

BARTON PRIMARY SCHOOL AND EARLY YEARS CENTRE.



TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ENGLISH

DATE: APRIL 2009

TO BE REVIEWED: APRIL 2011

Policy for the Teaching and Learning of English at Barton Primary School

Introduction

- This policy was developed in consultation with staff and governors in 2008. It will be reviewed in 2010.

Principles

- Language is fundamental to learning across the whole curriculum.
- It is the main medium through which we express our ideas, needs and understanding of the world in which we live.
- Scientific and mathematical terminologies are examples of specific language use, which we aim to develop through the teaching and learning of those curriculum areas. However, we recognise the cross-curricular nature of children's learning and so aim to reinforce the learning of specific language whenever appropriate.
- We acknowledge the different skills, experiences and knowledge that the children bring to school. From these starting points we aim to develop confidence, enjoyment and creativity in communicating through the four modes of language speaking, listening, reading and writing
- English is a core subject in the National Curriculum.

Aims

By the time each child leaves our school to move on to their next Key Stage, we aim for them to have developed the ability and skills to:

- Use language confidently, appropriately and accurately
- Reflect on their use of language and show an interest in its many forms and functions
- Speak clearly and confidently, adjusting language to suit the situation
- Listen attentively with understanding, pleasure, empathy and make relevant responses
- Read a range of materials fluently and with understanding, for enjoyment and for information
- Write confidently for a range of audiences and purposes using punctuation and syntax accurately, appropriate spelling strategies and effective vocabulary choices in a fluent, cursive style.

Strategies for the Teaching and Learning of English

Organisation

At Barton we aim to provide a rich, stimulating and ordered environment to foster creativity and enthusiasm.

The teacher may organise their classroom differently for particular purposes. Children will experience a range of working situations, e.g. individual, pairs, group or whole class as appropriate to the activity or the child's needs (See Teaching for Learning policy).

Speaking and Listening

These skills are developed through:

- Providing a range of opportunities for children to talk and listen in formal and informal settings
- The use of role-play and drama activities to explore situations
- The rhythmic quality of language
- Regular story times
- Circle time including listening games
- Class/group debates
- Opportunities to share experiences, ideas or describe events/objects
- Interviewing
- Praise given for use of interesting vocabulary
- Use of cassette recorders
- Opportunities to take part in performances

Reading Skills

Reading is a complex thinking process, which can be defined as including these processing strategies:

- Sight vocabulary, graphic and syntactic awareness, and phonic knowledge -the 'bottom up' word and sentence level skills of reading.
- Use of context, picture clues, knowledge of how books/stories work, forming hypotheses, making predictions - the 'top down' text level skills of reading

Reading is a two-way process where the child's own experiences and knowledge contribute as much to their understanding of a text as do the words of the author.

We develop reading skills by:

- Using a multi-sensory, synthetic and analytic approach to phonics through THRASS and Jolly Phonics
- Providing a wide range of reading materials with opportunities for children to select from this for information and pleasure
- The use of our main scheme: Rigby Star, plus other structured reading schemes when needed (Ginn, All Aboard, Fuzzbuzz and Sunshine) which cater for different needs
- One to one reading support for all children and more often for those who may not get support from home
- Use of cards for the learning of sight vocabulary

- Ensuring that all children have a regular period of quiet reading daily, practised by the teacher to provide a role model of reading for enjoyment
- Using a home-school reading diary and rewarding regular reading at home
- Giving regular opportunities for guided, paired and shared reading, experiencing a wide range of different texts
- The use of a variety of games including I.T.
- The use of directed activities related to text (D.A.R.T.)
- Providing a good role-model ourselves
- Encouraging discussion about favourite stories, books and other texts

Writing

Writing is a creative process through which meaning and ideas are expressed.

