

English Policy Document

Black Firs School

Introduction

Language, in all its forms, is an important part of the curriculum since it contributes to the social, emotional and educational development of each child. It permeates all areas of the curriculum. To participate confidently in public, cultural and working life, children need to be able to speak, read and write Standard English fluently and accurately. It is vital, therefore, that through our teaching we develop children's ability to communicate effectively in speech and writing and to listen with understanding. Children must be enabled to become enthusiastic, responsive and knowledgeable readers.

Aims

To ensure that:

- a broad range of speaking and listening activities appropriate to the age and ability of the child is provided;
- each child is encouraged to develop their own speaking and listening skills to communicate effectively;
- a broad range of reading activities and materials are available enabling each child to learn at their own level;
- the reading focus is widened beyond basic reading skills and that higher order skills are developed;
- to provide opportunities to develop skills connected to presentation - accurate punctuation, correct spelling and legible handwriting;
- to provide opportunities to develop drama and role play;
- through a variety of activities and experiences children acquire writing skills which include developing ideas, increasing vocabulary and organising and structuring sentences.
- each child has the opportunity to develop English skills through the use of ICT.



At Black Firs we are very aware that children need to 'use & apply' English in everyday contexts. That we not only concentrate on the literacy knowledge and skills, detailed in the Literacy Framework, but that children have an opportunity to explore, experience and understand why reading and writing are such important elements in our culture.

To encourage greater understanding and more creative communication, we are adopting the Schools creative process into our English teaching.

At Black Firs:-

- ✓ we will continue to emphasise that Reading is the key life-long learning skill
- ✓ that personal, narrative writing is the key to successful recording and communication of a learners experiences and ideas

- ✓ We will aim to provide quality first-hand reading and writing activities.
- ✓ We will encourage the children to use our creative process to explore quality outcomes in their development of English.

Strategies for Teaching English

Here is a brief overview of some of the strategies we use to teach English.

Speaking and listening:

This is developed through a variety of activities and experiences. Opportunities are provided for children to talk and listen in both formal and informal situations.

Other strategies include:

- the use of drama and role play;
- regular story times;
- class discussions;
- showing time or news sharing when children are encouraged to speak to the class;
- circle time;
- children taking part in class assemblies, school productions, etc.;

Reading:

Wide ranges of reading materials are provided for the children to select from for information and reading for pleasure. The school uses a wide variety of books from different published graded schemes together with picture and story books. Children learn to read successfully without the need for a graded scheme. To assist reading development in the Early Years a structured programme of Key Word recognition and phonics is used. From Reception, the school teaches phonics using the “Linking Sounds and Letters” programme. Parental involvement is valued and actively encouraged. A booklet for parents has been developed. Parents are encouraged to hear their children read as often as possible, to make comments in the reading diary and to help with the learning of the key words in Reception and beyond.

Writing:

Writing has a central place in all we do in school. Writing is developed through the provision of a wide range of contexts. The modelling of writing is a key tool in teaching the writing process. The process of drafting and re-drafting is introduced at the end of Key Stage 1 and is central to teaching in Key Stage 2.

Developmental writing is encouraged and developed during the Early Years. Early mark making is valued and encouraged in a variety of ways. The writing the children produce in both Key Stages is purposeful and varied. Secretarial skills are developed without hindering the child's ability to become a fluent and confident writer. Especially in Key Stage 2 research skills are developed and a wide range of written work is produced according to the demands of the different curricular areas.

Spelling:

The use of correct spelling is developed and taught through:

- specific marking of work;
- the investigation of letter patterns, developing an awareness of word families;
- the regular learning of spelling lists;
- the use of spelling investigations;
- the use of a variety of spelling strategies e.g. mnemonics, look-cover-spell etc;
- the encouragement of dictionary use.

Punctuation and grammar:

As children move up the school increasing attention is paid to these areas as part of the organisation of a piece of written work and in order to enhance meaning. Special attention is paid to the structure of words, verbs, pronouns, adjectives, sentences, grammar and syntax and the purpose of paragraph.

Handwriting:

Children are taught to write in a clear hand at reasonable speed. This is based on direct teaching and practice sessions. Please refer to the Handwriting Policy attached.

Progression

Ratified by the Governing Body.

Black Firs Bookmarks are used as a basis for teaching and to ensure progression.

Special Needs

Please refer to School Policy Document on Special Needs.

Equal Opportunities

Please refer to the School Aims and Statement on Equal Opportunities.

Feedback to pupils

This is referred to in the school Marking Policy.

Assessment

Throughout the year formative assessment is used to guide the progress of individual pupils. It involves identifying each child's progress, determining what they have learned and what therefore should be the next stage of learning. Formative assessment is mostly carried out by teachers in the course of their teaching through a variety of tasks e.g. hearing children read, short tests (spelling), specific assignments and individual discussions in which children are encouraged to evaluate their own work and progress. During the Early Years regular assessment takes place of key words, sounds and reading skills. The phonics test is undertaken by year 1 children and has to be retaken the following year (year 2) by any child who does not achieve the required pass mark. Key Stage 1 tests are carried out in Y2 and Key Stage 2 tests in Y6.

Record Keeping

Annual report to parents

Key Stage 1 and 2 test results

Phonics test for Y1 and above, where necessary.

Reading diaries - shared with parents

Reading records

Teacher records

Please refer to the school policy document on Record Keeping.

Reporting

Reporting to parents is done on a termly basis at parent interviews. In addition an annual report is sent home in July. The school has now introduced "Earwig" as its on-going report system.

Liaison with Secondary School Staff

Discussion takes place between the staff of Congleton High School (or any other school as necessary) and Black Firs.

Role of Co-ordinator

The curriculum co-ordinator has a crucial role in planning and monitoring the curriculum. Please refer to our document detailing the work and responsibilities of all curriculum co-ordinators.

Health and Safety

See Health and Safety policy

Review

The school policy for English reflects the consensus of opinion of the whole teaching staff and has the full agreement of the Governing Body.