



Believe, Grow, Succeed

English at Birches First School is centred around the intention to...

Our aim is for children to develop secure basic skills of Reading, Writing and communication to enable them to communicate effectively, in a range of contexts and for a range of audiences. Skills such as sound phonological awareness and the ability to decode; blending and segmenting fluently. Accurate spellers, able to apply learnt spelling rules to all writing contexts. Understanding of sentence structure and the different styles and purposes of writing as well as grammatical knowledge and an understanding of punctuation and its correct use. Confident speakers who are able to listen to others as well as question, discuss, debate, explain and persuade.

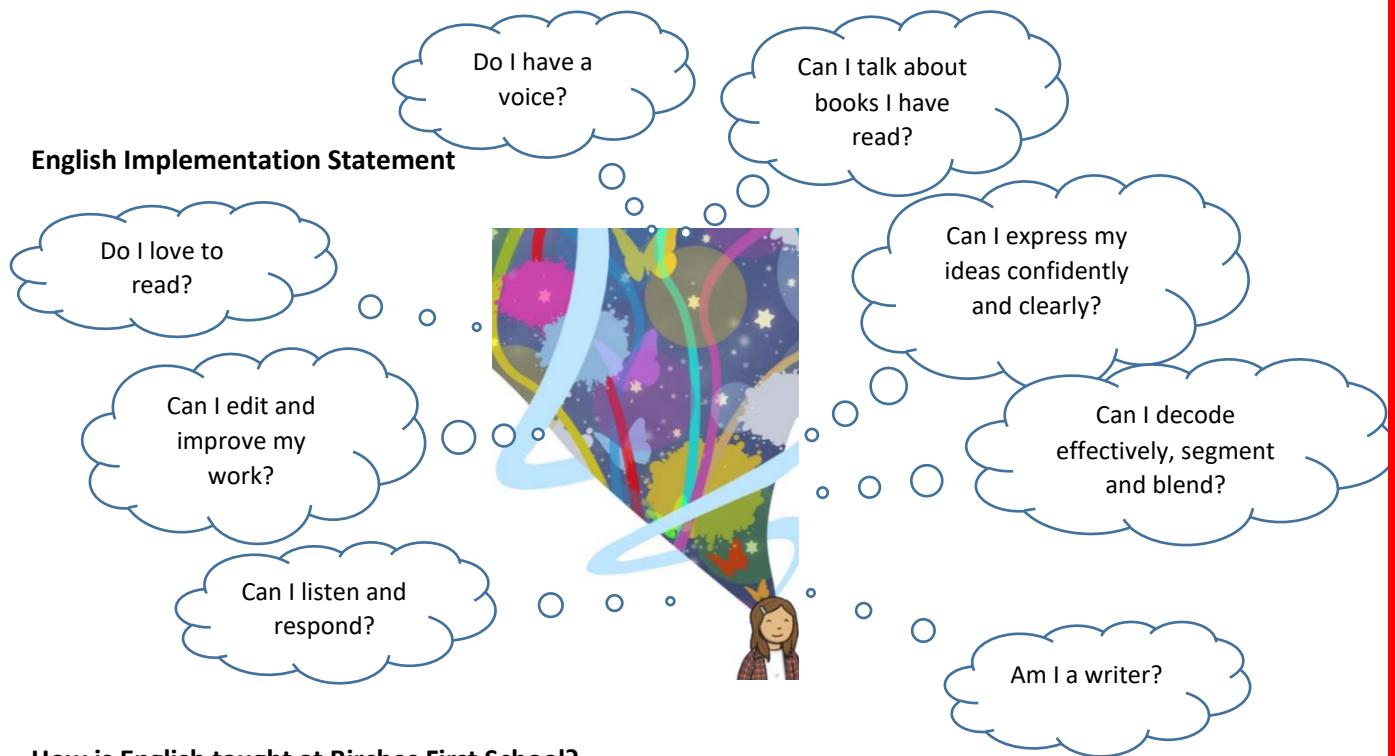
We promote a love of reading; encouraging children to experience and explore a range of high-quality texts and much-loved classics as well as traditional tales and nursery rhymes. We aim to ignite a passion for writing, enabling children to develop flare and their own personal style.

Our learners are encouraged to develop these vital skills to enable them to lay the foundations for lifelong success and prepare them for the next stage of their journey as readers, writers and communicators; taking with them passion, confidence and ambition. To continue to read and marvel in the wonder of a book, to write effectively but also creatively and with enjoyment. To take with them the skills to express themselves and share their opinions with the world.

The more that you learn the more places you will go!

The more that
YOU READ,
THE MORE THINGS
YOU WILL KNOW.
The more that you learn,
THE MORE PLACES
YOU'LL GO.

— DR. SEUSS



How is English taught at Birches First School?