As with reading, we have word level skills:

- Phonic awareness, known spellings, use of spelling strategies and how letters are formed

Sentence level skills:

- Syntax, choice of vocabulary, punctuation, sentence openers and connectives

Text level skills:

- Ideas, planning, flow, pace, balance, style, voice, adaptation of writing to audience and purpose, opinion, organisation and structure appropriate to form

We develop these skills through

- Valuing children's writing at all stages thus encouraging children to see themselves as writers from early on
- Providing real purposes for writing, enabling children to become increasingly aware of their intended audience
- A multi-sensory approach providing a range of contexts and stimuli
- Pie Corbett approach to story-telling and making
- The use of drama skills, eg hot seating, re-enacting, use of the theatre for making and presenting
- Providing a role model through the teacher sharing their own writing processes and experiences
- Opportunities for collaborative writing
- Providing writing frames where appropriate
- The use of Breakthrough approach where appropriate
- Providing opportunities for 'free writing'
- Setting realistic targets
- Encouraging drafting
- Teaching proof reading and editing skills
- Use of I.T., e.g. Talking Textease, Clicker, Office Word
- The teaching of writing across the curriculum
- Developing the child's ability to self-review and peer review
- Display
- Visiting writers or theatre groups such as puppet theatre

Spelling

Spelling is developed through:

- THRASS
- Developing phoneme: grapheme knowledge and the ability to translate phoneme into grapheme
- Sounding out each letter and blending the sounds
- Teaching consonant blends and clusters
- Splitting words into chunks, onset and rime
- Remembering the shape of words or parts of words
- Learning to transpose: recognising words have similar endings (rhyming and rimes), letter strings and patterns
- Developing the use of dictionaries, word banks and key word cards
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, giving children spellings to learn weekly, taken from the list of high frequency words and the rime screens using the look, say, cover, say, write, check method
- Making patterns and word families explicit
- Teaching spelling rules
- Mnemonics
- Use of games, word searches and D.A.R.T.s (Directed Activity Related to Text)
- I.T: Spelling programs and games
- Constructive marking
- Teaching phonics, spelling patterns and handwriting together

Handwriting

This is developed through a multi-sensory approach.

The correct formation of printed letters is taught in Reception, using the Primary Sassoon Infant font as a model which includes lead offs and is taught through THRASS. This is further developed from year 2 into a cursive style based on Jean Augur.

Teachers encourage correct posture, pencil grip and slope of paper.

Handwriting is developed through:

- THRASS IT
- THRASS overwrite cards and photocopiable sheets
- Rainbow letters
- Use of rice tray
- Air drawing
- Group sessions or class sessions
- Phonics work
- Practising the eight patterns that promote formation and flow
- Pencil control activities such as dot-to dot, mazes and tracing
- Providing a variety of writing implements appropriate to the individual child, such as chunky, triangular pencils or pencil grips and handwriting pens

Special Arrangements

Children with special needs work towards specific targets identified by the class teacher/language support teacher as part of their I.E.P. Children may work individually or in small groups with extra support.

Such special arrangements may be made for :

- Children with learning difficulties in any aspect of English
- Children for whom English is an additional language
- Children with a particular flair for English

Special groups are run by classroom assistants to boost children's literacy skills. These are E.L.S. (Early Literacy Support), BISKIT and A.L.S. (Additional Literacy Support). For other guidance on teaching and supporting children with special needs please see the Special Needs Handbook.

Resources

Classroom Assistants

Classroom assistants are important resources during Literacy lessons and other language activities. Their time is planned carefully to help meet the needs of individuals or groups. Classroom assistants help the teacher with assessment through observations and more formal assessments.

Books and Equipment

Each class has resources appropriate to age and abilities. Some resources are kept centrally in the workroom. The library is a valuable resource and its use is timetabled (please see the Library Policy).

