

Mere Brow C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

A Policy for English



Introduction

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for teaching and learning of English at Mere Brow Primary School.

It was revised during the Autumn of 2020 through on going consultation with teaching staff.

A schedule for the review of this, and all other policy documents is set out in the School's Development Plan.

The intended audience is parents, staff, governors, advisers and inspectors.

What is English?

English is the basic language of communication in this country and much of the western world and its mastery is a prerequisite for educational progress.

Aims

Our aims in teaching English are that all children will:

- Develop the necessary skills to use the English language confidently, appropriately and accurately to the best of their ability.
- Be able to speak clearly and fluently.
- Be able to listen to the spoken word attentively with understanding, pleasure and empathy.
- Be able to read a range of materials fluently and with understanding for enjoyment and for information.
- Be able to write effectively for a range of audiences and purposes using spelling, punctuation and syntax accurately and confidently.
- Develop linguistic skills and confidence to make sense of themselves and the world around them.

Principles of the Teaching and Learning of English

English is important because:

1. It is the basic language of communication in our society.
2. It is the foundation for almost all of the learning which takes place in our school.
3. Its mastery empowers the learner and is essential for independent learning, the world of work and most other aspects of everyday life and provides the key to a lifelong source of enjoyment and knowledge.
4. It enables pupils to recognise the power of language, the closeness of links between thinking.
5. Speaking, writing and reading, and the need for clarity and precision in all three.
6. It creates a sense of excitement in the power and potential of language and helps to foster the children's own imaginative use of language.

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. The fundamental skills, knowledge and concepts of the subject are set out in "English in the National Curriculum" where they are categorised into 3 attainment targets.

1. Speaking and listening.
2. Reading.
3. Writing.

Writing also includes spelling and handwriting.

The new National Curriculum (2014) has an increased emphasis on grammar, punctuation and spelling. Classes pay particular focus to the teaching of new and adventurous vocabulary.

Strategies for the Teaching of English

The English curriculum is organised into:

- i. "Formal" learning of reading, writing, speaking and listening in periods distinctly allocated to this work.
- ii. 'Informal' learning which goes on throughout the school day and throughout all curriculum areas.

Equal importance is given to both of these aspects of the English curriculum.

Because of the English learning which goes on throughout the curriculum it is difficult to estimate the time allocated to the teaching and learning of English. A rough guide is that approximately 6 hours per week is spent on English at Key Stage 1 and approximately 8 hours at Key Stage 2.

The predominant mode of working in English differs for each aspect of language, although all are interrelated. There is much co-operative group work, but individual support and class teaching are used where appropriate.

Speaking and listening skills are developed for all pupils by:

- i. Providing a range of opportunities for children to talk and listen in formal and informal settings.
- ii. The use of drama and role play to explore imagined situations.
- iii. Links between language and music exploring rhythm.
- iv. A regular story time (daily at key stage 1) when the teacher or other adult reads aloud to the class.
- v. Class discussion and debate on topical or contentious issues, both parochial and world wide.
- vi. Showing times or news sharing when pupils are encouraged to speak to their assembled classmates.
- vii. Interviewing/debating carried out as part of a topic or project.

Reading skills are developed through:

- i. Providing a wide range of reading materials and opportunities for children to select from, for information and entertainment.
- ii. Use of a structured reading scheme to support all pupils until they are capable of independent reading.
- iii. Opportunities to express an awareness of the language of text read.
- iv. Daily one-to-one reading support for children who have not yet reached the stage of being able to read independently.
- v. A programme of phonics and word-recognition development throughout school.
- vi. Opportunities for periods of quiet reading at key stage 2, and reading partners (for example: a ks1 child with a ks2 child) or mixed age and ability reading groups.
- vii. A home-school reading project (see homework below).
- viii. Eric times when the whole school is involved in developing reading strategies together.
- ix. Library books each week - key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- x. Rewards and celebratory certificates (as set per class) for reading a variety of different texts.

Writing skills are developed through:

- i. Providing a wide range of contexts for writing (including book making activities).
- ii. Paying increasing attention to punctuation, grammar and spelling as children become more fluent and confident.
- iii. Encouraging a process of drafting and redrafting. Speak, write and check (self/peer/teacher) routines for super sentences.
- iv. Providing opportunities for collaborative writing and demonstrating good examples.
- v. In EY mark making facilities available daily.