As a one form entry first school, children are taught in mixed ability classes for English. English lessons are taught daily, usually following a chosen text to provide a stimulus for the focus genre, be it narrative, non-fiction or poetry. Staff teach skills in a progressive way, identifying children's starting points at the start of a unit and planning to skilfully build on the foundations they have previously acquired. Children are given the opportunity to practise, develop and enhance their literacy skills. We promote literacy skills through a range of extra activities such as whole school writing projects, celebrating authors (Roald Dahl day) and World Book Day.

Reading

Children take part in a daily reading session. We use a blend of teacher-led, whole class reading and guided reading groups throughout the year. Using the VIPERS approach, each session is focused on developing children's fluency and reading skills (Vocabulary, Inference, Prediction, Explanation, Retrieval and Sequence (KS1) / Summarise (KS2) Children also regularly read individually with an adult.

The whole school begins each day with at least one group enjoying ERIC time (Everybody Reading in Class). Intended to promote a love of reading, during this time children are able to make own selections and read independently.

Each class also has a class reading book. Each day, children will experience a story being read to them by an adult. This models a range of reading skills as well as engaging children with a range of high quality texts.

In Early Years, children read individually with an adult at least once a week, share texts as part of a small adult led group and have daily story-time. Reading opportunities are also provided through continuous provision activities.

Writing

A range of writing opportunities, outcomes, purposes, contexts and audiences are planned for during English lessons. Staff make good use of WAGOLLS (What a Good One Looks Like) to model and scaffold children's writing and WASOLLS (What a Sad One Looks Like) to provide children with the opportunity to identify and make improvements; in writing examples as well as their own work. Links are made where possible with the wider curriculum themes to support the embedding of skills across all areas of learning. We provide a wide range of activities including use of film and imagery, modelled, shared and guided writing, peer editing and

discussion. We teach introduce a cursive style of handwriting as appropriate to each child with most children developing this skill during Year 2. Handwriting is taught through discreet sessions as well as through other tasks and activities.

Phonics and spelling

The school follows Letters and Sounds phonics progression, supported by Read Write Inc rhymes and picture prompts. Phonics is taught daily across school with children grouped by learning need rather than year group.

Spelling rules are taught on weekly and revisited regularly to support children's application. Weekly spelling tests check children's recall of learnt rules. Staff also monitor the application of spelling rules to writing tasks. Spelling teaching follows our school Phonic and Spelling Progression overview.

Additional support for those children struggling with phonics is provided through our Rapid Phonics and Rapid Reading intervention schemes.

Assessment of English

Teachers provide high quality verbal feedback during lessons to support children in moving their learning on as well as written feedback after the lesson. Teachers use the information gained from marking to inform planning for their next lesson. Teachers make ongoing judgements and assessments about a child's next steps. Targets and next steps are shared verbally with the children and recorded (by the adult in KS1 but working toward the child recording themselves in KS2) on a 'Superhero Target' sheet found at the front of their English book.

Hot and cold tasks are used in writing to compare progress over a unit of work. Regular controlled pieces of writing are produced to demonstrate progress in writing. Writing is judged using Birches Writing Skills Grids, adapted from the Staffordshire Writing Skills Grids. More formal assessments are carried out at the end of the term when writing is completed and judged in a separate book, reading tests are completed (Rising Stars) and phonic/spelling checks are carried out.

Resources

Rich and varied texts are available to support both the teaching and learning of reading and writing throughout school. A range of online resources including multi-media and visual literacy are also available. Pupils have access to age appropriate word books, dictionaries and thesauruses to support and enhance their spelling and vocabulary and children are taught how to use these. As a dyslexia friendly school, a range of resources and approaches are embedded in our day to day practice.

English, fundamental British Values and SMSC

Pupils experience books with a wide range of themes covering tolerance, mutual respect and democracy. Pupils look at how these themes are presented and how characters embody these values. Lessons explore the meaning of concepts such as liberty, democracy and tolerance

Spiritual Development – Pupils read a range of texts which inform their perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different people's feelings and values. Books create a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them, including the intangible. Pupils are encouraged to use their imagination and creativity in their learning. English promotes opportunities for pupils to reflect on their experiences.

Moral Development – Pupils will explore different concepts of right and wrong when reading and responding to a range of texts; for example fables and stories with dilemmas.

Social Development – As well enabling pupils to develop a wide range of basic skills, the teaching of English is used to achieve social goals. English enables pupils to develop a set of values, attitudes and beliefs about themselves and others. Pupils are exposed to a range of characters feelings, which in turn enables them to access and describe their own emotions. Drama opportunities enable pupils to practise social skills such as turn taking and conversational skills.

Cultural Development – Pupils read and respond to a range of poetry and stories from other cultures.

Impact

The percentage of children achieving the expected standard at end EYFS, in the Year 1 Phonic Screen and at the end of KS1 is above National.

At least 80% of children in all cohorts are judged to be at ARE in Reading and writing.