



English Policy

This policy reflects the school's values and philosophy in relation to teaching and learning English and should be read in conjunction with the school's curriculum policy. All at Bright Futures School recognise the central importance of English as gaining and using skills in language not only affects a child's progress in school, but also has a profound influence upon the course of his or her whole life.

All children at Bright Futures School have an EHC plan, with a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder. Some children have other special needs in addition to ASD, e.g. Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Speech and Language difficulties. Meeting the children's ASD needs is a priority at Bright Futures School and at the heart of the RDI (Relationship Development Intervention) philosophy to support the social and emotional development of children with autism. Our English policy develops and is amended according to the changing individual needs of the children.

We aim to develop pupils' abilities within an integrated programme of communication language (Speaking & Listening), Reading (phonics programme/comprehension) and Writing (handwriting, spelling, vocabulary, grammar and punctuation). Pupils will be given opportunities to develop their use, knowledge and understanding of spoken and written English within a broad and balanced curriculum, with opportunities to consolidate and reinforce taught literacy skills in all curriculum areas.

All children have daily Key Skills sessions which focus on both English and Maths. Pupils work on specific, individual targets developed in line with individual learning needs identified in EHCPs and from teaching and learning assessments. Staff follow a detailed English curriculum and monitor the progress and amend the targets as required.

Aims

- To support the development of each child's confidence, self-expression and communication skills.
- To promote a positive attitude to reading, writing, speaking and listening.
- To encourage children to become enthusiastic and reflective readers and interested in books and to read with enjoyment.
- To provide meaningful interactive opportunities for children to practise using language in relevant, 'real-life' situations.
- To have an interest in words and their meanings and a growing vocabulary.
- To help children enjoy writing and recognise its value.

- To promote and enable literacy development through individual learning programmes.

Objectives

- To provide a broad range of creative and engaging literacy experiences.
- To match learning materials to the child's level of ability, interests and experiences.
- Staff to liaise with the English Lead regarding an individual's specific literacy learning needs.
- Development of Literacy skills to be promoted across all curriculum experiences.
- Reading is used to develop cultural, emotional, spiritual and social progression.
- To make certain a systematic approach to phonics teaching is embedded within Bright Futures School.
- To assess English skills using formative and summative assessments to ensure pupils are appropriately challenged and make progress in English skills.
- To use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English lessons because we believe that people learn in different ways.

Teaching and Learning

Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in English. Pupils are taught on a 1-1, 1-2 or small group depending on the activity and or pupil/grouping and considering pupils' needs as directed by their EHCP.

Sessions should be:

- Organised - Planning based on the students ability and next learning steps
- Interactive – pupils' contributions are encouraged and extended.
- Supportive – a friendly, supportive environment to encourage learning.
- Well-paced – appropriate to the pupil's ability and engagement.
- Ambitious – there is optimism about and high expectations of success.
- Confident – Learning Mentors have a clear understanding of the objectives.

Learning mentors should have:

- Secure knowledge of skills, concepts and technical vocabulary.
- An understanding of every child's prior learning.
- Clear description and presentation of the learning intention.
- Success criteria so that they support each child's learning throughout the lesson and to promote independent learning

Lessons should have:

- Opportunities for children to think about and discuss the skills and concepts throughout the lesson.

- Multisensory strategies to engage pupils and focus on the students next steps on their learning journey.
- Feedback throughout the lesson to find out and demonstrate how the learning is progressing.
- Use of strategies to help to assess the learning acquired during the lesson so that the next lesson can be planned to take account of prior learning.
- Appropriate support and challenge for pupils
- Good questioning

Speaking and Listening

All children are given opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills across all learning experiences. We encourage all children to be respectful listeners and to express themselves confidently according to ability.

Reading

All staff are made aware of each child's reading and phonics ability. Staff strive to offer reading materials daily appropriate to the pupil's ability and engagement. Story sacks are also used to promote engagement in reading through play, multisensory activities aimed to promote language development for early readers.

Staff will use a clear and carefully planned phonics programme based on the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds scheme. Regular, termly, phonics assessments will keep staff up to date with students' progress who are working below phase 4.

A wide range of fiction and non-fiction books are available in school and online appropriate for each individual pupil's age and skill level. Some children, with reading difficulties receive direct instruction, including multi-sensory programmes such as 'Nessy' and programmes such as Toe by Toe.

All children are encouraged to practise their reading skills across their curriculum and to read for enjoyment. All children have a reading log where details of books read are recorded on a regular basis. Staff assist through paired, shared or guided reading when necessary. Pupils visit the local library on a regular basis and are encouraged to choose reading and reference books to read in school as well as at home if desired. Specific reading targets are the focus in key skills sessions and a text based approach is used to map out a long term reading and learning journey for students.

Writing

Pupils are encouraged to express themselves in writing using a variety of styles according to purpose, audience and ability level. Pupils are encouraged to start writing with mark making

using creative multi-sensory approaches. Letter formations are developed alongside the teaching of phonics (using Little Wandle Letters and Sounds) then pupils are encouraged to use a cursive script in handwriting and to use word processing typing skills. Where children particularly struggle with writing, laptops may be used but handwriting will still be developed as appropriate. Key skills sessions target writing for a range of real-life situations and enjoyment. Specific sessions in key skills sessions focus on developing vocabulary use and understanding, using pre-teach vocabulary where applicable. Spelling strategies are taught in line pupils progression steps identified using Vernon spelling assessments and B squared assessments. Grammar is taught at an age-appropriate level to gain skills in understanding and use of language. Punctuation is also taught to progression steps attainment. Writing is encouraged with practical real-life activities such as writing recipes for cooking or designing posters for school fundraising opportunities.

Assessment

At Bright Futures School we use English assessment to break learning points into more manageable learning steps. We use iASEND, the YARC Assessment for Reading Comprehension, the Vernon Spelling programme and termly phonics checks with Little Wandle Letters and Sounds to create a detailed picture of students progression and next learning steps.

As children progress through school we continue to prepare them for their next steps in life. Each pupil will follow a Functional Skills scheme appropriate to their ability, where the English skills are interleaved with life skills such as shopping, understanding timetables, managing money and cooking. The purpose for achieving a Functional Skills qualification is that these provide a progression to employment, further education and support skills for everyday life

Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas

The skills that children develop in English are linked to, and applied in, every subject of our curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work in school.

March 2024

Review: This policy will be reviewed April 2025