Spelling is developed through:

- i. The marking of work (see Feedback to Pupils below).
- ii. Regular learning of spelling lists allocated according to ability groups (from Year 1 onwards).
- iii. Encouragement of dictionary/thesaurus use.
- iv. Use of I.T. spelling programmes.
- v. Whole class work spelling rules (for example when learning prefixes and suffixes).
- vi. Additional handwriting work that uses spelling rules for the year group as specified in the 2014 National Curriculum in upper key stage 2.

Handwriting is developed through:

- i. Daily teaching and practice sessions In EY/R and at Key Stage 1 to develop a clear formation of letters and to continue to practice regularly and develop more individual styles (including cursive) at Key Stage 2.
- ii. Regular whole class handwriting sessions in class time in Key Stage 2.
- iii. Individual activities tailored to a child's own needs.

Our School handwriting policy means that children learn the cursive style of handwriting once they are able to form and recognise basic letter shapes. The teaching of spelling is closely linked to our handwriting policy.

There is no specialist teaching in English, it is taught by class teachers.

Classroom helpers

Classroom helpers are used in English:

- i. In the classroom by hearing children read in a one-to-one context.
- ii. Keeping whole class records of daily home reading/work.
- iii. Help and assist overseeing the application of computer programmes which aid phonics application and dyslexia assistance (see below).
- iv. On outings and visits by fostering discussion and questioning among small groups.
- v. In providing other help, such as support for word processing and book making.

Commercially available schemes are used in English when appropriate.

The School has developed its own continuous reading scheme throughout the school which makes use of various published schemes (e.g. Oxford, Tree Tops, etc).

Pupils with special needs in English are given extra support in the classroom, differentiated work, and receive 1-2-1 tutoring when needed. The school uses IDL, Nessy, Accelerate/Accelerwrite programme, Toe By Toe and Lancashire Fast Forward Phonics and Grammar schemes. Children are taught in small focus groups by teachers and teaching assistants, with targets relevant to the child's working age.

Pupils with difficulties in learning to read are given extra opportunities to read to an adult in school (teachers/teaching assistants/parent helpers) as appropriate.

Pupils with a particular ability and flair for English are extended through the use of a wide variety of reading materials and projects involving speaking and writing. Opportunities are also provided by local high schools for Gifted and Able students to attend extra focused lessons, and pupils are regularly sent (when appropriate) to these sessions.

Homework

Homework is used to support English through:

- a. The Home-School Reading scheme, which involves each child taking books home to read each week. EY/N and KS1 take a selection of three books weekly which support learned and new reading knowledge. KS2 take home appropriate books to their reading stage and ability.
- b. The learning of spelling lists (expected of all pupils from Year 1 onwards). KS1/2 follow the same scheme.
- c. Specific tasks set periodically by teachers which may involve a cross-curricular theme.
- d. Re-reading a story at home to develop fluency at KS1.
- e. The use of remote learning via SeeSaw.

The emphasis in our teaching of English is on building upon, and having respect for the child's home experience and language, developing and extending this in ways which the school is best suited to offer.

Facilitating Learning

We aim to facilitate learning by:

- i. Offering adults as positive role models in reading, writing and speaking.
- ii. Allowing pupils to acquire a vocabulary for talking about language.
- iii. Involving parents by encouraging paired reading at home.
- iv. Encouraging parents/helpers to come into school and listen to readers.

Excellence in English is celebrated in display and performance including:

- i. Display of handwritten and word-processed work.
- ii. Read or spoken presentations to the class or whole school.
- iii. Performance of improvised and scripted dramatic productions.
- iv. Preparation of worship times at KS2.

The teaching of English may be in topic work, with cross-curricular themes, blocked work to teach a particular skill or continuous work to practise and develop a range of literacy skills.

Remote Learning

For pupils unable to access learning in school surroundings, the school uses SeeSaw to provide online tasks. These tasks are applied weekly (e.g. weekly spelling codes) and checked regularly.

Strategies for Ensuring Progress and Continuity

Planning in English is a process in which the teaching staff is involved, wherein:

1. The foundation for curricular planning is part of the Whole School Development Plan. It is developed between staff and approved by governors.
2. Staff meetings are used to discuss the English curriculum and ensure consistency of approach and of standards.
3. Work plans (including detailed lesson plans as necessary) are drawn up by individual teachers and monitored by the head-teacher.
4. A school portfolio of moderated work is continually being compiled and includes cluster moderation.
5. Children are given access to subject specific knowledge organisers, including key facts and vocabulary.
6. Lessons frequently start with the recall of prior knowledge, to help embed learning into the child's long term memory.

