

# Policy for English

## Including Writing, Speaking, Listening, Grammar and Spelling



At Beddington Infants' School we **enjoy learning all aspects** of English to become **excellent communicators** and **good members of our community** with **strong core skills, ambition and respect.**



### Intent

The vision for our school is rooted in an understanding of, and respect for, the incredible capacity of every child. With a focus on both self-regulated deep learning and a knowledge rich provision, our curriculum has evolved to enable each child to engage with their learning at the level of metacognition and therefore to achieve to his/her personal best. Our provision is inspired by the Italian **Reggio Emilia Approach**. It is an experiential provision for both children and adults.

**'Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn.'** Benjamin Franklin

### Children

- are respected as individuals with something valuable to say
- have a genuine input into the direction of their learning
- are empowered to engage fully with the learning process, to take personal responsibility and to develop skills for life.
- are given a variety of opportunities to explore the world in which they live, indoors and outside, developing positive attitudes to all weathers
- are supported in developing positive relationships with children and adults across the school
- are given regular, meaningful opportunities to express themselves

## **Department for Education**

*'The implementation of a child-centred pedagogy in combination with specific teacher managed activities and a high level of assistance, stimulates the development of academic skills such as numeracy and literacy. Children demonstrate high levels of well being and a motivation to learn.'*

### **Pedagogy in Early Childhood Education: July 2015**

## **The National Curriculum 2014**

*'Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects.'*

## **English Ofsted Subject Specific Guidance 2015**

*'[Outstanding] English teaching consistently reflects the highest expectations and the highest aspirations for pupils including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those for whom English is a second language and those known to be eligible for the pupil premium. Best practice is spread effectively in a drive for continuous improvement.'*

## **Implementation**

### **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

#### **Nursery:**

English activities with a focus on Speaking and Listening are part of the daily ongoing nursery provision. Planned adult-led activities and opportunities to develop language through child initiated learning experiences are supported by high quality interactions between children and adults.

#### **Reception:**

There are focussed adult-led activities and well planned and monitored continuous provision in all areas of English. These allow children opportunities to practise and apply English skills and knowledge.

#### **Key Stage One**

In Years 1 and 2, there is daily teaching of core English knowledge and skills in adult led whole class sessions. All areas of English are included in daily cross curricular subject teaching. Learning is applied both independently and in focussed groups as part of the whole provision.

## **Planning for Effective English Lessons**

Government guidelines allow schools the flexibility of creating their own English curriculum based around the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. Schools are required to teach speaking, listening, reading (including phonics), writing, grammar, spelling and handwriting.

Continuing progress of individual pupils is at the core of planning, which takes place in year group teams. All staff take responsibility for progression throughout the school through close co-operation and curriculum discussions between teams. Plans are monitored by the English leader and senior staff with regular monitoring of progress through book/learning journey-audits, learning walks, formal observations and progress meetings to ensure new skills are being applied.

Our English plans include opportunities for pupils to apply both low level and high level thinking skills. All pupil groups, including SEN, EAL and AL, are provided with cross-curricular experiences to

deepen their knowledge and understanding on how to apply Literacy skills and to do so with a high level of independence and standards.

The focus of all English lessons is what the pupils are learning. Lessons should include the following to ensure good teaching, learning and assessment:

- Pupils have a familiar routine and begin learning straight away
- Teacher and pupils review and reflect on previous learning
- New learning is introduced ensuring all children can hear/see the teaching input
- A range of strategies for learning are employed but teaching remains tightly focused on the learning objective
- Pupils are asked a range of targeted and challenging questions
- All children are engaged and included
- There is clear differentiation
- High expectations for all groups are evident
- Each lesson is delivered at a good pace
- Progression and consolidation of previous learning is supported
- Assessment takes place throughout the lesson
- Additional adults are deployed effectively
- Staff are flexible to take account of differing needs
- The learning intention is achieved within the optimum time

## **Writing**

We have high expectations for writing at Beddington Infants' School:

- Teachers provide opportunities for an exciting and engaging reason for writing e.g. writing a letter to a character from the text supporting a topic, writing about engagement experiences etc.
- Writing is taught through the exciting range of topics within the school's Cornerstones curriculum
- Clear targets and objectives are set and they are presented on a format that is used across the school, reflecting the progression of skills from Nursery to Year 2
- Outstanding teacher modelling and shared writing opportunities
- Differentiated resources, including sufficient scaffolding where necessary
- All children are involved in a form of continuous writing at least once each week
- The context of writing may be child initiated and occur anywhere within the free-flow provision
- Planned context is selected after careful planning and assessment of the needs and skills of the cohort
- There is ample opportunity for the children to write about a subject of their choice
- There is a literacy rich environment in every classroom, reflecting both current topics and pupils' writing
- Talking, Phonics and Reading assist writing. This should be appropriately encouraged in both the classroom and other areas of the school to encourage knowledge and use of extended vocabulary and style
- Proofreading and editing is used to improve both the content and the conventions of writing
- Conventions of writing, i.e. grammar, are best taught from the child's own writing but these will also be taught in a systematic way and explicitly (for example daily in Year 2).

