English Policy

Brierley CE (VC) Primary School

Approved by:	Governing Body	**Date:** Autumn 2026
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1. Aims

This policy is for the staff in our school. It aims to set out:

- Our approach to teaching, monitoring and assessing English knowledge and skills
- How we will make sure our provision for the teaching of English is of consistently high quality

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements and expectations set out in:

- The National Curriculum programmes of study for English
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice 2014
- The Equality Act 2010

3. Our vision for English in our school

Our school aims to develop pupils' skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening. By the time that pupils move on from our school, our aim is for them to:

- Be fluent and independent readers and writers
- Have a positive attitude towards books and reading, reading widely for pleasure and information
- Develop an understanding of what has been read
- Be engaged and motivated to read and write
- Enjoy writing in different contexts and for different purposes and audiences
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting language and style accordingly

- Be curious and creative when it comes to reading and writing, for example by being interested in learning the meaning of new words
- Have a wide vocabulary and understanding of grammar
- Feel confident speaking in class and be able to clearly explain their understanding and ideas
- Listen carefully and sensitively to adults and their peers

4. Our guiding principles for the teaching of English

We teach English best when:

- There's a joyful culture around reading and writing in the school
- All staff feel they have the knowledge, skills, understanding and professional support they need to teach English and literacy effectively
- There's sufficiently detailed and frequent ongoing assessment of pupil progress
- The goal of comprehension is promoted consistently
- We expose pupils to different types of reading material, such as through stimulating, high-quality and curiosity-inspiring classroom displays
- We involve families in supporting their child's reading and writing
- The English curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced
- We identify where pupils have learning gaps or aren't making the expected progress, and make sure interventions target these
- Teaching resources are available, up to date, varied and diverse, and match pupil and curriculum needs
- Reading and writing is taught in meaningful contexts
- A range of strategies are promoted for decoding (sight recognition, contextual clues, relationship between picture and text, grammatical cues as well as the use of phonics)
- Synthetic phonics is systematically taught
- Encoding is promoted through phonics initially then through high frequency words, word families and spelling patterns
- We engage pupils in high-quality back-and-forth interactions
- We model new language and accurate grammar to pupils
- We support pupils with speech, language and communication needs, for example by putting on extra small-group focus sessions

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Building a team of expert teachers who know and understand the processes that underpin learning to read and write
- Providing teachers with the appropriate training and resources so that they can competently deliver the English curriculum
- Creating a stimulating school environment where pupils are exposed to different types of reading material, such as through displays, books and other classroom resources

5.2 The English and literacy lead

Our English subject lead is Mrs Matterson (Mrs Marshall is covering the role September 2026-July 2027). The subject lead is responsible for providing leadership and management for English to secure:

- High-quality teaching and subject knowledge of staff
- A coherently planned and sequenced English curriculum
- Consistent assessment and accurate teacher judgements within English
- Effective use of resources
- Provide relevant CPD for all staff

5.3 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- Planning effective English lessons based on the class texts each term
- Providing opportunities for pupils to apply their English skills in a variety of ways across the curriculum
- Completing the relevant marking to ensure pupils have immediate feedback to improve their English skills
- Completing the relevant formative and summative assessments
- Making sure that support staff have:
    - Access to planning materials and resources
    - The knowledge and skills they need to support and challenge pupils

6. Curriculum

Our curriculum structure for reading, writing, speaking and listening is as follows:

- We have progression documents for speaking & listening, reading (word reading, pleasure of reading, discussion and understanding, comprehension), writing (Composition, skills and transcription) from EYFS to Y6

  Reading: We have a reading pathway (S plan) which outlines the core texts and other linked reading materials to be read

- Each year group has a minimum of 3 main books each academic year, supplemented and enhanced by other text types such as poetry and non-fiction. Children will read widely and for pleasure immersing themselves in different authors and text types throughout the year. Children also have the opportunity to explore a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts in their foundation lessons, which are based around age appropriate texts linked to the topic being studied
- We use Read, Write, Inc as our systematic and synthetic phonics programme
- Once children have successfully completed the RWI scheme and are achieving Age Expected reading levels, they are base lined using the Accelerated Reader programme. This baseline ensures that each child is given a book that is specific to its level of reading and understanding.
- Whole class reading ‘Book Club’ focuses on reading for understanding through discussion and exploration of new vocabulary. Inference, prediction, explanation, retrieval, sequencing and summarising skills are explored when sharing class texts
- Teachers read with children, hearing them read individually and discussing answers. Parent volunteers are additional support for reading with pupils in EYFS and Y1
- Drop everything and read (D.E.A.R.) and buddy reading sessions promote our love of reading throughout school

  Writing: We have a writing pathway (S plan) which outlines the core texts to share and provides stimuli for writing in all year groups

- Lessons involve a focus on spellings, punctuation and grammar and handwriting patterns.

