

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** We intend to cover all the attainment targets as set out in the National Curriculum English document (2000) for Key stages 1 and 2 and those set out for the Foundation Stage. We aim to do this through the National Literacy strategy, through the emphasis of literacy skills across the curriculum and adherence to school policies on Speaking and Listening, Reading, Writing, Spelling, Handwriting and Teaching and Learning.

2 Aims and Objectives

- 2.1** At Toll Bar Primary School we aim to encourage children to:
- speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners;
 - listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard;
 - 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 and the language used;
 - evaluate their own and others' contributions through a range of drama activities;
 - develop as confident, independent readers through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text-level knowledge;
 - understand the sound and spelling system and use this to read and spell accurately
 - become enthusiastic and reflective readers able to justify their preferences;
 - enjoy writing and recognize its value;
 - write with accuracy and meaning in non-fiction tasks;
 - 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 literacy ideas of setting, character and plot.
 - increase their ability to plan, draft and edit to improve their work.
 - have fluent and legible handwriting

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 National Literacy Strategy. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in English.
- 3.2** The daily lesson will have a high proportion of whole-class and group teaching. During these lessons children will usually experience a whole-class shared reading or writing activity, a whole-class focused word or sentence activity, a guided group or independent activity and a whole-class session to review progress and learning. They will have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts and use a range of resources such as dictionaries, thesauruses to support their work. Planning may be adapted to take account of individual events, e.g. follow up to visits.
- 3.3** 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.
- 3.4** 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
- 3.5** 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
- 3.6** 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.
- 3.7** We use classroom assistants to support some children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals. We make full use of all available "catch up" strategies either in the literacy hour or at other times of day.

4 English curriculum planning and organisation

- 4.1** English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the National Literacy Strategy as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English.
- 4.2** We see classroom organisation as a key area to success in the teaching and learning of literacy. The structure of the Literacy Hour itself offers a clear structure for classroom management. The emphasis on whole class work ensures that pupils on average will spend about three quarters of their time being taught as members of the whole class or a smaller ability group. About a quarter of their time will be spent on independent reading or writing. We must ensure that the needs of the full range of pupils are met, as far as possible, within this structure, including those with SEN, those with English as a second language and the more able pupils.
- 4.3** We carry out the curriculum planning in English in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The National Literacy Strategy Framework for Teaching details what we teach in the long-term.
- 4.4** Our medium-term plans, which we also base on the Framework, give details of the main teaching objectives for each term, allowing for the mixed aged nature of our classes. These plans define what we teach and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term. The English subject leader is responsible for keeping and reviewing these plans.
- 4.5** Class teachers complete a weekly or two weekly (short-term) plan for the teaching of English depending on the age and objective being covered. This lists the specific learning objectives for each lesson and gives details of how the lessons are to be taught. It also includes details of what each group of children will be learning. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, and the class teacher and subject leader discuss them on an informal basis as necessary
- 4.6** At Toll Bar Primary School we are committed to ensuring, as far as possible, that there is equality of opportunity in all areas of the curriculum. Including Literacy. Gender and ethnic issues are closely monitored but appear to differ with the make up of each small cohort.

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.

6.2 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.

6.3 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 a aid for lower ability pupils.

6.4 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.

6.5 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 .

6.6 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.

6.7 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.

7 Teaching English to children with special educational needs

- 7.1** At our school we teach English to all children, whatever their ability. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our English teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels.
- 7.2** When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This may involve work in supported groups both in and out of the classroom and during the Literacy Hour or at other times. This is to ensure that our teaching is matched to the child's needs as far as is possible.
- 7.3** Intervention through School Action and School Action Plus will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs. The IEP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to English.
- 7.4** We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning English including visitors and drama groups. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a theatre trip, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.
- 7.5** Teachers provide help with communication and literacy through:
- using texts that children can read and understand;
 - using visual and written materials in different formats;
 - using ICT, other technological aids and taped materials;
 - using alternative communication, such as signs and symbols where necessary;
 - using translators when appropriate
 - using support staff following the teacher's plans.
 - using outside agencies to support specific problems and different ethnic groups, including travellers

8 Assessment and recording

- 8.1** The assessment and recording of all the elements of English is part of the overall assessment of the child and should be seen alongside all the other areas of development and personal details
- 8.2** Assessment should reflect the general principles and procedures laid down in the school's Assessment Policy. The following points should be borne in mind:

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- planned teaching is recorded in long, medium and short term plans and copies should be kept in individual planning files in case of absence
- half-termly assessments should be marked, dated and kept in individual pupil's files
- progress should be recorded regularly in pupil record books and dated
- the school maintains a portfolio of work which is reviewed and agreed by staff annually and kept up to date by the subject leader
- a variety of methods can be used to gather material including photographs
- a written report on each child's achievements will be sent to parents as part of the annual written report in July of each academic year. Parents will also have the opportunity to discuss progress at Open Evenings in the Autumn and Spring terms.
- In addition to statutory assessments in Years 2 and 6 non-statutory SATs will be undertaken in Years 3,4 and 5
- Pupils must be involved in assessment through the use of class and individual targets and recording in their Record of Achievement booklets

8.3 Teachers assess children's work in English in three phases. The short-term assessments that teachers make as part of every lesson help teachers to adjust their daily plans. Teachers match these short-term assessments closely to the teaching objectives. They use medium-term assessments to measure progress against the key objectives, and to help them plan for the next unit of work. Teachers make long-term assessments towards the end of the school year, and they use these to assess progress against school and national targets. With the help of these long-term assessments, teachers along with the Headteacher are able to set targets for the next school year and track progress of each child during the academic year.

9 Resources

9.1 There is a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries and a selection of fiction texts. Access to the Internet is available in the computer room and in Classes 4 and 5. The library contains a range of books to support children's individual research as well as further fiction books.

9.2 Reading scheme books, guided reading sets and Big Books are kept in central areas.

9.3 Overhead projectors for use with the whiteboards or screens are available as well as tape-recorders, a camera, a digital camera and laptops with multi-media programs. A variety of computer programs is available.

10 Monitoring and review

- 10.1** 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
 - 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
- 10.2** 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.
- 10.3** This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier in the light of statutory changes

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Related Policies

Speaking and Listening Policy

Reading Policy

Writing Policy

Spelling Policy

Handwriting Policy

Assessment Policy

Teaching and Learning Policy

Monitoring, Evaluation, Review and Improvement Policy