## **Writing in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

Developing fine motor skills is critical for children's development and these skills are a pre-cursor to writing. There are a number of activities that help children to build up muscle strength in their hands and also serve to improve their hand-eye coordination. Young children develop fine motor skills at different stages and are ready to write at different points. Therefore, we ensure children are encouraged to form letters only when they are ready. A variety of resources are used to encourage the development of the fine motor control essential for writing. These include playdough, painting, cutting, threading and tracing.

In the Early Years, children are encouraged to attempt their own emergent writing and their efforts are valued and praised. As their phonic knowledge and awareness increases, this will be reflected in their writing. At the same time, their knowledge of key words is supported through reading and writing activities, including shared reading and writing. Opportunities for children to engage in writing activities include shared writing, role-play (e.g. an office or restaurant), labels, recipes, lists, making books, writing letters.

Through engaging in these activities, children become aware that writing is used for a range of purposes. They distinguish it from drawing, and learn the left to right convention of writing in English.

## **Writing in Key Stage 1**

### **1. Guided Writing**

Applying learned writing skills is led by an adult in small groups daily in Year 1 and at least twice a week in Year 2. The Year 2 practice is also topped up with a self-regulated independently written piece twice a week as a Daily Challenge on top of the cross-curricular writing opportunities that are presented through the Independent Challenges.

### **2. Independent Writing**

Cross-curricular opportunities to write in the frame of a self-chosen context:

- a) via an open ended but guided (Adult Initiated - AI) context (subject or topic led)
- b) via child initiated (CI) context

## **Speaking and Listening/Spoken Language**

At Beddington Infants', we aim:

- To encourage children to recognise that their use of language helps them to learn more effectively
- To provide an environment which values, welcomes and encourages cultural and linguistic diversity
- To help and promote collaborative working
- To teach children to respect and consider the opinions and views of others and reflect this in their responses
- To promote clarity, confidence and competence in all areas of the curriculum linked to speaking and listening
- To ensure that children are provided with an environment in which the teacher and staff demonstrate a model of good attitude and practice in speaking and listening
- To use speaking and listening to access and promote subjects in which children have an interest or knowledge
- To achieve high quality listening skills through opportunities for active involvement

Spoken Language is taught and facilitated with a cross-curricular approach. This should ensure that children are able to develop their speaking and listening skills across the whole curriculum throughout the school day. Children should have the opportunity to work as individuals, in pairs, small groups or as a whole class. Children should be grouped in a variety of ways, depending on the task and its context.

## **Spelling**

The statutory requirements for the teaching of spelling in Key stage 1 are set out in the National Curriculum and will be used by all teachers during planning sessions in conjunction with the long term plans.

At the early stages of writing, children's natural curiosity for and enjoyment in words should be exploited. Rhymes, rhythms, jingles and patterns will be a daily occurrence. Children should be encouraged to experiment with spellings and be praised for their attempts. At this stage, the main aim is to develop confidence and enjoyment in writing and the written word.

As the child's writing and awareness develops the following principles should apply:

- Children should be encouraged to make an attempt at spelling in order not to break the flow in writing. Spellings can be checked later. It is important that pupils are asked to attempt words for themselves and apply their phonic knowledge and skills.
- Children should be encouraged to look for small words inside large ones e.g. ear/hear.
- Children should be encouraged to check their own spellings. There is a high emphasis on using Wordwalls, unit wordbanks and Common Exception Word mats.
- Spelling rules should be used frequently and the most basic ones should be explicitly taught.
- Spelling and/or word study should be fun. Children should be encouraged to develop a fascination for words. For this reason, games, puzzles and rhymes will be an essential part of the school programme.
- Progress in spelling should be monitored regularly through writing and phonics assessments.

## **Punctuation and Grammar**

The statutory requirements for the teaching of vocabulary, grammar and punctuation in Key Stage 1 are set out in the National Curriculum and will be used by all teachers during planning sessions in conjunction with the long term plans.