English Co-ordinator

The role of the English co-ordinator is to:

- i. Take the lead in policy development and the production of schemes of work designed to ensure progression and continuity in English throughout the school.
- ii. Support colleagues in their development of detailed work plans and implementation of the scheme of work and in assessment and record keeping activities.
- iii. Monitor progress in English and advise the head-teacher on action needed.
- iv. Take responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central resources

for English.

- v. Keep up-to-date with developments in English education and disseminate information to colleagues as appropriate.

Pupil feedback / Assessment

Feedback to pupils about their own progress in English is achieved through discussion and through the marking of work. Effective marking:

- i. Aims to help children to learn, not to find fault, and comments aim to be positive and constructive.
- ii. Is often done while a task is being carried out through discussion between child and teacher.
- iii. Of written work is used sensitively and with discretion so that a child can assimilate a limited number of corrections at one time - this will vary according to age and ability.

Formative assessment is used to guide the progress of individual pupils in English. It involves identifying each child's progress in each aspect of the subject, determining what each child has learned and what therefore should be the next stage in his/her learning. Formative assessment is mostly carried out informally by teachers in the course of their teaching. Suitable tasks for assessment include:

- Hearing children read in a one-to-one context.
- In UKS2 whole class shared reading of the class topic books where the children take ownership of their reading (e.g. by choosing how much they want to read before passing onto the next person).
- Small group discussions perhaps in the context of a practical task.
- Short tests in which the teacher gives questions orally and pupils write answers (such as spelling tests or dictation exercises).
- Specific assignments for individual pupils.
- Individual discussions with the teacher in which children are encouraged to appraise their own work and progress.
- Testing reading ages for SEN/D children.

Staff Development and Inset

Needs are identified through:

- Curriculum review and evaluation.
- School development planning.
- Appraisal.
- Results in standardised tests.

Strategies for Recording and Reporting

Records of progress in English kept for each child contain:

- i. An annual record of progress in each attainment target.
- ii. A portfolio of work/class books dated and annotated with teacher comments which shows achievement and progress.
- iii. A record of books read (kept by the teacher at ks1), and in reading diaries/on reading sheets.
- iv. Weekly spelling scores are recorded throughout the school.

Reporting

Parents of all pupils receive a verbal "progress report" in the autumn term and a written report in the spring and summer term. A consultation afternoon, for parents, is held each year in the autumn and spring terms and parents are encouraged to discuss progress at mutually convenient times throughout the year. The reports will focus on the children's progress in:

- reading
- speaking and listening
- writing
- grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Formal Summative assessment is carried out at the end of each National Curriculum Key Stage (i.e. in years 2 and 6) through the use of SATs and/or teacher assessment.

At the end of the school year the children should be working at expected yearly levels or above (based on National Curriculum expectations 2014).

Strategies for the use of resources

Classroom resources in English include:

- A class reading library containing fiction, non-fiction and poetry.
- Dictionaries/thesauruses (age appropriate to each class).
- Text books, work cards and worksheets to support comprehension activities.
- A selection of papers and guide lines for writing activities.
- Pencils and pens.
- iPads capable of recording film clips and sound.

Central resources in English include:

- The school reading scheme.
- Relevant books provided each term on the topic being studied (fiction and

non-fiction).

- Internet, online books.
- A comprehensive non-fiction library.

Information Technology is a major resource which is used for English:

- Word processing, involving the drafting and redrafting of work originated at the computer.
- Desk top publishing of materials for a variety of audiences
- Information access using our stock of CD-ROMs.
- Specifically purchased digital schemes of work and programmes.
- A number of laptops and iPads available for whole class use.

Although word processing of work is not compulsory for KS1 and other options should also be made available for KS2 under the 2014 curriculum, we feel that they are important skills to have and will continue to use when appropriate.

The library has a substantial resource of reference materials for the whole school, and is updated with new books regularly. Children are taught how to use the library effectively and how to make the best use of reference materials such as encyclopaedias and dictionaries. Children are encouraged to borrow a library book each week.

Health and Safety

Risk assessments for all curriculum areas are carried out over a 3 year cycle.

Special Educational Needs

All pupils on the SEN/D. register will follow the National Curriculum guidelines for English but the work will be differentiated to take into account each pupil's ability and level of attainment. (Further information is in the school's SEN/D policy).

Equal Opportunities

All pupils, regardless of race, colour, or gender have access to all of the English National Curriculum provision at Mere Brow Primary School.

Signed: Paula Alty
English Co-ordinator
Autumn 2020

It was approved by the Governing body _____

This policy will be reviewed in the Autumn of 2022.