

BURFORD SCHOOL



Burford School

Literacy Policy





LITERACY POLICY LANGUAGE PRINCIPLES

Introduction

This policy has been written taking into account the Programmes of Study as required by the National Curriculum orders and the Primary National Strategy Frameworks for Literacy 2008.

At Burford School we recognise that English is a core subject within the National Curriculum and that a central concern of all our teaching is to develop pupils' abilities to use language to think, explore, organise and communicate significant meanings to enable every pupil to achieve their potential and develop self-esteem. We also recognise the importance language plays in the social, emotional and imaginative development of pupils as they use language to make meaning of the complexity of human experience and communicate with the world at large.

Aims

In this school, pupils will be given opportunities to interrelate the requirements of English within a broad and balanced approach across the curriculum, with opportunities to consolidate and practise taught literacy skills. We aim to:

- Enable pupils to be taught in all subjects to express themselves correctly and appropriately
- Enable pupils to read accurately and with understanding
- Enable pupils to recognise the close relationship between reading and writing
- Provide pupils with learning opportunities which integrate speaking and listening, reading and writing activities
- Provide real contexts for language learning in English and across the curriculum
- Encourage pupils to have an interest in words, their meaning, and a growing vocabulary. This interest extends to the technical and specialist vocabulary of all subjects.
- Develop the thinking skills of pupils to help them on the path to becoming reflective, independent learners
- Provide opportunities for pupils to use ICT to facilitate and extend their learning in speaking, listening, reading and writing
- Recognise the importance of having a consistent view of language learning across the wider curriculum

SPEAKING & LISTENING POLICY

Introduction

Children's ability to speak and listen is fundamental to their language development, learning in school and social development. Talk underpins learning and thinking. Richness and variety of talk is important for all children.

Direct teaching of oracy skills needs to be fostered to enable them to develop confidence and a repertoire of talk for different purposes and audiences. Links between oral and written language need to be encouraged and built on.

Children for whom English is the second language need to have opportunities to work with good language models.

Aims

We aim to enable pupils to:

- Communicate effectively by speaking and listening with increasing confidence, clarity and fluency
- Speak appropriately in a variety of settings for a range of audiences
- Develop a wide range of speaking skills on increasingly complex subjects
- Think carefully and organise thinking before speaking
- Respond sensitively and reflectively to what has been heard
- Reflect on their talk

The new framework for Literacy incorporates the four strands of speaking and listening. These strands also need to be considered across all other curriculum areas to give children the opportunity to apply their Speaking and Listening skills taught within Literacy.

During each key stage, pupils should be taught knowledge, skills and understanding through the following range of activities, contexts and purposes:

- Speaking for different audiences which includes friends, class, teachers and other adults in the school
- Listening and responding, both in face-to-face situations and to broadcast or taped material
- Group discussion and interaction, in settings with different numbers of participants and different levels of formality
- Drama activities, including improvisation and working in role, as well as writing and performing scripted drama

It is important to distinguish between the explicit teaching of speaking and listening skills and opportunities for reinforcing the skills or using talk for other purposes.

Speaking and listening skills need to be planned for and applied across the curriculum. This may include:

- Speaking and listening as a focus for teaching where particular skills are being taught, although the subject matter may be related to any part of the curriculum
- Curricular areas other than English may be the teaching focus but may be organised to help children reinforce Speaking and Listening skills, e.g. investigating, evaluating and reporting work.

READING POLICY

Introduction

Reading is a complex accomplishment, dependent on a range of different factors to do with reading readiness, cultural attitudes, and a variety of teaching methods.

- a reader knows that reading is a complex, intellectual endeavour, requiring him/her to draw on a range of active meaning – making skills.
- a reader deploys previous knowledge of other texts to enable the effective reading and further meaning-making of the text being read.
- a reader knows how to interact appropriately with a variety of text types/genres for particular purposes.
- a reader is aware that learning to read is a life-long continuous process.

