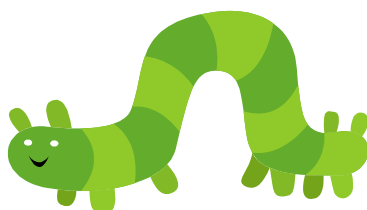




and



Abbots Farm Preschool

English Policy

September 2025

Review by September 2027

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1. Overview

English is a fundamental life skill that should develop children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes.

At Abbots Farm Infant School, we aim to provide our children with a varied, creative approach to the teaching of English which allows them to gain an understanding of how language works and encourages a love of the subject.

We recognise that a key influence on language development is the provision of an environment that is rich in spoken and written language. We therefore believe that the robust teaching for vocabulary acquisition is vital for children's spoken, reading and writing development. As children develop a broad and deep vocabulary, their confidence and independence in learning within and across subjects will increase.

We plan continuous learning which encourages children to use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking, listening and writing across a range of situations. Our 'Talk for Learning' approach allows the children opportunities to work collaboratively in order to support, challenge and enhance their learning experience. Rich learning opportunities are designed to enable children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as enthusiastic, independent learners inside and outside of the school environment.

Our English curriculum is divided into main areas of

- Reading
- Writing (including Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar and Handwriting)
- Phonics
- Vocabulary

Speaking and Listening are key skills interwoven throughout our curriculum.

2. Roles and responsibilities

The **subject leader** is responsible for:

- Encouraging staff to provide effective learning opportunities for children.
- Helping to expand on colleagues' areas of expertise in English.
- Organising the deployment of resources and carrying out audits of all related resources.
- Liaising with teachers across all phases.
- Communicating developments in the subject to all teaching staff and the senior leadership team (SLT), as appropriate.
- Leading staff meetings and providing staff members with the appropriate training.

- Organising, providing and monitoring CPD opportunities regarding English skills.
- Ensuring common standards are met for recording and assessing children's' performance.
- Advising on the contribution of English in other curriculum areas, including cross-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

The **classroom teacher** is responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with this policy.
- Ensuring progression of children's' English skills, with due regard to the national curriculum.
- Planning lessons effectively, ensuring a range of teaching methods are used to cover the content of the national curriculum.
- Liaising with the **subject leader/SENDCO** about key topics, resources and support for individual children.
- Monitoring the progress of children in their class and reporting this on a termly basis.
- Reporting any concerns regarding the teaching of the subject to the **subject leader** or a **member of the SLT**.
- Undertaking any training that is necessary in order to effectively teach English.

The **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCO)** is responsible for:

- Liaising with the **subject leader** in order to implement and develop specialist English-based learning throughout the school.
- Organising and providing training for staff regarding the English curriculum for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- Advising staff on how best to support children's' needs.
- Advising staff on the inclusion of English objectives in pupils' individual educational plans.
- Advising staff on the use of teaching assistant (TAs) in order to meet children's' needs.

3. Reading

We aim to

- foster a climate in which reading is valued as a skill to be used for pleasure and as a tool for learning.
- encourage the children's love of books.
- introduce children to a range of literature.
- enable children to become independent readers.

We will do this by

- teaching children how to handle books (e.g. direction of text- top to bottom, left to right, and turning pages)
- encouraging children to notice patterns in texts (e.g. rhyme, repeated refrains) and to join in when they know them.
- teaching children to decode text effortlessly in order to understand what they read **(see 'phonics' for more detail)**.
- teaching children skills of inference, prediction, retrieval, and summarising in order to explain what they have read and make comparisons between texts and authors.
- building children's ability to ask questions about what they read; particularly new vocabulary **(see 'vocabulary' for more detail)**.
- Using regular ongoing assessment to ensure children are making expected progress. **(see 'ongoing and statutory assessment' for more detail)**
- planning timely interventions for those children identified as needing extra support.
- offering children a variety of daily reading experiences. For example;
 - Guided Reading: Children will read a book chosen for their reading ability with a small group of children at the same ability. Staff will listen to children read with a particular focus in mind (e.g. decoding, fluency, expression, comprehension).
 - Paired Reading (during Guided Reading): In this strategy, students read aloud to each other. When using partners, more fluent readers can be paired with less fluent readers, or children who read at the same level can be paired to reread a story they have already read. This can help to build fluency and enjoyment.
 - Whole Class/Shared Reading: Children will read a text on screen or listen to a text being read that is perhaps beyond their ability to read independently. The focus is on discussion and building an understanding of different text types and themes. Children may complete activities based on their responses to text and any discussion. Tasks may be completed independently or through Talk for Learning style activities.
 - 1 to 1 Reading: Children will read a book at an appropriate level to an adult. The focus will vary according to the ability of the child (e.g. decoding, fluency, expression, comprehension)
- ensuring reading for pleasure and purpose is enthusiastically modelled throughout the school. For example, by:
 - building learning across the curriculum around quality texts

- providing access to texts related to the children's current learning.
- sharing a class story every day that are strategically planned for
- promoting 'class authors' or 'star book' (preschool) each half term, covering a wide range of texts/ genres over the course of the year allowing children to compare and build up a knowledge of different text and story structures
- using e-books and books in other formats to engage and inspire.
- giving access to high quality reading materials- a wide variety of text types with appropriate levels of ability and child-friendly appeal. This includes:
 - 'home readers'- children choose these texts and may change them as often as they wish
 - 'phonics home readers' - colour banded and matched to phonic stages
 - class reading areas- children have daily access to a wide range of texts suited to their age and ability.
 - school library- children visit on a rota basis and choose a book to take home and share. A separate area is available for Pre-school children to access Library books.
- encouraging and valuing reading through the whole-school rewards system 'The Reading Rainbow'.
- maintaining home-school reading links and parental engagement through use of a reading diary.
- organising regular school events (e.g. visiting story-tellers, book days, assemblies)

4. Writing

We aim to

- equip children with the tools they need to become independent writers.
- give children a purpose for their writing.
- teach children to begin to adapt their writing to suit their audience and purpose by enabling children to become familiar with a range of text types and genres of writing.
- develop children's imagination through story and poetry writing
- give children the space to make mistakes, allowing them to develop their individuality and creativity.
- teach children to form letters accurately and clearly leading in a neat cursive style in Year 2.
- teach children the grapheme-phoneme correspondences needed to make early plausible attempts at spelling.
- teach children common spelling rules as set out in the National Curriculum.
- develop children's knowledge and use of grammar rules as set out in the National Curriculum.

We will do this by

- following the principles of 'Drawing Club' and 'Curious Quests' to teach children the joy of writing within an engaging narrative by improving their vocabulary and applying their phonic understanding

- creating a writing environment in each classroom that include many different examples of writing provided by both the teacher and child: books, display labels, notices, children's work produced in different formats from home and school.
- providing a plentiful supply of resources for writing in order to inspire the children to practise their skills.
- demonstrating the link between the spoken and written word, including through the use of ICT.
- strengthening muscle control needed to develop gross and fine motor skills through fun exercises such as Dough Disco, Squiggle, Moves and Write Dance.
- teaching children how to write in a legible joined style. (Letter join scheme)
- encouraging children to use their increasing phonic knowledge (grapheme-phoneme correspondences) to aid plausible early attempts at spelling.
- ensuring there is a supply of sound mats, word mats with visuals, dictionaries, word-banks and thesauruses available to aide children's writing attempts.
- teaching and modelling the correct use of grammar and punctuation and planning purposeful activities that provide children the time and space to practise their skills.
- using quality texts (fiction and non-fiction) to inspire independent writing.
- using carefully chosen vocabulary in spoken and written context in order to develop children's knowledge of language. (*vocabulary tiers- see 'Vocabulary' for more detail*)
- displaying new vocabulary in order to encourage children to use in their independent writing.
- following our Talk for Learning approach;
 - modelling the thought process involved in writing.
 - modelling writing in different contexts and for different purposes in order for children to see and begin to understand the writing process (purpose; choice of vocabulary; spelling, punctuation and grammar; editing and improving)
 - sharing writing experiences with the children in order for them to make attempts and choices in a supportive environment.
 - planning for children work collaboratively in small groups or pairs in order to share ideas that inspire and support their independent writing.
 - planning opportunities for children to write purposefully in a playful environment in order to consolidate their learning.

5. Phonics

We aim to

At Abbots Farm Infant School, we aim to provide pupils with the tools to learn to read accurately. This equips them with the decoding ability which is a crucial element in reading success. The systematic teaching of phonics has a high priority throughout Early Years and Key Stage 1. At Abbots Farm Infant School, we value reading as a key life skill, and are dedicated to enabling our pupils to become lifelong readers. We acknowledge that children need to be taught the key skills in segmenting and blending to be equipped with the knowledge to be able to

complete the phonics check at the end of year 1. We also value and encourage the pupils to read for enjoyment and recognise that this starts with the foundations of acquiring letter sounds, segmenting and blending skills. The school's shared vision is that every pupil learns to read quickly and continues to read – widely and often. The aims of our phonics and reading curriculum is to develop children who:

- apply the skill of blending phonemes in order to read words.
- segment words into their constituent phonemes in order to spell words.
- learn that blending and segmenting words are reversible processes.
- read high frequency words that do not conform to regular phonic patterns.
- read texts and words that are within their phonic capabilities as early as possible.
- decode texts effortlessly so all their resources can be used to comprehend what they read.

We will do this by

- Through the teaching of Bug Club Phonics, the children are taught the essential skills needed for reading. Phonics is taught daily to all children in Early Years, and Key Stage 1. Extra support is provided to those in Year 2 who have not passed the phonics screening in Year 1 and interventions are planned for those children who are working below expected levels.
 - Children who attend pre-school are provided with a daily phase 1 phonics activity, with a focus on sound awareness.
 - Children in Reception focus on reading and writing the basic 40+ phonemes (units 1-12) followed by the alternative spellings of these phonemes acquired in Key Stage 1 (units 13-30).
 - Decodable readers are introduced at the end of Unit 2. This enables children to apply the taught strategies and enjoy contextualised reading early on
- Staff systematically teach learners the relationship between sounds and the written spelling patterns, or graphemes, which represent them. Phonics is delivered in a whole class format because this has been shown to foster a sense of social inclusion and boost the performance of the children who are progressing more slowly. However, differentiated questioning is used within the lesson to ensure that all children are fully engaged.

6. Vocabulary

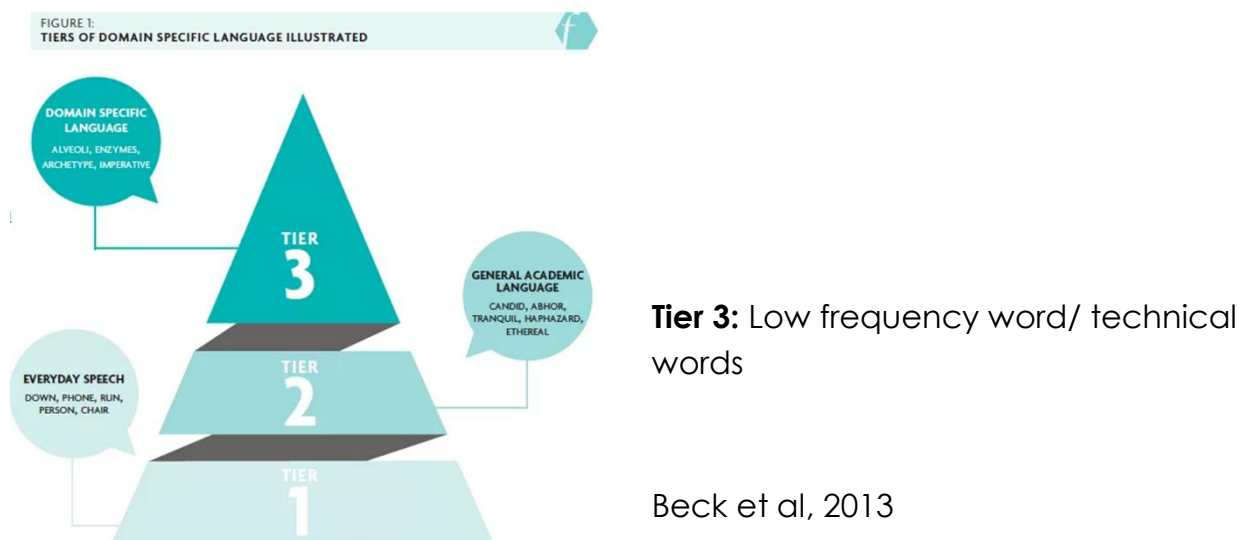
We aim to

- provide children with access and exposure to high quality vocabulary that will enhance their understanding of the world around them.
- develop children's interest in words and their meanings as active listeners, speakers, readers and writers.
- extend children's vocabulary in a way which allows meaningful recall of words to strengthen learning across the curriculum.

We will do this by

- introducing identified, relevant 'Tier 2' words encountered within quality texts, across subjects and the wider curriculum.
- intentionally teaching carefully selected vocabulary through explicit introductory activities and subsequent daily interaction teaching strategies.
- displaying new vocabulary in the classroom and on word mats to aid retention and encourage usage.
- providing children with multiple opportunities to encounter words through new situations and contexts.
- deliberately revisiting words in order to integrate new vocabulary and secure understanding.

Overview of Tiered Vocabulary



7. Ongoing and Statutory Assessment:

Assessment of children's development is an integral part of teaching and learning. On a daily basis, the work children produce and their interactions with staff, alongside observations of social interaction and independent play in the school environment inform next steps. Children's progress is continually monitored using teacher's professional judgements and formally reported to Senior Leaders once per term. These judgements are used alongside Statutory forms of assessment.

Ongoing Assessment for Learning

- Children in Pre-school are assessed via observations and interactions with staff using 'development matters' bands. Observations are recorded and form part of the child's portfolio of evidence which tracks their progress.
- On entry to Reception, children are assessed using NFER (National Foundation for Educational Research) tests.
- Throughout Reception, children's progress is monitored and tracked against Development Matters. As in Pre-school, children's work and observations are collected to form a portfolio of evidence which tracks their progress.
- Children's progress through the phonic phases is closely monitored and tracked throughout Early Years and Key Stage 1. Children are assessed at the end of each Phonics phase and this is used by Year group Leaders to closely monitor children's progress.
- Where children are not making expected progress, teachers will work alongside parents, the SENCO and any other relevant agencies to discuss next steps in order to support them.
- For reading and writing, National Curriculum statements are used to plan children's progress and determine next steps in learning.
- Children's writing will be assessed according to the school's assessment policy. (*see marking policy for more detail*)
- In Key Stage 1, children may undertake informal spelling tests based on phonics and spelling patterns taught throughout the year, as well as Common Exception Words taught in Years 1 and 2.

Statutory Assessments

- In line with statutory requirements, children in Reception are baseline assessed on entry using NFER (National Foundation for Educational Research) tests,
- In accordance with National guidelines, data at the end of Reception is submitted indicating whether children are 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding' Early Learning Goals which include goals related to Literacy, communication and language. Judgements are based on an EYFS (Early Years & Foundation Phase) profile which is completed for each child in Reception and is cumulative observational evidence recorded over the course of the year.
- Judgements made are robustly moderated within school, with our Federation Schools, with other schools in the local area, and periodically with the Local Authority to ensure judgements are accurate, valid and consistent with national standards.
- In Year 1, children will undertake a phonic screening check which will show how well your child can use the phonics skills they've learned up to that point. Children who do not meet the required pass mark will have the opportunity to repeat this in Year 2. The assessments take place one to one with a teacher.

8. Equal opportunities

- All children will have equal access to the English curriculum.
- Gender, learning ability, physical ability, ethnicity, linguistic ability and/or cultural circumstances will not impede children from accessing English lessons.
- If English is an additional language (EAL), additional support will be allocated to the child to provide extra help where needed. Additionally, outside support through EMTAS can be offered to the child.
- Where it is inappropriate for a child to participate in a lesson due to reasons related to any of the factors outlined above, the lesson will be adapted to meet the child's needs and alternative arrangements involving extra support will be provided where necessary.
- Cultural and gender differences are positively reflected in lessons and teaching materials used.

9. Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be reviewed biannually by the subject leader. The next scheduled review date for this policy is **September 2027**.
- The subject leader will monitor teaching and learning in English at Abbots Farm Infant and Abbots Farm Preschool, ensuring that the content of the national curriculum is covered across all phases of children's education.
- A named member of the governing board will be briefed to oversee the teaching of English, and meets regularly with the subject leader to review progress.
- Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all teaching staff.