Central Resources

These include

- Reading schemes: Rigby Star and Rockets, Wildcats, New Ginn, All Aboard, Sunshine and Sunshine Spirals, Fuzzbuzz
- The School Library: puppet story books and story sacks, Big Books, story tapes and books, children's own made books, author packs, Banana books, Jets, Cartwheels and Puffin books, fiction and non-fiction
- Videos/DVDs
- Easy Learn phonic resources (photocopiable activity sheets)
- Jean Augur handwriting sheets
- Ginn reading skills books
- Guided Reading sets

Classroom Resources

These include

- A class reading corner containing fiction, non-fiction and poetry
- A variety of dictionaries and thesauruses

- A class writing corner
- A selection of line guides, paper and writing implements
- Breakthrough sentence makers
- Listening equipment
- Teachers' Handbooks for the main reading schemes
- Spellbound spelling programme
- C.D. roms
- School Library Loan books including topic loans

External Resources

These include

- Library van which visits each term
- All Share book scheme for Key Stage 2
- Topic Loans
- Public library
- Visiting writers
- Visiting theatre groups
- Visits and visitors to help develop speaking and listening and reporting skills

Information and Communication Technology

Resources for teaching English include:

- Cassette recorders and listening equipment
- P.C.s in the classrooms and suites
- Smart Boards in classrooms

Programs used for the teaching of English include:

- Word processing programs: Talking Textease, Word and Publisher on which drafting, editing and presenting skills are taught
- Encyclopaedia and information presentations on C.D. rom or on-line for research and reference skills
- Phonics and reading programs such as Phonic Word Builder and Rigby Star
- Electronic worksheets: on-screen activities made by staff
- Knowledge Box and Educationcity

Home-School Links

We aim to include parents in their children's learning. Ways in which parents are encouraged to help their children include:

- Reading with their children at home and making notes in their reading diary; a reward system has been developed to encourage home reading
- Helping their child to learn their sounds using Jolly Phonics or other clue cards and phonics books
- Helping their child to learn the spellings sent home weekly from year 1 on
- Helping with letter formation through activity sheets
- Helping their child write e.g. in Teddy's Diary

A Reading Booklet is given to and discussed with parents when their children come into Reception and a Learning Spellings information sheet is sent home when the children begin to take their spellings home.

Continuity and Progression

Planning

Planning for the Teaching and Learning of English is undertaken by Key Stage planning teams or individual teachers. At the Foundation Stage, planning is based on 'Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage' (DFEE/QCA). Key Stage 1 and 2 planning covers the objectives in the 'National Literacy Strategy' and the programmes of study from the National Curriculum for English and Ros Wilson's Four Generic Targets for writing. A medium term or unit plan is drawn up, from which weekly planning is developed. Cross-curricular use of language is detailed in the curriculum frameworks and medium term plans for topics.

The teaching and learning of key skills is to meet the needs of individuals or groups.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

To inform target setting and future planning, a range of assessment is carried out and records kept. We are then able to track children's progress over each year and through the school.

These records include:

- Foundation Stage Profile
- Phonic record (colour-coded highlighting for each year group)
- Sight vocabulary (as above)
- Reading record
- Spelling of high frequency words (as above)
- Unaided writing which is levelled using Ros Wilson's criterion scale, annotated and added to the child's 'Special Writing Book' each term
- Speaking and Listening class tracker
- The class teacher's informal observations
- Spelling Test: Autumn Term and Summer Term (end of Year 1 on)
- Salford Reading Test: Autumn Term and Summer Term (end of Year 1 on)
- Key Stage 1 S.A.T. results
- Year 3 C.A.T.s
- Year 4 S.A.T.s
- THRASS records

All formal records are passed on to the child's next teacher or destination school. Targets set for groups or individuals are shared with the children, noted in their books and discussed with parents at Parents' Evenings. Teachers give feedback to children about their progress through constructive marking and discussion, and writing comments in Reading Diaries.

Reporting to Parents

This is offered through interviews at Parents' Evenings and written reports are sent to parents at the end of each academic year. Teachers report on children's learning and progress in the four areas of English and set new targets for the coming term. S.A.T.s results are reported to parents at the end of year 2.