Aims

In this school, we aim to enable pupils to:

- develop confidence in themselves as readers
- make progress as readers
- develop key skills (semantic, syntactic and grapho-phonetic) in order to read with fluency, accuracy, understanding and enjoyment
- develop knowledge of and familiarity with a wide range of children's literature, both narrative and non-narrative
- develop the ability to talk about characters, events and language in texts
- respond to the texts they read in a thoughtful and imaginative way, using all forms of language
- develop the ability to use information texts and locate, extract and use relevant information
- become increasingly reflective about their reading development
- Develop a love for books and reading for pleasure

Reading experiences include:

Reading to pupils

Modelled reading

Shared reading

Guided reading – This is taught separately to the Literacy hour: 20-30 minutes daily in KS1; 30 mins 3 x week in KS2

Paired reading

Performance reading

Independent reading (extended reading)

Cross curricular links

WRITING POLICY

Introduction

- Writing is closely linked to reading; pupils draw upon their range of reading experiences and use them as models for writing
- Talk is a prerequisite for all pupils to enable them to put into words what they are thinking of writing and to allow them to reflect upon what they have written
- The process of planning, interaction, collaboration, mutual support and feedback helps a writer to move forward through the process of writing
- An extensive range of purposes, forms and audiences for writing need to be created so that pupils understand the choices facing a writer and how to make to make appropriate choices
- The teacher plays a crucial role in the development of writing through modelling the writing process and teaching at the point of writing (e.g. guided writing)
- Extended writing and creativity may take place beyond the scope and purpose of the designated literacy hour and be incorporated into other curriculum areas.

Aims

In this school, we aim to enable pupils to:

- Know, understand, and be able to write in a range of genres and text types
- To write for real or imagined purposes
- Plan, draft, discuss, revise and edit their own writing, and develop into reflective writers
- Know that writing is different from speaking
- To recognise that writing should have a clear purpose and audience
- Develop understanding that writing is both essential to thinking, investigating, organising and learning, and enjoyable in its own right
- Make connections between pupils' reading and writing so that they have clear models for writing
- Through reading and writing, develop their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness
- Have fluent and legible handwriting
- Use punctuation correctly

HANDWRITING POLICY

At Burford School we value the quality of written work. Our aim is that all children will write in a continuous cursive style. We expect all staff to use cursive handwriting at all times. Throughout Key Stage One we expect that all children master a continuous cursive handwriting script, and begin to join their writing in Year 1 with a focus on joining (Continuous Cursive Script) in Year 2.

The Continuous Cursive Script also benefits dyslexic children by reducing the number of times they have to lift their pen or pencil from the paper and help children to develop an even, fluent style.

Reception

- Children will experiment with mark making using a variety of tools.
- A variety of activities will be used to enhance motor skills. Eg: Dance with movement, in sand, magic finger, letters on backs.
- Children will be taught correct letter formation using cursive script (lead ins and outs from each letter but not joined)
- Once letter formation is mastered Continuous Cursive will be introduced. Please see appendix for example of script to be used.
- Children will use a 'chubby' HB pencil.
- All children will be expected to develop and use the 'tripod grip' when writing.

Key Stage One

- Year 1
 - Formal teaching of Cursive Script occurs once a week.
 - Handwriting practice should also be linked to phonics taught throughout the week.
 - Children should be encouraged to use Cursive Script throughout the curriculum.
 - If children demonstrate they are ready through the use of correct and even letter formation with clear ascenders and descenders, they will be taught to begin to join their writing. (Continuous Cursive Script)
- Year 2
 - Children will be taught to join their writing in Year 2. The expectation is for most children to be joining their writing by the end of Year 2.
 - Formal teaching of Cursive Script occurs once a week.
 - Our aim is for all children to use Continuous Cursive Script throughout the curriculum.

- Handwriting practice should also be linked to phonics taught throughout the week.
- Additional teaching and practise will be required daily for those children who haven't mastered Continuous Cursive Script.

Key Stage Two

- Year 3
 - Our aim is that all children will be fluent users of Continuous Cursive Script and will continue to practice this in a formal handwriting session once a week.
 - Children who have not mastered Continuous Cursive Script should practise daily.
 - Children who demonstrate a fluent joined style with even letters and clear ascenders and descenders should be asked to use a Berol Handwriting pen.
- Year 4, 5 & 6
 - Children will continue to develop a fluent Continuous Cursive Script through weekly handwriting sessions.
 - All children will be expected to be writing in pen by the beginning of Year 4.
 - When children have developed a fluent style of joined handwriting and are confident writers should be asked to use ink pens.