To teach children about punctuation and grammar, the emphasis is on the close consideration of examples of language in use, including pupils' own writing and on the exploration of language as a system. The aim is to develop pupils' curiosity about language and their capacity to observe and reflect which will in turn enable them to develop more control and choice in their use of language.

Through the teaching of punctuation and grammar, staff at Beddington Infants' are expected to:

- provide direct teaching and accurate modelling
- provide resources and an environment which promotes a developing understanding of grammar and punctuation
- observe pupils, monitor progress and determine 'next steps' for development

### **Punctuation and Grammar in the Foundation Stage**

Children begin to expect written text to make sense and they recognise sentences in their shared reading of texts and in their own play and experimental writing. They write simple sentences based on speech and may begin to use significant punctuation, for example capital letters for their own name and at the beginning of a sentence.

### **Punctuation and Grammar in Key Stage 1**

At Key Stage 1, the emphasis is on developing children's general awareness of language, both written and spoken. Children are encouraged to attempt more complex spoken language and to observe the use of punctuation in written texts as a pointer for pausing, intonation and as an aid to meaning. They recognise sentences, expect them to make sense and use basic sentence structures in their own writing. Some punctuation marks (such as full stops, question marks and exclamation marks) are used in context and children learn to use capital letters for names of people, places, days of the week and the personal pronoun 'I'. More complex sentences are developed through the use of an increasing range of conjunctions and past and present tenses are introduced as well as expanded noun phrases.

### **Additional needs**

Children with specific writing, reading or language difficulties may require an individualised programme. Time should be taken to analyse the problem/s which may be related to language processing, hand, eye or ear difficulties. Appropriate short/long term strategies (Quality First Teaching, Targeted Support Groups and SSP) should then be planned. Such children may be identified at any time in consultation with the year group leader and Inclusion Manager (AH). KR

### **Assessment**

Appropriate English assessment takes place as part of the learning process through:

- Baseline assessment
- A range of formative assessment (Salford, Phonics Phase Assessment, Common Exception Words Assessment, Independent Write at the end of a unit in KS1)
- Summative assessment
- Formal Assessment every 10 weeks
- Internal moderation

Progress and attainment is monitored and analysed. Individual difficulties or areas of excellence are identified and appropriate interventions put in place. Daily assessment is used to inform planning.

English in the **Early Years' Foundation Stage (EYFS)** is implicit in both prime and specific areas of learning as an understanding of the English language is vital to progress. A baseline assessment is completed on entry and then staff complete ongoing formative assessments across all areas of learning. These are in line with the recommended best early years practice of "Observation → assessment → planning → observation".

Evidence is collected by both home and school adults. This includes annotated photographs and detailed "long observations".

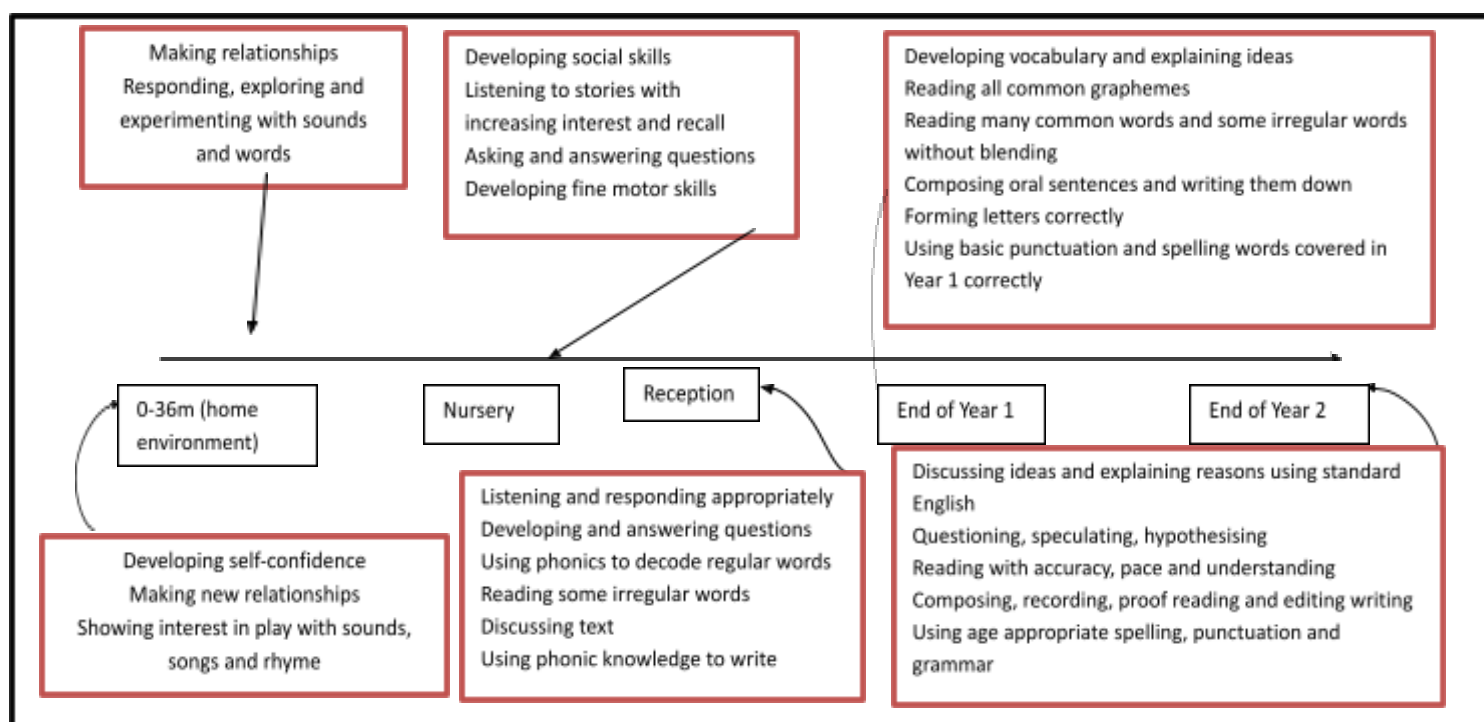
All staff are aware of how to make a judgement:

**Emerging** - beginning to learn a new skill  
**Developing** - applying an increased understanding  
**Securing** - achieving age related expectations  
**Mastering** – applying a deeper knowledge and understanding

Teachers will use ongoing assessment and independent application of learned English skills to make an overall judgement. This will be recorded in a termly tracking grid. It is the teacher's responsibility to ensure all areas of English learning is assessed and evidence is collected.

### Progression and Expectation

The following timeline demonstrates expected progression in English:



### Children who do not make expected progress

*consider the following:*

- A child's sight, hearing, speech, attendance or general well-being (liaise with SENCO) may be causing difficulties
- Quality First Teaching: aim for well-paced targeted teaching, active learning and opportunities to practise and apply new skills in a meaningful way. Ensure lessons follow a systematic programme of planning.
- Are activities differentiated so all pupils are engaged and motivated?
- Are English sessions active and multi-sensory?
- Is the independent application of English skills encouraged and monitored?
- Is ICT used effectively to promote learning?
- Have you provided opportunities to revisit and close gaps in learning?
- Have you made full use of both the indoor and outdoor learning environment?

### English across the Curriculum

Being literate empowers pupils with a skill for life. Core English skills underpin all learning in Beddington Infants' School and practitioners model speaking and listening in all areas of learning. Explicit modelling of reading and writing skills is the expectation in all subjects as is the use of correct grammar, spelling and handwriting. Phonics is demonstrated as the primary strategy for encoding and decoding words.

## **Use of ICT**

Practitioners may use interactive games available online or digital Applications (e.g. Phonics Bug, Phonics Play, Education City, Busy Things). Other uses of ICT include iPads, Chrome books and laptops to record, present, arrange and manipulate information for writing or reading.

## **English in the Learning Environment**

There is evidence of English learning in the whole learning environment. This is seen in indoor and outdoor independent challenges, displays across the school, in pupils' writing, learning independently in all areas, e.g. in the library and role play etc. It is also evidenced in children speaking and listening to each other about their learning, both with adults and independently.

## **Parent Partnerships**

Opportunities for parents to regularly share English learning are planned into the provision. Teaching English is shared with parents through regular visits to classrooms where they can see how pupils apply skills in current topics. They can be part of shared reading and attend English and phonics workshops. (This has not been possible this year due to the pandemic.)

Pupils can access a range of resources and activities at home using Google Classroom, Phonic Bugs and Education City. Those pupils without home access are given opportunities to access most of these learning resources in school.

## **English Leader**

It is the responsibility of the English leader to keep up to date with current educational philosophy and practice through attending CPD training. Staff must be informed and kept up to date with current practice in English education.

It is the responsibility of individuals to identify relevant CPD and implement changes into their planning and practice.

The English leader should co-ordinate whole school events and work alongside senior leaders to monitor learning regularly and analyse data which should be used effectively to provide the best education for each pupil.