

Braishfield Primary School English Policy

*At Braishfield Primary School, our **Purpose** is to **help every child grow** to be the best version of themselves that they can be. By educating each child emotionally, physically, spiritually and academically, we will prepare them for their future. In doing this, we will equip our children with the life skills to become confident, caring citizens who can play a positive and active role in modern society.*

*Our **Vision** for the school is a positive, nurturing and happy school community, based on **kindness, honesty and respect** for ourselves, each other and for our environment. We will all strive to be successful lifelong learners by developing **inquisitiveness, independence, collaboration and resilience**. We will all strive for excellence in everything that we do. We will all be brave, resilient learners, prepared to take learning risks and learn from our mistakes.*

At Braishfield Primary School, we believe that literacy and communication are key life skills. Through the English curriculum, we will help children develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively through spoken and written language and equip them with the skills to become lifelong learners. We want children to enjoy and appreciate literature and its rich variety.

Literacy is at the heart of all children's learning. Literacy enables children both to communicate with others effectively for a variety of purposes and to express their own feelings and ideas. Literacy is central to children's intellectual, emotional and social development. It has an essential role across our curriculum and helps pupils' learning to be coherent and progressive.

Aims

- To ensure that all pupils are exposed to different genres and authors through a curriculum that is (1) rich, exciting and balanced, (2) relevant and engaging with pupils' voices driving and shaping the curriculum wherever possible, (3) differentiated to match the needs and abilities of all children (4) secures and embeds the knowledge, skills and understanding to enable pupils to attain highly and (5) prepares them for secondary school or their next stage of learning.
- To ensure that each teacher is providing pupils with a consistent approach to English teaching.
- To ensure that all pupils are given the opportunity to extend their knowledge and skills, and communicate through spoken and written forms. Through developing their knowledge, skills and understanding in English, children learn to appreciate that communication in all forms contributes to their wider understanding of the world in which they live.

Intent

- To allow children to make connections across their learning and the curriculum.
- To provide a systematic approach to teaching vocabulary to all children.
- To plan succinctly for knowledge, skills and understanding across the English curriculum.
- To offer children the ability to verbalise their learning, through questions asked that allow them to demonstrate their understanding.
- To enable children to become confident, fluent readers.

Implementation

- To enable children to build up their skills to become independent writers over a longer time to ensure quality and develop clear understanding.
- To plan for the knowledge, skills and understanding that the children will gain from each English unit of work so that links are made between reading, GPaS and writing.
- To plan vocabulary that the children will be taught, based on three tiers, so that all children's vocabulary is being extended.
- Teaching supports links across the curriculum so that English teaching is not seen as standalone, but a key to learning the whole curriculum.

Impact

- Greater connections being made for children to see how English links to the rest of the curriculum.
- Vocabulary is planned for in the writing process, displayed in the classroom environment and explicit vocabulary is taught within reading sessions.
- Children are able to confidently verbalise their learning to demonstrate their understanding in English.

Planning

Planning reflects a learning journey through a unit of work. Like all journeys, the plan should have a specific destination and journey time. There may be detours, hold-ups or opportunities for acceleration which arise from Assessment for Learning, but the acquisition and application of skills provide the driving force. Teachers work from a medium term plan which then feeds into a weekly plan. The weekly plans have a focus around a specific text which can be narrative, non-narrative or poetry based. Often planning links closely with a class novel or a text that runs over several weeks. Links may also be made with other areas of the curriculum. Although completed on an agreed format, planning is a flexible document and is used by the teacher and for the children to ensure good progress is made by all.

Teaching and Learning of English

Much of our English work will be text-based, with children enjoying a wide and varied range of texts and genres. Key skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening will be developed and consolidated upon, before children are then stretched and challenged through a range of exciting learning opportunities.

Classroom Environment

In all classrooms, an English working wall should be clearly evident. This should be up to date with the latest learning focus, complete with examples of children's work, a WAGOLL example and there should also be an area to display prompts for GPaS. All classrooms should have an accessible reading area which, again, demonstrates children's work and displays the most recent learning focus. Opportunities should be taken to develop children's vocabulary and so displays across the curriculum should display key vocabulary (topic, science) so that they can be utilised by the children as well as Vocabulary Mats, dictionaries and thesauruses being ready to use in the classroom.

Reading

We aim to foster a love of reading and we encourage children to read a wide range of books both at school and at home. All children have access to our wonderful school library which they are able to use to extend their independent reading, as a research tool or just to enjoy a good story. We have high expectations of children and the progression of their reading skills. Therefore, we offer as many opportunities for reading as we can. This may happen in the English lesson or across the curriculum.

Shared Reading.

During English lessons the children are given a variety of text types as a stimulus for writing. The teacher and children share the text and the teacher models as an expert reader, drawing out the key elements of the content.

