elements in line with the long-term English curriculum plan and whilst sentence structure, grammar and punctuation may be taught discretely, their application, alongside the literacy genre being taught, will link with the termly theme through the choice of fiction or non-fiction book selected as the focus for writing. The expected standard of writing does not just apply to focused English lessons but to all subject areas where writing activities occur, demonstrating pupils' transferable literacy skills.

Pupils within KS1 may have the chance to choose their own writing task or challenge in a lesson and for some, this may be scaffolded. They also have opportunities to write at length in extended, independent writing sessions, applying their taught skills to an unsupported piece of writing.

Computing

The use of technology enables our pupils to use and apply their developing skills in English in a variety of ways. It can be used as a source of information, as a way of enabling them to present their completed work effectively or when using the internet to search for information.

Assessment

- End of term phonic assessments, in line with the SSP programme, are completed for each pupil to enable appropriate support for those working below age related expectations.
- During guided reading sessions, observations are recorded against a specific objective or target in line with the Reading Progression Map. This will then be tracked using the school's ongoing assessment tracker.
- PM Benchmark assessments may be used to gauge a child's independent reading level.
- In KS1, in line with our Marking and Feedback policy, supported and independent written work informs next steps. Fully independent writing tasks each term are used to assess ability against expected standards and are tracked using the school's ongoing assessment tracker.

Evaluation and Monitoring

Monitoring of the standards of pupils' work and the quality of the teaching in English is the responsibility of the English subject leader. The role of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English,

being informed about the current developments in the subject and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.

This policy will be reviewed biennially

Last reviewed: October 2022