

Language, Literacy & Communication Skills / English Policy

At Barker's Lane Community School we believe that language and learning are interdependent; effective learning depends on the level of language. The development of language, literacy and communication skills will enable each child to enjoy a full participation in society, assisting each child's personal and social development and support them in life-long learning.

Aims and objectives

By immersing children in meaningful language experiences and activities their skills will develop through talking, singing, signing / communicating and listening. At Barker's Lane Community School we provide opportunities for children's differing abilities to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, using language to learn and communicate needs, feelings and thoughts. We encourage them to refer their intentions by asking questions, expressing opinions and making choices through a variety of media, and by building on previous experiences. Children are able to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as non-fiction and media texts. They gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins, developing an awareness of Wales as a country with two languages. We show positive attitudes to speakers of languages other than Welsh and English. They understand that language skills learned in one language can support the development of skills and knowledge in another.

At Barker's Lane Community School we aim to:

- help children communicate confidently and effectively;
- enable children to listen with concentration and respond with understanding in a wide context;
- enable children to use skills of speaking and listening, to inform / report / give and follow instructions in all learning areas;
- enable children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners;
- value children's oral contributions;
- provide a wide range of resources and activities to encourage the development of oracy skills, with much emphasis on drama, role play improvisation and performance;
- have a system of early identification of speaking and listening difficulties, and provide individualised programmes with the support of outside agencies;
- enable children to read with fluency, accuracy, understanding and independence;
- encourage reading as a means of considerable personal enjoyment and as a source for research;
- provide as wide a range of literature as possible;
- provide a dynamic reading environment where children are motivated to take their place as readers;
- promote writing as source of enjoyment and a rewarding pursuit;
- encourage children to think of themselves as writers, writing with confidence, fluency and accuracy, making choices about vocabulary;
- help develop an increasing awareness of purpose and audience;
- provide opportunities for planning, redrafting and evaluating written work;
- encourage the development of an understanding of the structure, vocabulary and grammar of Standard English;
- increase knowledge of spelling conventions and punctuation procedures;
- develop a fluent and legible style of handwriting.
- use ICT to enhance learning and understanding of literacy.

Teaching and learning style

We believe children should acquire and absorb language, literacy and communication skills through a holistic approach to learning. Our principle aim is to develop children's skills, knowledge and understanding through a structured developmental and progressive continuum, taking account of their learning needs and allowing for spontaneous developmental opportunities when they arise. We aim to ensure learning is exciting, challenging and creative, and that learners understand what they need to do to improve and how they can do this.

Language, literacy and communication skills are crucial and important factors in a child's development. Language is a means by which children learn about the world and communicate with peers and adults. It is fundamental in enhancing their cognitive development and in the way they go about solving problems and forming relationships.

We encourage children to understand the importance of looking at the person to whom they are speaking or listening.

We recognise all children are different and provide suitable learning opportunities by matching the challenge of the activity to the needs / ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies taking account of all learning styles, extending children's thinking skills, providing opportunities for children to plan, develop and reflect on their own learning through the organisation of the learning environment. We encourage children to learn collaboratively and take some ownership for their own learning with adults facilitating this, willing to learn alongside.

Early on the learning continuum, children will be involved in activities which begin developing their oracy, reading and writing skills. They will have opportunities to use simple language in their play, follow instructions, listen to and join in with rhymes, songs and stories. They will be able to share and handle books, develop their phonological awareness and explore mark making, emergent writing and word building skills. Experiential activities will support development with skills in real and imaginary situations through structured / free play, role-play and using 'small world' resources. As they progress throughout the Foundation Phase, children's confidence in oracy, reading and writing will increase, they will have a wide variety of methods of communication available to them, including ICT and will become more sophisticated in their learning. Through practical experiential learning opportunities, using a range of resources and ICT children will incorporate relevant detail in explanations, descriptions and narratives, ask and answer questions to clarify their understanding and recognise the importance of language that is clear, fluent and interesting in order to communicate effectively.

They will begin to read with enjoyment, fluency, accuracy and independence, extending their phonological and grammatical awareness when reading a range of texts. In real and imaginary meaningful situations they will have opportunity to write in a variety of genres, organise and present their writing neatly and develop their use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

As they progress through Key Stage 2 children grow in confidence in adapting their talk to an increasing range of situations. They become confident, coherent and engaging speakers, working as individuals and as members of a group. They become increasingly aware of the needs of their audience and of how they can adapt their talk according to its purpose. Their experiences will include opportunities to take part in drama and role-play activities. Growing competence is reflected in their understanding of the appropriate level of formality to use in different situations. They develop as active and responsive pupils in a wide range of situations and show an increasing understanding of how to respond appropriately in both formal and informal contexts. They become increasingly adept at reflecting upon and evaluating their own and others' performance as speakers and listeners and can suggest ways to improve.

In terms of reading children experience a progressively wide range of demanding texts, for enjoyment and information, so that they can develop into fluent and effective readers. Through employing a range of strategies, they are able to read with accuracy and fluency, understanding significant ideas, themes, events and characters. They read a broad range of texts with challenging subject matter and relevance to the twenty-first century. Layers of meaning are identified and commented upon. In their personal response, they are able to show understanding of an author's craft. They express preferences and opinions that they are able to justify. Competence in locating, retrieving, collating and synthesising information and ideas from a range of sources develops. Children become competent writers as they develop, writing clearly and coherently in a range of genre and for a variety of purposes. They acquire a growing understanding of the need to adapt their writing to suit purpose and audience, showing an awareness of the readers' needs. Their awareness of style and the features of different genre are used and they adjust their language to suit the level of formality required for purpose and audience.

In all communication modes they work with increasing accuracy and become reflective and evaluative in relation to their own and others' achievements.

Planning for Language, Literacy & Communication Skills.

Language, Literacy & Communication skills are taught to all pupils at Barker's Lane Community School, taking account of the Curriculum for Wales: revised FP Areas for Learning and KS2 Programmes of Study (2015). This comprises of:

Oracy
Reading
Writing

Planning is carried out in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps out the skills / learning challenges to be covered over the Foundation Phase and for Key Stage 2. The Curriculum Leader liaises with colleagues to establish these.

Our medium-term plans give further details of learning challenges for each term. These plans focus on developing children's skills, determine the learning challenges and ensure an appropriate balance across the term. The Curriculum Leader keeps a copy of these plans and reviews them with colleagues.

Short term plans are completed on a weekly basis by individual / teams of teachers. Each teacher keeps these individual plans, and the teachers and the Curriculum Leader discuss them on an informal basis. The SLT monitors these plans each half-term.

Language, literacy and communication skills are planned to build upon children's prior learning. Whilst there are opportunities for children of all ability levels to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding, there is planned progression built into the scheme of work, so that children are increasing challenged as they progress.

Planning takes account of key skill development, including the development of children's thinking skills through a variety of problem solving and investigational experiences.

The Literacy & Numeracy Framework (LNF)

The Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF) is incorporated into the revised AoL and PoS and sets expectations for learners to develop and apply their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.

Literacy skills in oracy, reading and writing; and numeracy skills in numerical reasoning, number, measures and data are planned for across all areas of the curriculum.

Skills across the curriculum

Thinking Skills

Learners develop their thinking across the curriculum through the processes of **planning, developing and reflecting**.

In English, learners explore, plan, develop and reflect on ideas through speech, reading and writing, responding to their own work as well as that of others. They:

- analyse, structure and organise their work;
- use language creatively;
- use errors and unexpected outcomes to develop their learning;
- use their knowledge about language to explain and predict;
- describe links and similarities in language;
- identify patterns and formulate rules;
- discuss their language learning and evaluate their success.

Learners explore ideas through discussion, reflecting on one another's ideas and opinions and developing their own contributions. They use strategies such as 'diamond ranking' to help them structure their ideas effectively.

Digital Skills

Learners develop their digital skills across the curriculum by **finding, developing, creating and presenting information and ideas** and by using a wide range of equipment and software.

In English, learners develop their digital skills by:

- communicating and sharing information;
- using technology to research, develop and present their work.

Their growing competence in using keyboard skills and presentational packages will be enhanced through presenting work.

The use of digital skills will have a central place in activities provided for learners.

In addition to this at Barker's Lane Community School we take account of statutory requirements and cross curricular themes, such as the Curriculum Cymreig and personal and social education, which includes equal opportunities, food and fitness and sustainable development.

At Key Stage 2, learners at Barker's Lane Community School are given opportunities to build on the experiences gained during the Foundation Phase, and to promote their knowledge and understanding of Wales, and their personal and social development and well-being.

Curriculum Cymreig

English contributes to the Curriculum Cymreig by developing learners' understanding of the cultural identity unique to Wales. They develop awareness of the literary and linguistic heritage through the study of literary, non-literary, media and other texts, and through activities which explore issues pertinent to life in Wales, past and present.

Personal & Social Education

English contributes to learners' personal and social education by providing opportunities to develop their understanding of social interaction through collaborative working. The exploration and reflection upon texts dealing with a range of themes can encourage the development of self-knowledge, emotional maturity and empathy.

Additional Learning Needs

Language, literacy and communication skills are developed with all children, whatever their ability. It forms part of a broad and balanced education for all children.

Learning opportunities are matched to the needs of all children to include challenge and support for our most and least able children. When necessary these take account of any relevant targets set for individual children in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

Equality

Equality is always observed with positive attitudes being developed. We will not unlawfully discriminate on grounds of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity or on the grounds of Welsh language.

All pupils, their parents and guardians, volunteers, staff and school governors are valued and will be treated with dignity and respect. The school will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

We will work across our school community to ensure our commitment to equality and fairness is shared and take steps to ensure that our school is accessible, welcoming and inclusive.

Curriculum Cymreig

Opportunities are provided to develop and apply their skills, knowledge and understanding of the cultural, historical and linguistic characteristics of Wales. The local and school environment is utilised to support this. E.g. role play, listening, reading and responding to Welsh stories

Health and Safety

Children are encouraged to discuss safety implications concerning themselves and their fellow pupils when working. We aim to ensure pupils work in an environment which is safe and hazard free at all times.

Parental Involvement, Partnerships & Community

Parents and members of the community are encouraged throughout the school to support their children's learning.

We actively promote parent's and community support with:

- listening to children read / sharing books
- male role models - CUBs
- playing games
- paired reading
- spelling

Children have homework to reinforce concepts which parents are encouraged to help with, this increases as children progress throughout the school. Reading at home is an expectation, online books are also allocated for children to read if they so wish. Homework also focuses on writing skills, including spelling.

Volunteers come into school on a regular basis to support children with their reading. Authors and poets are invited into school in each year to inspire pupils. We visit the local library.

We offer bi-annual reading workshops / information for parents.

Liaison / Transition

Whole school planning allows for smooth transition between phases. Liaison between teachers, pre-school settings and local high schools allows for smooth transition, progression and continuity from pre-school to FP to KS2 to KS3.

We offer Language & Play activities as part of our pre-school transition in the term before a child enters Nursery.

Assessment and Recording

Statutory assessments are carried out in the first six weeks in Reception using an observation based assessment tool, the Foundation Phase Profile (FPP). The FPP is also utilized with Nursery to provide on-entry information. Assessments in Early Years are utilised to plan for the beginning of each child's learning journey at Barker's Lane.

Statutory assessment at the end of Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2 consists of teacher assessment during the Summer term in Year 2 and Year 6. These assessments:

- are based on the teacher's knowledge of how the learner performs across a range of contexts
- takes into account different strengths and areas for development in that learner's performance
- are checked against adjacent outcomes / level descriptions to ensure that the outcome / level judged to be the most appropriate is the closest overall match to the learner's performance in the attainment target.

Since Summer 2018, Y2 pupils have been assessed against recalibrated outcomes which were revised against the expectations in the revised AoL.

The national personalized assessments for reading are administered from Year 2 – Year 6 and support teacher assessment.

Teachers assess children's work in language, literacy and communication / English from three aspects. We make formative assessments through observation and marking which are used to help adjust daily plans. These short-term assessments are closely matched to learning challenges and are recorded as part of on-going formative assessment.

We make assessments on a termly basis to measure progress / inform next steps for learning by making judgements as we observe children participating in activities and by looking at their written work. We make a 'best fit' judgement which takes account of F.P and N.C guidance.

We make summative assessments during the Summer Term, and we use these to assess progress against school and national targets. We pass this information on to the next teacher at the end of the year, so that s/he can plan for the new school year. The previous class teacher and new class teacher together then review / set targets for the next school year, the following Autumn Term.

These records also enable the teacher to make an annual assessment of progress for each child, as part of the child's annual report to parents.

Resources

There are a wide range of resources, including digital resources to support language, literacy and communication skills across the school. These are housed in classrooms and in central resource areas. The library areas house a range of books to support children's individual research, there is also a range of fiction books arranged in alphabetical order by author surname.

As a school we have also invested in reading materials aimed towards encouraging boys to read.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring the standards of learning and the quality of teaching language, literacy and communication is the responsibility of the Curriculum Leader. The work of the Curriculum Leader also involves supporting colleagues, being informed about current developments, and providing a strategic lead and direction for this learning area within the school. The Curriculum Leader liaises with staff, the headteacher and indicates areas for improvement. This is recorded on our School Improvement Plan and shared with staff and governors termly.

This policy was compiled in June 2012 in consultation with all staff and the governing body. It was reviewed in November 2015 by Miss J Taylor, where amendments taking account of statutory changes and current guidance were made.

It was reviewed in October 2019 and will be amended to reflect the requirements of Curriculum 2022 as appropriate.