Early Reading

In Year R and Year 1, alongside their daily phonics sessions, the children take part in three reading sessions during the week. At Braishfield, we have a *Reading Squad* of trained adults, overseen by the class teachers and English Leader, who take groups of children for their *Little Wandle* reading sessions. These group sessions take place after lunch and enable ALL of the children following *Little Wandle* to read the appropriate pitched text at the same time. However these groups can be adapted to suit the needs of individuals and groups on a regular basis. These sessions are used for decoding, developing prosody (reading with expression) and comprehension skills.

Whole Class Reading and Guided Reading

Children are given opportunities to listen to, read, and comment on, books and stories during whole class sessions, as well as within class story time sessions. These sessions are teacher-led and the children interact and respond to differentiated questions, both verbal and written. Most classes use shared texts as the basis for their English work.

Whole class and focus group guided reading takes place regularly in the class, where possible, with a text that links to the writing learning journey. This allows children to become embedded in a text, which then in turn helps them to make good progress in both their reading and writing. Guided reading follows the format of:

1. Guided/teacher led session

This allows for a more in-depth reading of the text supported by a teacher or teaching assistant. The children are able to discuss in more detail characters, language and writing style. This is done through effective questioning which is clearly linked to the Hampshire year group expectations for reading. As part of this process, children are able to make their own notes as

well as using inference, prediction and justification skills. This again may be done as small group or a whole class session. Teachers may also model answers to questions during this session.

2. Independent comprehension

This session allows children to think carefully about the text by answering comprehension questions linked to the reading objectives discussed in class. Children are encouraged to work independently using retrieval and inference skills in this session with the teacher or teaching assistant supporting where necessary.

Home School Reading

Reading begins from before day one at Braishfield! Home/school links are very important in reading and are encouraged and developed from before the children join us. From the initial visits to school and home visits before starting school, the children are introduced to reading through sharing stories with the Early Years Teacher. This further develops when they start school and are introduced to the text-rich environment. Soon after joining school, the children in Early Years begin to take home a book they have chosen from the school library alongside an appropriate reading book linked to our *Little Wandle* Phonics and Early Reading scheme. This text directly links to their phonics learning and is carefully chosen by staff to ensure it supports and reinforces their learning in class. This text is read in school three times, as part of their small group reading, before being sent home to be shared. This approach continues through Year 1 until the children have successfully completed the *Little Wandle* Phonics programme. However, children in Year 2 and beyond, who have not yet secured the knowledge and skills required, will continue to receive the *Little Wandle* phonics and reading sessions alongside accessing their year group curriculum.

Most children within KS1 and Lower KS2 take home books regularly from our extensive resources in school. These reading books are matched to individual children's reading abilities, as necessary. Children are heard reading frequently, especially in KS1, until their confidence, fluency and understanding has been developed. Children share their books with parents/carers at home and also teaching assistants and teachers in school. Any comments made during these sessions by either party can be recorded in children's reading diaries therefore it is very much a two-way process. As children move through school, the frequency in which they are heard will be less until the point where the class teacher feels that they no longer need the home readers and children become 'independent readers'. This means that children (usually in Upper KS2) are encouraged to use the school library, bring books in from home or choose from a range of class novels that we have in school. We actively encourage parents/carers to share a good book with their children. Once they become independent readers then children are encouraged to write their own comments in their reading diaries. These are checked weekly as part of the children's homework schedule. ICT supports our home and school reading, with all pupils having access to Hampshire School Library Service's *Sora* reading app, where they can select from a wide range of titles, including magazines.

Writing

We aim to foster a love of writing as soon as children enter school. This is achieved through many different teaching and learning strategies.

Early Years Foundation Stage

We believe that communication and language, with opportunities to explore reading and writing, underpins the future learning of our children. Within our Early Years class, children have access to adult-initiated writing activities but also many opportunities for child-initiated writing activities.

These may include the following:

- Opportunities to develop and experience speaking and listening skills.
- Experiences that develop fine and gross motor skills through play and mark making activities.
- Sharing and enjoying a range of rhymes, songs, stories and books.
- Immersion in a print-rich environment with opportunities for oral language and written communication.
- Whole class shared text activities
- ICT opportunities using a range of equipment, iPads and the Interactive Whiteboard.
- A daily phonics session
- Literacy integrated throughout the Early Years curriculum and environment.
- Opportunities for emergent writing through continuous provision, often with a clear purpose.

