

Brindle St James' Church of England Primary School



English Policy

January 2026

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy sets to outline our approach to teaching reflecting the school's aims and objectives in relation to the teaching and learning of English. It sets a framework within which teaching and non-teaching staff can operate. The policy should be read in conjunction with the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and the 2014 National Curriculum. These set out the rationale for teaching each area of the English Curriculum and specify the skills that will be developed for the majority of pupils in each year group.

AIMS

At Brindle St. James' we aim to deliver a high-quality English curriculum that gives children the best possible opportunities to become confident, literate, successful members of society with a deep love and understanding of English language and literature. We believe the development of English skills is central to improving a child's life chances. Teachers have high expectations for all children to achieve and enjoy English and to be able to use the skills they have acquired in a range of contexts. We strive to ensure all children can communicate clearly in spoken and written form and become masters of language. Rich texts are at the heart of our teaching and a love for reading is promoted throughout the school. We recognise the importance of phonics, particularly to form a solid foundation on which to build their reading and writing skills. Within all other subjects, there is a high expectation that children will apply their phonological knowledge along with non-negotiable skills for each year group. Teachers use inspirational ideas to engage children in work, providing memorable experiences, and bringing topics to life through real life contexts linked to our local area where appropriate. 'Stimulating starts' to create interest are planned to launch a unit of work. We recognise that each child is unique and will learn in a different way. Therefore, a multi-sensory approach is used to deliver lessons including the use of physical books, e-books, audio books, writing with pen/ pencil, drama and other inspiring resources linked to the topic/ genre. Curriculum coverage is carefully monitored by the Senior Leadership Team to ensure all staff are delivering the quality English curriculum in line with our vision statement. A progression of knowledge map sets out the progression of each strand of the English curriculum from EYFS to Year 6 and the Long-Term Planning maps follow this direction very closely.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

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

The English programme of study is based on four areas:

- Spoken language
- Reading
- Writing
- Spelling, grammar and punctuation

The National Curriculum is divided into 3 Key stages: Key Stage 1, Lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4) and Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 and 6). By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, knowledge and processes specified in the relevant programme of study.

The National Curriculum 2014, gives detailed guidance of what should be taught at each Key stage under the following headings:

- Spoken language
- Reading - Word recognition

- Comprehension
- Writing - Transcription-spelling
Handwriting and presentation
Composition
- Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation

In the Foundation Stage (Reception) children are given opportunities to:

- Speak and listen and represent ideas in their activities
- Use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum
- Become immersed in an environment rich in print and opportunities to communicate.

At Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2) children learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They learn to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They learn to use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds. Children are given opportunities to speak and listen throughout all subject areas.

At Key Stage Two (Years 3-6) children learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works.

The Governing Body receives regular reports on the progress of English provision.

SUBJECT ORGANISATION

Foundation Stage

In Foundation stage, children have daily discrete phonics lessons. Children have opportunities to develop their communication, language and literacy skills on a daily basis in both adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1, daily discrete phonics lessons (using the SuperSonic Phonics scheme) continue and are taught in ability groups, while children have daily mixed ability English lessons with an emphasis on real texts. Children also have discrete grammar lessons each week. Children take part in both guided and individual reading sessions and have regular story times to develop a love of reading. Literacy skills are developed across the curriculum. Provision is made for children who require extra support through intervention programmes, differentiated class teaching and extended phonics sessions.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2, children have daily English lessons including discrete grammar warm-ups. Additional English sessions include guided reading, handwriting, spelling and a class novel which is read at the teacher's discretion at a time throughout the day. Literacy skills are developed across the curriculum. Provision is made for children who require extra support through intervention programmes and differentiated class teaching. Some children continue to have daily phonics sessions.

APPROACHES TO SPEAKING AND LISTENING

The Four Strands of Speaking and Listening: Speaking; Listening; Group Discussion and Interaction, and Drama permeate the whole curriculum. Interactive teaching strategies are

used to engage all pupils in order to raise reading and writing standards. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life.

Opportunities to develop these skills include: parent assemblies, presentations, Talk for Writing, talk partners, drama and performances including our Christmas Nativity and a performance at the end of the year. We recognise the need for all pupils to speak, read and write Standard English fluently and accurately, while acknowledging that a pupil's own dialect, or other language is also of importance. It is our school policy to model our own language to the children which encourages Standard English both in speaking and writing.

Oracy is a key component of our English curriculum and supports spoken language development. In line with the Reading and Writing Framework, EYFS, and Ofsted expectations, pupils will participate in a discreet Oracy lesson once a week for 15 minutes. These sessions will focus on structured talk, vocabulary development, and confidence in speaking for different purposes and audiences.

We use Appendix 1 – The Listening Ladder as a model for developing listening skills, ensuring pupils understand and apply progressive listening strategies. There is clear progression in Oracy skills throughout the school, mapped from EYFS to Year 6, so that pupils build confidence and competence in speaking and listening year on year.

[Oracy-progression .pdf](#)

APPROACHES TO READING

Teachers model reading strategies during shared reading sessions, whilst children have the opportunity to develop reading strategies and to discuss texts in detail during guided reading sessions. Independent reading provides time for both assessment and 1-1 teaching. Daily discrete phonics lessons in FS and KS1 enable children to decode efficiently. This is continued into KS2 where necessary.

A range of reading schemes are used to support early readers as well as book banded 'real books' used for guided reading. Teaching assistants support reading activities to ensure that children have more frequent opportunities to read with adults.

