

Toll Bar Primary School English Policy

1 Introduction

1.1 The study of English develops children's abilities to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, so using language to learn and communicate ideas, views and feelings. We believe good oral work enhances pupils' understanding of language in oral and written forms and of the way language can be used to communicate. Literacy skills enable children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively and are an important part of the process through which pupils read and compose texts. We want our children to gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins and to use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations.

1.2 This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching, learning and assessment of English at Toll Bar Primary School. This policy will be reviewed in the light of any subsequent curriculum changes.

This policy stands alongside our-arching policies on Teaching and Learning, Inclusions, School Environment, Handwriting and Assessment for Learning. The intention is not to repeat information already in these policies.

1.3 Literacy sits at the heart of the primary curriculum and is explicitly defined as the four strands of language – reading, writing, speaking and listening. Speaking and listening skills underpin all learning and by placing speaking and listening alongside reading and writing we acknowledge the importance of the mutuality of the four stands of language. Conversation orders the concepts which are encoded in writing and decoded in reading.

2 Aims and Objectives

2.1 At Toll Bar Primary School we aim to encourage children and other curriculum aims to:

- speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners;
- listen with concentration
- adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands and have a growing vocabulary;
- develop abilities to reflect on their own and others' contributions
- evaluate their own and others' contributions
- develop as confident, independent readers
- use phonics as an aid to reading and spelling
- become enthusiastic and reflective readers able to justify their preferences;
- enjoy writing and recognize its value and write accurately
- know, understand and be able to write in a range of genres in fiction and non-fiction
- increase their ability to plan, draft and edit to improve their work.
- have fluent and legible handwriting
- develop a positive and confident attitude towards learning in English
- enjoy reading for pleasure, leading to reading for life

- develop the understanding, knowledge and literacy skills required to participate in a constantly changing society
- understand how literacy is useful to them
- use language to communicate in a variety of ways
- learn to work collaboratively and independently
- foster and develop language and literacy talent
- review their own learning using skills and information to manage their own language and literacy development

3 Approaches to teaching and learning

- 3.1** At Toll Bar Primary School we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English lessons as recommended by the Primary Framework. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in English.
- 3.2** Children will use ICT in English lessons where it enhances their learning, as in drafting their work and use multimedia to study how words and images are combined to convey meaning. Wherever possible we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum. E.g. cross-curricular links.
- 3.3** Teaching in literacy lessons should be:
- Discursive – characterised by high quality oral work
 - Interactive – pupils' contributions are expected, encouraged and extended
 - Well paced – there must be a sense of urgency driven by the need to make progress and succeed
 - Confident – teachers need a clear understanding of relevant objectives
 - Ambitious – we should always show high expectations of success
- 3.4** Teachers need to use a range of teaching strategies including:
- Direction
 - Demonstration
 - Modelling
 - Scaffolding
 - Explanation to clarify and discuss
 - Questioning to probe pupils' understanding, to cause them to reflect on and refine their work and to extend their ideas
 - Initiating and guiding exploration
 - Investigating ideas
 - Discussing and clarifying opinions
 - Listening and responding
- 3.5** There are children of differing ability in all classes at Toll Bar Primary School. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons we do it through differentiated group work, while in other lessons we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas.
- 3.6** We use classroom assistants to support some children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

4 Planning for English

- 4.1** English teaching and learning in Years 1-6 is planned around a unit of between 2 and 6 weeks in length. There is a degree of flexibility in the length of the unit plans to allow creative cross curricular planning, linked to the current topic. At the end of every unit there should be a Quality outcome in some form, which the children understand to be their target. Assessment for learning takes place continually and supports the development and personalisation of the plans. Assessment and targets are recorded on APP sheets and in tracking documents.
- 4.2** Staff personalise plans to meet the particular needs of the learners in their classrooms.
- 4.3** Plans must include opportunities for speaking and listening - Children need to talk about their learning and develop their thinking and reasoning skills, so teachers must plan opportunities for discussion and time for reflection. Talking and reasoning activities enable learners to self or peer assess and to know what they have learnt, how they have learnt, what they do not understand and what they want to learn next. Throughout the process teachers plan to guide the learning through intervention and high level open-ended questioning, facilitating good AfL practice.
- 4.4** An engaging, stimulating and attractive learning environment is a key part of a teacher's repertoire and contributes significantly to children's continuous learning. It should reflect current learning and include a Working Wall, where children are able to see 'the big picture' and the steps they are taking to get there. It should include a WMG notice to show the success criteria they are aiming at in their current learning and the expected outcome and a Who am I writing for? Question.

5 The Foundation Stage

- 5.1** We teach English skills in the nursery and reception classes as an integral part of the school's work. We relate the English aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. We give all children 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 practise and extend 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.

6 Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas

- 6.1** The skills that children develop in English are linked to, and applied in, every subject of our curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work in school.

As staff we achieve these aims by:

- Use of the curriculum guidance for the foundation stage for language development in the nursery and reception classes.
- Use of the structured programme of English provided by the Primary Framework from Year 1 to 6, which ensures coverage of the National Curriculum by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching a daily English lesson in KS1 and KS2 which will include some oral/mental work, introduction, a main activity and a plenary session;
- Teaching daily discrete phonics sessions in EYFS and KS1;
- Teaching handwriting and spelling/phonics sessions in KS2;
- Teaching reading daily through shared, guided and individual reading
- Teaching writing through shared, guided and modelled writing;
- Use of creative dialogic teaching which promotes Talk for Writing;
- Using picture books as a stimulus for talking and writing
- Using AfL and adapting plans and provision using a range of teaching and learning strategies
- Making meaningful cross curricular links wherever possible to provide purpose and audience for writing, reading, speaking and listening
- Sharing outcomes with other classes to encourage pride and raise self-esteem
- Having high expectations about the way pupils work and the standard of presentation

6.2 Speaking and Listening

Speaking and listening are important skills in their own right and their absence inhibits not only other learning, but also social and emotional development. At Toll Bar Primary School we recognise that a strong commitment to speaking and listening skills within the whole curriculum supports all children, particularly those with poor language skills, so that they are able to access the curriculum and make progress. These skills may be taught through a range of drama, presentation, conversation and discussion activities and assessed as part of continuous AfL.