- Year groups 2-6 follow Read, Write Inc Spelling where specific sets of words are taught using different methods
- We follow Kinetic letters from FS2 to Y4. Correct pencil grip is promoted and presentation of writing is a high priority in all classes.
- Our writing lessons contain a balance of dictated writing and independent writing opportunities, which for targeted pupils, enables them to use their current phonic knowledge to write words and sentences. Our lesson plans are from The Write Stuff scheme of work for some units.
- The RWI approach to spelling words is adopted in writing lessons for continuity and independence (hide your fingers, find the sounds, write it)
- Each half term, assessed pieces of writing are completed and analysed according to the year groups expectations

Speaking and Listening

- Opportunities for speaking and listening are promoted in all curriculum areas (maths chat, life skills discussions, partner work)
- Children are encouraged to use the correct grammar when speaking, this is modelled by all staff.
- Children are encourages to be confident speakers who can share their ideas and are willing to do so.

6.1 Timetabling

Our timetable for English includes:

- **Phonics:** Daily RWI sessions from EYFS to Y2; Daily phonic sessions for children in LKS2 who have not passed their PSC; Daily Fresh start sessions for UKS2 pupils; Catch-up tutoring and 1:1 interventions supports pupils in Y1 and Y2.
- **Book Club:** A guided whole class reading session used for comprehension and to introduce new vocabulary.
- **Independent writing:** Daily opportunities to write for different purposes linked to our writing pathway (S plan)
- **Spelling**: Weekly spellings are linked to Read Write Inc spelling and are taught each day
- **Grammar and punctuation**: Discrete teaching each day to practise specific skills linked to each year group
- **Spoken language:** Daily opportunities when reading and writing to share oral composition, generation of ideas and drama opportunities

6.2 Cross-curricular links

We will facilitate cross-curricular learning of English skills, making sure that the links with other curriculums are natural and not forced. This is achieved through activities in other subjects such as:

- Annotating sources
- Group discussions
- Comprehension
- Topic research
- Role play activities
- ICT

6.3 Differentiation

We will provide suitable differentiation to make sure that every pupil makes maximum progress in English by:

- Recognising where some pupils need specific help with their English skills, e.g. if they are dyslexic
- Providing resources such as phonics mats and writing frames to scaffold pupils' learning

- Dictating words/sentences to minimise cognition overload
- Identifying pupils who would benefit from more support in an area of their English learning, and running small intervention groups for targeted support each week to aid their progress and attainment. We will monitor these closely to move pupils in and out of these groups as needed
- Making sure pupils who need it are extended through the use of additional, more-demanding and open-ended tasks and planned challenges within each lesson

7. Marking and feedback

Feedback will clearly explain to pupils what they are doing well, and what they need to do next to continue to improve their work

It will be given verbally and written using a marking code in pupils' books, which is used to guide their editing and improvement

8. Monitoring, assessment and moderation

8.1 Monitoring

We will monitor teaching and learning of English in our school to make sure that all of our pupils make the best possible progress from their starting points.

The English Lead will monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' learning through:

- Conducting lesson drop ins
- Reviewing marking and feedback
- Termly pupil progress meetings
- Gathering input from the school council
- Meeting with the reading and writing ambassadors
- Planning scrutinies
- Book scrutinies

8.2 Assessment

We will track pupils' progress using a combination of formative and summative assessment – for example, through ongoing formative assessment throughout every lesson, in-school summative assessment in the form of assessed pieces of writing, NFER reading tests and formal summative assessment at the end of each Key Stage

Our pupils will sit the following formal assessments:

- The phonics screening check at the end of Year 1
- National Curriculum tests in the summer terms at the end of KS1 (optional)
- National Curriculum tests in the summer terms at the end of KS2

We will provide regular targets for pupils, and provide termly verbal reports against these at parents' evenings. Pupils will receive a written report annually (July) and two other tracking reports (Autumn and Spring term)

8.3 Moderation

We will standardise writing samples to:

- Demonstrate how pupils' work meets National Curriculum attainment targets for KS1 and KS2, to help with assessment

- Make sure staff have a consistent approach to marking pupils' work

We will refer to the Standards and Testing Agency (STA)'s exemplification materials for KS1 and KS2 to support with this.