Children in the Foundation Stage class and Key Stage 1 take home a levelled book (matched to their phonics level) and phonics card from school according to their ability. Parents are encouraged to hear their child read the book and then record how they have got on. This encourages teacher – parent communication. Each child has a home-school reading record that teachers and parents can use to share information about a child's reading. Parents are encouraged to read with their child daily. Guidance for Parents on Reading and Phonics will be provided during the year. In addition to this, children have the opportunity to choose a book from the school library.

In Key Stage 2, children choose books from the relevant book bands to take home and read. These books are levelled to help these children to continue to grow in confidence as readers, with a text that is appropriate for their reading age. Once they have progressed through these to the end of the banding, they then become free readers and can choose books, in consultation with the class teacher, from the class library or from home. Throughout the Key Stage, children become more independent in recording what they have read in their reading to support appropriate text choices. They are encouraged to record their own thoughts and opinions about the books in their Reading Record through planned activities and tasks. We still encourage all readers to share a book at home with their grown-ups. We believe that this not only helps to develop inferential skills, but also supports a life-long love

of reading. Throughout the Key Stage, children become more independent in recording what they have read in their reading journals.

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.

APPROACHES TO WRITING

We aim to develop the children's 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 the school to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling. Teachers model writing strategies and the use of phonics and spelling strategies in shared writing sessions. Guided writing sessions are used to target specific needs of both groups and individuals.

The children are given frequent opportunities in school to write in different contexts using quality texts as a model and for a variety of purposes and audiences. There are many opportunities for children to improve their writing inspired by drama techniques and film clips. They may be asked to produce their writing on their own or as part of a group. Children will also be given the opportunity to use ICT for their writing. We have our own developed Handwriting Scheme in school to help children develop fluent, clear and legible joined up writing. Children will learn in Reception to form letters with a lead-in stroke ready for joining in Year 1. In Year 4, once children have acquired a neat and cursive style, they will be given a pen, encouraging them to take care in their presentation and have pride in their work.

Every class has an English working wall where the key learning will be displayed. This wall evolves as each day progresses. It is the public display of the learning process. It will display exemplified text-types and will be used to demonstrate to pupils how they will be able to achieve the learning outcome. Key vocabulary is also displayed. Mind mapping, modelled examples, re-drafting and pupil's examples are regular features of the working wall.

Extended independent writing will take place in every class on a regular basis. This is usually linked to the literacy genre being studied at the time, but may also be cross-curricular. These pieces of writing will be marked with appropriate next steps encouraged by our whole class feedback and marking policy. Independent pieces are completed each half term and these can be short or more extended pieces of writing. These will assist the teacher in measuring pupils' progress against the KLIPs (key indicators of performance).

CROSS-CURRICULAR LITERACY OPPORTUNITIES

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. They will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum, with a particular focus, in our school, of writing through all subject areas where the same standard of writing is expected as in English books. At times, a further piece of independent writing can be planned for in another curricular area giving further opportunity for children to display their proficiency in writing a particular text type.

THE USE OF ICT

We recognise the important role ICT has to play in our school in the development of Literacy skills. ICT is used on a daily basis to enhance the teaching of literacy and to give all children the opportunity to experience, read and write multimodal texts and develop visual literacy. The use of ICT is cross – curricular.

VOCABULARY

At Brindle St James' we aim create a word rich environment where children are word conscious, enthused and excited to learn the meaning of new words. The knowledge of words is a key skill in verbal and written communication. Having a depth of understanding, allows children to have more concise and mature conversations along with a higher quality of writing. We aim to teach children about the etymology of a word so that they can apply this knowledge to less familiar words.

We approach the teaching of vocabulary using a three tiered approach.

(Add picture of the pyramid)

Tier 1 - basic words of everyday talk

Tier 2 - high frequency words that have multi meaning across the curriculum, but are not typically in everyday language.

Tier 3- subject specific vocabulary which is generally not applicable to other subjects.

Word lists will be subject specific and topic specific although tier 2 words will frequency be transferrable into other subjects (whilst not necessarily named in subject lists). Word lists will be concise (rather than excessive) to ensure thorough understanding and application.

Subject leaders will monitor the use and understanding of vocabulary using the lists in each policy appendix. This will be done during lesson drop ins, book looks and pupil discussions which will be recorded in the subject leader monitoring form.

ASSESSMENT AND TARGET SETTING

Work will be assessed in line with the Assessment Policy and recorded on the School Pupil Tracker. Attainment is measured against KLIPs (key indicators of performance) for the appropriate year group. This is recorded once a term on the tracker. At times it may be necessary, through pupil progress meetings, to track particular children's progress half termly.

INCLUSION

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment. Gifted children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

ROLE OF SUBJECT LEADER

The Subject Leader is responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through:

- Monitoring and evaluating English:-
 - pupil progress and analysis of data
 - provision of English, ensuring the breadth and balance of the curriculum
 - English across the curriculum
 - the quality of the Learning Environment
- Taking the lead in policy development
- Auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD
- Purchasing and organising resources
- Reporting to governors
- Keeping up to date with recent English developments.

SATs results are published in accordance with Government legislation.

Appendix 1

Listening Ladder

The Listening Ladder sets out the various listening skills and orders them in terms of complexity. It can be used to support students to reflect on their discussion and to set targets for which rung they have and want to reach.