KS1

Clear assessments from the Early Years Teacher allows for a smooth transition into key stage one where children continue to develop their love of writing. These opportunities include:

- Explicitly taught and planned English sessions following the guidance and objectives of the statutory English curriculum (Sept 2014).
- Use of the HIAS three-stage approach to plan learning that engages the children and aids their learning (see HIAS learning journey guidance on our school website [here](#)).
- Extended opportunities for discussion of writing, e.g. role-play, paired talk, drama and hot-seating to prepare children for the writing process.
- Modelled, shared and guided writing examples.
- Discussion of a high-quality example of genres of writing- a WAGOLL (What A Good One Looks Like).
- Opportunities for children to write for and share their writing with different audiences.
- Clear identification of genre, audience, purpose and style for each piece of extended writing.
- Songs, rhymes and games to develop English skills.
- Text-level work using a range of genres and texts which will develop comprehension skills and understanding and enjoyment of books, helping to promote a love of writing.
- ICT work that complements and supports work in English, helping children to develop skills learnt through quality first teaching.

- Immersion in a print rich environment that promotes a reading culture and develops children's oral and written communication.
- Daily phonics.
- Regular Review, Teach, Practice and Apply (RTPA) Spelling sessions using the *No-Nonsense Spelling Program*.

KS2

- Explicitly taught and planned sessions following the guidance and objectives of the statutory English curriculum (Sept 2014)
- Use the HIAS three-stage approach to plan learning that engages the children and aids their learning.
- Experience of a wide range of genres used in reading and writing.
- Discussion/analysis of a WAGOLL for each genre.
- Grammar, spelling and punctuation work led by quality texts to develop grammatical awareness and key punctuation skills building on and deepening key skills across different year groups.
- Text-level work, reading a range of genres to develop comprehension skills and support writing. Also making cross-curricular links where possible to help promote sustained composition.
- Spelling and grammar games and activities to familiarise children with key skills.
- Extended independent writing opportunities to apply the skills learnt when writing within different genres. Also the opportunity for children to draft, edit and refine their own work alongside that of others.
- Immersion in a print-rich environment that promotes a reading culture.
- Extended opportunities for discussion of writing, e.g. role play, pair talk, drama and hot-seating to prepare children for the writing process.
- Modelled, shared and guided writing takes place in the classroom.
- Opportunities for children to write for and share their writing with different audiences.
- Clear identification of genre, audience, purpose and style for each piece of extended writing.
- ICT work that complements and supports work in literacy, helping children to develop skills learnt through quality-first teaching.
- Regular Review, Teach, Practice and Apply (RTPA) Spelling sessions using the *No-Nonsense Spelling Program*

Phonics and Spelling

Within Reception and KS1 the focus is on phonics and children are immersed in the world of synthetic phonics (closely-linked to their allocated reading books) as soon as they enter school. All children within Reception and KS1 access a daily lesson of phonics, following the *Little Wandle* phonics scheme. This can be differentiated for some children especially where their needs differ from others in their class. Regular half-termly assessments will ensure that children's progress is monitored, maintained and support given where necessary.

Spelling is a key focus at Braishfield and we believe that foundations in spelling should be put in place from an early age. As children move towards the end of KS1, the focus changes from phonics to the learning of spelling rules and strategies. Within Year 2, children are also beginning to learn further words from the national curriculum word list.

Within KS2, the children follow *No-Nonsense Spelling* programme as the basis for coverage of spelling rules. This allows teachers to follow a flexible approach to spelling, tailored to the individual needs of their class, whilst consistently using a Review, Teach Practice, Apply approach. Key spelling strategies and rules are taught within the classroom at least 3 times per week. Children may receive weekly spelling lists or individualised spelling lists to learn at home.

Alongside learning spelling rules and strategies, Years 3/4 and Years 5/6 are also expected to learn the words lists as stated in the national curriculum.

Spelling is important to all children and it is essential that they are given every opportunity to embed key spelling rules so that they are then able to apply them to their own writing. Strong spelling is a non-negotiable at Braishfield Primary School.

Handwriting

We aim to cultivate the development of neat, well-formed writing for all pupils. By promoting legible, aesthetically pleasing and consistent style of handwriting throughout the school, we want pupils to gain satisfaction from neatly presented pieces of work.

Guidelines

- A range of writing implements, and media should be used to encourage, develop and extend the pupils' conceptions of pattern and form from the very start of pupils' time at Braishfield.
- The process should begin in the early stages of writing with the modelling of the correct formation of letters of the alphabet.
- Handwriting is a skill that needs to be formally taught and is practised regularly using the *Letterjoin* scheme.
- Letter formation should be based on the agreed handwriting script.
- From Year 1, children will be taught the correct letter formation using a lead in line.
- From Year 2 upwards children should be taught and encouraged to join their handwriting.
- All pupils will be expected to use a joined script by the end of KS2.
- Accuracy, speed and flow are essential aspects of handwriting skills and need to be practised.
- Support will be given to pupils as and when required.
- Handwriting practice will be recorded in English books.