We will moderate teacher assessments of reading and writing at least termly

For each National Curriculum statement, we will:

- State what the activity involved, for example if it was done in controlled conditions or involved specific resources
- Explain how the evidence was collected, for example by observation, written work or drawing
- Indicate how much support was given to the pupil during the activity
- Record the outcome of the activity, for example:
    - The marks awarded in our marking criteria
    - Information from the curriculum we are using to judge success

9. Learning environment

Pupils will learn English in spaces that:

- Are well-organised and managed
- Contain appropriate and good-quality resources for pupils to refer to (in a space where they can find or see them easily)
- Are quiet and have minimal distractions
- Display letter cards and posters showing grapheme-phoneme correspondences that match our school's Read, Write Inc programme

10. Resources

10.1 Books

We will select and use books that:

- Engage pupils emotionally
- Cover a wide range of subjects
- Elicit a strong response, such as curiosity, anger, excitement, laughter or empathy
- Have a strong narrative that will sustain multiple readings
- Extend pupils' vocabulary
- Have illustrations that are engaging and reflect children from all backgrounds and cultures
- Help pupils connect with who they are
- Help pupils to understand the lives of people whose experiences and perspectives may be different from their own
- Include stories set in both the UK and around the world
- Include both modern and traditional stories
- Include fiction and non-fiction

It is unlikely that just 1 book will meet all of these criteria, but our full selection as a whole will.

Once we have chosen our books, we will:

- Identify a core set of stories for each year group
- Refresh the list regularly (at least once a year), as new books are published and as our school welcomes new teachers

- Encourage teachers to familiarise themselves with the stories their pupils will know from previous years
- Get teachers to choose their own books and poems to read aloud alongside the core set of stories
- Share the list with parents, and explain its purpose, so they can buy the books

10.2 Reading Areas

When visiting their reading areas pupils will be able to:

- Browse the books
- Revisit the ones the teacher has read to them
- Borrow books to read or re-tell at home
- Spend time there

When arranging the reading areas, teachers will:

- Avoid displaying too many books at once
- Choose a space in the classroom that is well lit and of an adequate size
- Display books pupils have listened to recently, at their eye level on outward-facing shelves
- At the start of the year especially, include around 20 of the children's favourites from the previous year (either on lower shelves or in boxes)
- Make the books look attractive and easy to find – removing any that are dull and dog-eared, unless these are particularly well-loved
- Refresh the display to highlight topics, titles or authors that might engage pupils
- Involve pupils in this process by getting them to help return books to the central school library
- Keep any books that have been previously read in extra boxes for pupils to read and retell again, at school and at home

10.3 Rhymes and poems

We will choose rhymes and poems that will develop pupils' language skills. The English lead will identify a core set of poems for each year group, including:

- Rhyming poems
- Poems where alliteration is a strong feature
- Word games
- Traditional songs and rhymes
- Nonsense rhymes
- Poems that:
    - Are particularly rhythmical
    - Can withstand a lot of repetition
    - Elicit a strong emotional response
    - Extend pupils' vocabulary in different areas of learning

10.4 Dictionaries and thesauruses

To support with writing and spelling, we will make sure that pupils have access to dictionaries and thesauruses by:

- Having dictionaries and thesauruses available in each classroom
- Allowing pupils to use the computer during lessons to look up word meanings and synonyms

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed every year by the English lead, head teacher and Chair of Governors. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing board.

12. Links with other policies

This policy links with the following policies and procedures:

- Curriculum policy
- SEN/SEND policy and information report
- Marking and feedback policy
- Assessment policy
- Non-examination assessment policy
- Equality information and objectives
- Behaviour policy
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy
- Performance Management Policy