

Betley CE (VC) Primary School
'English Statement of Intent.'

Intent

The overarching aim for English at Betley Primary School is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word.

Spoken language Intent - We want children at Betley Primary school to be able to elaborate and clearly explain their understanding and ideas. It is important that our children use discussion to learn.

Reading Intent - When our children leave our school, we want them to be avid readers, children who read fluently and widely, and are able to express preferences and opinions about the texts that they read. We want them to read for pleasure and have access to a wide range of text types, authors and genres.

Writing Intent - We want Children to write clearly, accurately, and coherently adapting their language and their style for a range of situations, purposes and audience.

Implementation

Spoken Language - 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. It is our intent that the children at Betley Primary develop a rich and diverse knowledge of language. This is implemented across the curriculum; we provide our children with a wide range of opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills such as discussion, debate, presentation and drama. During speaking activities, we assist children in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing and their knowledge across the curriculum, the impact of which can be seen in all subjects.

Reading - Our intent is that pupils learn to read fluently and with a good understanding. Reading enables pupils to acquire knowledge, develop a wide vocabulary and stimulate the imagination. It helps pupils to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Through reading high quality literature, pupils develop a good understanding of the world and a love of reading.

Learning to read comprises of two core elements: word reading and comprehension. We implement the teaching of these skills in a range of ways.

We use book 'bands' to enable a clear progression in reading through the use of a variety of quality reading texts. We use a range of books from a variety of schemes that incorporates different genres and text types.

Through quality phonic teaching which begins in Nursery, we put a lot of effort into ensuring our pupils quickly learn to read words. We use the 'Letters and Sounds' approach to teach phonics and use a variety of quality resources to further help the pupils learn to read and write sounds. Pupils are taught to read tricky high frequency words and are given 'coloured' books to read at home that match their phonic and word knowledge; this boosts the child's confidence in reading.

Throughout the whole school, we expect the children to read at least four times a week. The percentage of children achieving this is

recorded each week on a display and is communicated with parents via the weekly newsletter. All the children that have read four times a week go in to a raffle for a book of their choice. In school, all children are heard reading by an adult each week, the number of times this is completed varies in the year groups, the younger the child, the more times they are heard reading so the early reading skills can be learnt quicker.

All classes take part in a daily 'Look at a book' time. This encourages all children to read independently or to an adult using a book of their choice that they enjoy. The time children read is built on from EYFS up to Year 6, this encourages the children to build stamina when reading. We believe that the children having choices to the texts that they read is important and therefore all year groups visit the mobile library in the village. We teach quality texts and encourage independent reading through well planned guided reading sessions. The Children answer questions on this using the VIPERS system - Vocabulary, Inference, Predict, Explain, Retrieve and Summarise. These different question types ensure that all strands from the reading curriculum are built on gradually throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

Writing - At Betley, our intent is for our pupils to become fluent, articulate and enthusiastic writers. We teach the writing objectives of the National Curriculum using an exciting cross-curricular approach, and feel it is important to give pupils rich experiences to inspire writing and to provide a strong purpose where possible. We look for ways to motivate and inspire pupils so they see themselves as 'writers'.

At Betley, we believe that pupils need to hear how sentences are spoken, speak these sentences aloud and then read and analyse them written in a text before attempting to write them for themselves. We use carefully chosen or created model texts as well as live modelling and shared writing so that pupils can see the process involved in creating a piece of writing. Re-reading and editing are important parts of the writing process and this is modelled to the pupils during shared writing sessions. The pupils are given time to edit and improve their writing and they are encouraged to evaluate both with the teacher, themselves and with peers.

We ensure the pupils have the opportunity to write for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences. At Betley, we believe that children need opportunities to write at length, all children complete two extended writing tasks a week. This may be done within the English lesson or as part of the wider curriculum areas.

We recognise the vital importance of exposing our pupils to a rich and varied vocabulary and understand that their acquisition and

command of vocabulary are key to their learning and progress across the whole curriculum. We aim to increase pupils' store of words, help them make links between known and new vocabulary and discuss shades of meaning. All children use a vocabulary book to write new vocabulary in that can then be used within their own writing. We use model texts and class novels to teach vocabulary in context and encourage discussion around word choices when both reading and writing. Additionally, each classroom uses a working wall where newly introduced vocabulary is displayed to encourage use.

Our teaching of the grammar requirements of the National Curriculum are taught as part of a separate lesson each week. This newly taught skill is then developed during the remaining English lessons in the week. We believe that grammar makes most sense if it is taught as an active process, related to the teaching of writing and reading. We encourage pupils to see the joys of language and to enjoy finding just the right words or phrases to express what they want to say.

We believe children should be proud of their writing and we celebrate their achievements. Children's' work is displayed in classroom areas and awards are given out in the weekly celebration assembly for achievements in writing.

Spelling - The ability to write ideas down fluently requires a good understanding of spelling. In Key Stage 1, we follow the 'Letters and Sounds' approach and teach pupils how to write phonemes as graphemes. In both Key Stage 1 and 2 we use 'Spelling Shed' - This scheme ensure full coverage of, and progression within the National Curriculum requirements.

We use a range of strategies to support pupils with their spelling:

- Phonetic spelling strategies. Segmenting, to see how a word is composed of individual sounds, is crucial for spelling.
- Visual spelling strategy. Learning how a word looks and visualising the word can be an effective strategy.
- Rule-based strategies. Pupils are taught through investigations to understand rules behind spelling patterns.
- Word-meaning strategies. Helping pupils understand what words mean can support their spelling of those words. Explaining how words are derived, how prefixes and suffixes are added on to root words and how to form compound words, can all support confidence and accurate spelling.

We also encourage the pupils to develop their use of dictionaries and other tools to check their spelling.

A star speller award is given out to children using learnt spellings in their written work during the week.

Handwriting - In the early years and year 1, pupils complete fine motor activities to develop finger strength and are taught how to hold a pencil correctly. Pupils are taught correct letter shapes and formations.

From year 2 onwards, through weekly handwriting lessons, we begin to explicitly teach correct joins, consistent letter size and clear ascenders and descenders following a cursive script. Additional support is given through handwriting interventions where needed.

In Key Stage 2, pupils who demonstrate good handwriting are awarded a pen licence. This enables them to use handwriting pens and to further develop their fluency. Additional support is given through handwriting interventions where needed.

A presentation award is given to children during celebration assembly who demonstrate excellent handwriting skills throughout their written work.

Impact

The impact of the above implementations on children is clear: progress, sustained learning and transferrable skills.

With the implementation of all the above skills being well established, children are becoming more confident writers and by the time they are in upper Key Stage 2, most genres of writing are familiar to them and the teaching can focus on creativity, writer's craft, sustained writing and manipulation of grammar and punctuation skills. This is also enabling our greater depth writers to become more independent. As all aspects of English are an integral part of the curriculum, cross curricular writing standards have also improved and skills taught in the English lesson are transferred into other subjects; this shows consolidation of skills and a deeper understanding of how and when to use specific grammar, punctuation and grammar objectives. We hope that as children move on from us to further their education and learning that their creativity, passion for English and high aspirations travel with them and continue to grow and develop as they do.