Continuous Cursive Script

- Correct letter formation
- Upright
- Appropriate and consistent in size
- Letters joined correctly

Guidelines for Parents

- Please see attached letter to parents, Apeendix 1 (May 2008)

THE OVERALL MANAGEMENT OF THE SUBJECT

Time allocation

There are five allocated literacy hours per week in each Key Stage.

Planning

Teachers work together to plan the overall Literacy programme, ensuring balance and progression across the Key Stages, using the PNS Literacy Framework as the core scheme of work. Staff meetings are used to discuss the Literacy curriculum and to ensure consistency of approach, standards and expectations.

Class teachers are responsible for medium term and weekly plans. They identify appropriate learning and teaching strategies required to cover the teaching objectives and ensure that the needs of all pupils are met within a variety of organisational learning. Regular assessment will also influence planning for pupils' needs, ensuring progression for all.

The literacy co-ordinator oversees medium and short term plans and will offer support and advice as appropriate.

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND LEARNING STYLES

Pupils are taught as individuals, pairs, in groups, and as a class. We recognise that pupils have a wide range of preferred learning styles and that, in line with PNS suggestions; we provide teaching which is challenging, interactive and develops thinking skills in pupils.

INCLUSION/ SEN

All pupils will cover the content made statutory by the Programmes of Study within the National Curriculum, and pupils will access the curriculum at the appropriate level, thus ensuring progression and differentiation. We ensure all children, regardless of race, gender and disability have equal access to the curriculum.

In line with the school policy on SEN, the SEN co-ordinator, the YGT coordinator, the literacy co-ordinator, and any other appropriate coordinators will support class teachers in ensuring that pupils will have work planned to their individual needs. Learning Support Assistants and Special Support Assistants will also provide support. Pupils with significant literacy weaknesses will have specific literacy targets on their IEPs. Suitable resources and learning environments will be available to enable pupils to access the learning requirements.

CROSS-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

Literacy is linked to other subjects in an integral way as is it the medium through which pupils learn. Therefore, we also recognise that the principles of teaching Literacy can be applied to the teaching of other subjects across the curriculum. e.g. in group discussion, using writing frames across the curriculum, reading for understanding strategies, communication and using ICT. Medium term and weekly plans make clear links between Literacy and other subject areas. We also plan to include the development of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

RESOURCES

The literacy co-ordinator has a budget for resourcing Literacy. The amount allocated is dependent on the priorities in the school improvement plan, and on PNS funding. The literacy co-ordinator meets with staff and the whole school needs are decided upon.

Refer to list of resources in Appendix 2.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Refer to the Health and Safety Policy.

ASSESSMENT AND RECORDING

We recognise the importance of day to day formative assessment as a reflection of the extent to which pupils are achieving the learning intentions set out in lesson plans. This involves a range of evidence, including: the annotation of lesson plans, the keeping of written records, half-termly assessments and the recognition that marking is an important feature of ongoing formative assessment. A combination of the evidence informs the APP method of assessment as detailed in the assessment and recording policy.

The school's Assessment Policy defines specific half-termly assessments to be carried out and work is recorded in pupil's portfolios/books.

Formal, summative assessments are carried out at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in line with National Curriculum assessment requirements.

Parents are provided with annual written reports in line with the DCFS statutory requirements to ensure that all parents are not only well informed of progress, including strengths and weaknesses, but also to enable them to be partners in the child's education. Parents' evenings are held twice throughout the academic year where National Curriculum levels for Reading and Writing are shared and discussed.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT

School self-evaluation is a necessary prerequisite for school improvement, and we place high importance on our monitoring and evaluation procedures.

The class teacher, the literacy co-ordinator and the headteacher will monitor the approaches outlined in this document, in line with school policy. Monitoring will include lesson observation, work sampling, planning sampling, interviews and data analysis.