6.3 Reading

Children learn to read through a mixture of individual, shared and guided reading. At Toll Bar Primary School, the teaching of reading is personalised to the individual child and the appropriate strategy adopted. Whatever the strategy, each child must read with an adult at least once a week; this should be noted in the reading record. Guided reading sessions following the established teaching sequence take place every day across the whole school and every class has at least one story read aloud to them daily. In this way we aim to ensure that children experience high quality literature and hear a wide range of ambitious and challenging language. Assessment in reading focus areas is recorded using the agreed format and is reported as a NC level during assessment weeks. (See Reading policy)

Children must bring books to school and take one home again every day. The expectation and hope is that children will read to an adult at home, comment being written into the reading record book.

6.4 Writing

Wherever possible children must write for an audience and purpose which is meaningful to them. The earliest stages of such writing begin with Drawing into Writing in EYFS, with children showing an increasing acquisition of phonic skills being independently applied in their written work.

In KS1 and KS2 teachers follow the Primary Framework for English which outlines the genres to be taught in each year group, mapping this onto the planning units for the year in advance to ensure coverage. This means that writing outcomes can be linked to the class topic, where meaningful, with skills relating to grammar, punctuation, handwriting and spelling taught discretely then applied and practised through the contextual theme. In this way children are writing for both audience and purpose, with much of their writing being published and presented to parents and the wider school. Presentation is valued highly and children are encouraged to feel proud of their written outcomes.

Writing evidence across a range of genres is assessed using APP criteria once every half term and during assessment weeks, and used for tracking purposes. Child-friendly versions of these criteria should be shared with the children, stuck into English books and used as targets. Children should periodically reflect on their work to see which targets they feel they have achieved and what their next steps are.

6.5 Phonics and Spelling

In EYFS and KS1 phonics sessions of 20 minutes are planned daily and taught in a whole class setting, using the **Letters and Sounds** programme. Where necessary, children who need extra support or challenge are given small group consolidation or pre-learning before and/or after these sessions, usually with a TA/LSA. Assessment of phonics during these sessions is immediate, with brief notes made on post-its. More formal, individual, assessment should be made for children who struggle, to ascertain their specific knowledge and gaps. Tracking is recorded on the phonics/spelling grid every term.

In KS2 spelling is taught and can be linked to handwriting.

6.6 Mathematics

English contributes significantly to the teaching of mathematics in our school. Children in the Foundation Stage develop their understanding of number, pattern, shape and space by talking about these areas with adults and other children. Children in Key Stage 1 meet stories and rhymes that rely on counting and sequencing. Children in Key Stage 2 are encouraged to read and interpret problems in order to identify the mathematics involved. They explain and present their work to others during plenary sessions and they communicate mathematically through the developing use of precise mathematical language.

6.7 Science

Literacy skills involved in non-fiction work are very applicable to recording in science. The use of writing frames for structuring reports is encouraged as an aid for lower ability pupils.

6.8 Humanities

History and Geography give opportunities for both factual and creative work and therefore the opportunities for teachers to encourage an extensive range of English skills. Again the use of writing frames is encouraged, especially in the younger years when the demands of different writing styles are introduced.

6.9 Information and communication technology (ICT)

The use of ICT enables children to use and apply their developing skills in English in a variety of ways. Younger children use ICT as a source of information and as a way of enabling them to present their completed work effectively. Older children use the Internet when searching for information about a different part of the world, or when using desktop publishing to design a class newspaper. Children use the planning and proofing tools in a word processor when checking their draft work. We encourage all children to use ICT as a resource for learning whenever it is appropriate .

6.10 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

English contributes to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. We encourage younger children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues. In their science work they talk about things that improve their health and about rules for keeping them safe around the school. Older children research and debate topical problems and events. They discuss lifestyle choices and meet and talk with many visitors who work within the school community. Planned activities within the classroom encourage children to work together and respect each other's views.

6.11 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

The teaching of English develops skills through which our children can give critical responses to the moral questions they meet in their work. Their understanding and appreciation of a range of texts brings them into contact with their own literary heritage and texts from other cultures. The organisation of lessons allows children to work together and gives them the chance to discuss their ideas and results.

Monitoring and review

7.1 Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the subject leader. This is to be achieved in a variety of ways:

- Involvement in long and medium planning across the school
- Regular formal and informal discussions with teaching and support staff concerning progress of individuals and groups through pupil progress meetings
- Classroom observations as part of the subject leader release timetable
- Monitoring of resources
- Reviewing assessment data to evaluate the quality of learning throughout the school

7.2 The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The co-ordinator gives the Headteacher and Governing Body an annual action plan which evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, and indicates areas for further improvement. The named governor responsible for literacy meets regularly with the subject leader in order to review progress.

7.3 This policy will be reviewed every 2 years or earlier in the light of statutory changes

English Policy

Date of Review: June 2013

Date of Next Review: June 2015

Signed:

Date: