

Birkwood Primary

Inspire

Cherish



Achieve



Together

School

LITERACY POLICY

UPDATED DECEMBER 2019

Rationale

At Birkwood Primary School, we believe that language, in all its forms, is a key subject in the curriculum since it contributes to the social, emotional and educational development of each child. It permeates all areas of the curriculum as both a tool and a channel of learning.

General Aims

“Teachers should develop pupils’ spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for pupils, understanding the language provides access to the whole curriculum. Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects.”

The 2014 Primary National Curriculum in England

We aim to teach the children the skills, knowledge and understanding within a creative and relevant curriculum.

In line with our school’s Vision Statement, our intent is:

- To develop the children’s ability to speak clearly, fluently and with confidence in a variety of situations, matching style and response to audience and purpose.
- To develop their ability to listen with care, sensitivity and understanding in different circumstances for a range of purposes.
- To enable children to read a range of different texts with fluency, confidence and understanding.
- To foster a love of books and reading.
- To help the children to develop the ability to retrieve information from reference books, the internet and other sources.
- To develop the children’s ability to express thoughts and ideas through writing, matching style to audience and purpose, paying careful attention to grammar, punctuation and syntax.
- To develop the children’s ability to spell correctly, thereby increasing their range of vocabulary.
- To develop an agreed style of handwriting that is taught throughout school.

Our implementation:

Teaching and Learning

F1 and 2 children follow the objectives set out in the Development Matters document and the Early Learning Goals for Literacy, Language and Communication. Teachers follow an ‘In the moment’ approach to extend learning through provision and use of the natural world. A wide range of resources, including IWB resources, are used to enhance the curriculum appropriate to the age and ability of the children.

Throughout school, within the framework of the National Curriculum, teachers will provide opportunities for individual, group and whole class work. We aim to offer a variety of teaching and learning styles appropriate to a range of activities and tailored to individual needs.

Speaking and Listening

Speaking and listening is an integral part of all aspects of the curriculum and may be a specific focus in Drama, role play, Circle Time, TASC days, Ask it sessions (Open Futures) etc. Language and extended vocabulary development are a key focus in order to enhance children’s ‘Cultural Capital’ due to language deprivation on entry to school. Many arenas are provided for children to demonstrate their communication skills, e.g. End of year productions, termly Class Assemblies, speaking to visitors, collective worship as well as in class on a daily basis.

Reading

* Please see Reading Case Study for overview of practice (Appendix 1)

Oxford Reading Tree forms the backbone of the reading scheme throughout school, with book bands linked to the child’s phonics phase or Step on STAT; there are several other supplementary schemes that add breadth and depth, so that every child has the opportunity to develop a broad range of strategies enabling them to read with greater confidence and accuracy. In addition, a range of individual texts is available in school, to support topics

within each year group; further specialist texts support Reading Recovery and Catch Up initiatives.

Reading

Reading sessions take place daily. Please see overview of reading for an in-depth view of how we implement the teaching of reading at Birkwood.

Home Reading

Each child is assessed to ensure that their home reading book is appropriate and sufficiently challenging. Books are selected so that the child can read them with minimal support; the focus is to practise, develop personal response to text and gain fluency and expression. It is expected that younger children, or those with SEN, will be listened to read daily at home, for a minimum of 10 minutes.

Pearson Book Bug Club

All children and parents have access to an online reading scheme both at home and at school.

Writing / Handwriting

We aim to develop the children's ability to produce well-structured, detailed writing in which the meaning is clear and their writing in turn engages the interest of the reader. Attention is paid throughout the school to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling. Our approach to teaching writing covers the 'transcription' and 'composition' requirements of The National Curriculum (2014). To support our teaching of writing, staff use their class topics as a stimulus for writing and try to give texts a meaningful context wherever possible. Teachers model writing skills 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. Children have opportunities to write at length in extended independent writing sessions; applying their taught skills to an unsupported piece of writing. The Ros Wilson 'Big Write' format is followed in the main for independent extended writing. Assessments and feedback are provided following each piece of writing and targets for improvement are clearly communicated. Writing targets are progressive and displayed in all classrooms. Opportunities are identified for extended and independent writing across the curriculum.

A cursive writing style is in place from Y1 to Year 6. Regular practice is undertaken.

Phonics/Spellings

Letters and Sounds and elements of The Read Write INC phonics programme are implemented throughout EYFS and Key Stage 1. Children are regularly assessed and taught in ability groups on a daily basis. The National Curriculum objectives are used to teach spellings from Y1 – Y6. A range of resources are used to support the teaching of spellings and children are provided with spellings to practise at home using the Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check approach and an online tool: 'Spelling Shed'. The children have weekly spelling quizzes/tests to ensure that they are regularly learnt, and they practise utilising new vocabulary in their writing throughout the curriculum.

Comprehension

Weekly comprehension tasks take place from Y1 (when the children are ready) to Y6. Texts and questions are differentiated to suit all children's abilities and needs, ensuring all AFs are covered. ***Do we need this if we reference the reading overview?***

Special Needs Provision

Children who are on our Special Needs Register have appropriate support where required. Teaching assistants work within class supporting small groups of children focusing on the needs of groups identified by the teacher. Specific initiatives are in place to help raise attainment and to meet individual needs, for example, Catch Up Literacy, Dyslexia support groups and Letter and Sounds support groups for KS2 children. Children identified as 'Working at Greater Depth' are provided with challenging tasks and opportunities for independent learning.

Monitoring and Review

The Governing Body reviews this policy every 2 years. The Governors may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the government introduces new regulations, or if the governing body receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved.

This policy will be reviewed in December 2021.

Signed _____ Headteacher Date _____

Signed _____ Chair of Governors Date _____