RELATED POLICIES

Marking Children's Work
Monitoring and Evaluation
Home Learning
Equal Opportunities
Multicultural Policy
The School Library
Assessment, Recording and Reporting Achievement

Dear Parent/Guardian,

As a school we have recently reviewed our handwriting policy, the use of handwriting pens and the impact they have on the presentation of children's work.

All children are taught the cursive script when they enter Reception class (although are not taught to join at this stage). The children are also encouraged to use a 'tripod' grip with a 'chubby' pencil. This grip helps with fluency and ease of writing as the children progress through the school.

Within Year 1, children will use a normal HB handwriting pencil. When the children demonstrate they are ready, they will be taught to join their handwriting. This will usually be when they are forming their letters correctly ensuring they are of a consistent size with clear ascenders and descenders. This will continue through Year 2, by the end of which the expectation will be for most children to be joining. Research shows this not only benefits the fluency of writing and increases the pace at which children can write but also has a positive effect on spelling as they begin to recognise groups of letters which frequently go together. The continuous cursive script is also recommended by the British Dyslexia Association as each letter is formed with a continuous movement without removing the pencil or pen from the page.

In Year 3, the children will continue to develop their joined handwriting and when ready, will be asked by their teacher to use a dark blue ink Berol handwriting pen. This will generally be when the children demonstrate control over their joined writing, ensuring it is of an even size. Using handwriting pens is an intermediate stage to using ink pens as Berol Handwriters are much smoother, cleaner and therefore easier to control! These can be bought from the school office for 20p each. If you wish to purchase your own from elsewhere, please be aware of imitations as not all pens have the same quality nibs and have a tendency to leak!

By the beginning of Year 4, all children will be expected to be using pen. Throughout Year 4, 5 and 6 the teacher will indicate to the children when they feel they are ready to use ink pens. This will generally be when the children are able to demonstrate a fluent, joined style within all subjects rather than just their handwriting books. Children who are currently using ink pens may be asked by their teachers to try using a Berol handwriting pen if they feel it would be of benefit to the child.

Please see over the page for illustrations of a good tripod grip and the cursive style used by the school.

Many thanks for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Mrs D. Williams
Deputy Headteacher

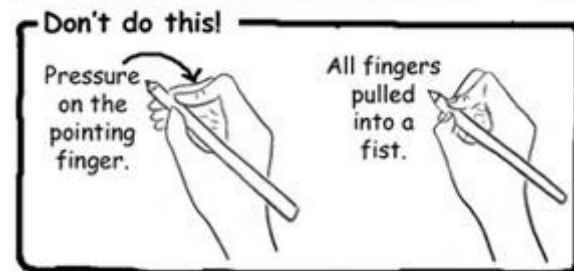


How to Hold a Pencil : The Correct Pencil Grip

The pencil should be positioned so that there is equal pressure between the thumb, the side of the middle finger and the tip of the index finger. All fingers are bent slightly. This is called a "tripod grip" or "tripod pencil grasp".

Check for Tension in the Children's Fingers and Hands

- Is the first knuckle of the pointer finger hyper-extended? Is the index finger red and the knuckle white from too much pressure? There should be no sign of pressure in the knuckle or the finger tip. The index finger rests on top of the pencil.
- Is the tripod grip too tight? The three fingers should gently grip the pencil and keep the pencil stable while writing. Have the entire class go through this simple exercise: Have the children pretend to tightly hold a small stone in their fingertips as you count to ten. Discuss how their hand feels. Next, have the children pretend to gently hold a feather in their fingertips, and count to ten. Discuss how their hands feel. Help the children understand that they can write more quickly and for a longer time when their hand is relaxed.
- Is the hand a tight fist? Have the child pretend they have a round ball inside their hand as they write, or have them hold a wadded paper towel as they write.
- Tension indicates weak fine-motor skills. Work with manipulatives to improve these skills: cut with scissors, play with finger puppets, play with modeling clay, stretch Silly Putty, play games that require a pinching motion (Pick-Up-Sticks), and string beads.



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Continuous Cursive Script:

Please note: All letters start in the same position whether left or right hand handed.