

What does English look like in EYFS at Bilston?

Historically, children enter our Reception class well below the expected standard in basic communication and language skills and with very little phonic awareness. Many have an understanding of simple vocabulary and the ability to follow some single step instructions but find more complex language and instructions more difficult to comprehend. Some children have had very little access to stories and they are not read to at home. Writing and fine motor control is also a common area of weakness. This is shown through the NFER baseline data and baseline teacher assessments. Our EYFS curriculum is centred around language rich texts covered in a topic based style. Each half term, our learning is tailored around a basic topic through which we can follow the children's interests. Every week, children are introduced to a new text related to the topic and fully immersed in this text with learning opportunities and enhancements linked to all areas of learning. We have a skills and knowledge grid that maps out the progression of skills and knowledge in all 7 areas of learning. This is reflective of the low starting points of our children but has ambitious end points that not only cover the expected Early Learning Goals for EYFS but also additional skills and knowledge that we would like our children to have to fully prepare them for the Year 1 curriculum.

Communication and Language

- Communication and language underpins everything that we do in Reception. Children are immersed in rich language to ensure that they are given a wide range of vocabulary that they can understand and use. Adults model key vocabulary and accurate language use at all times.
- As we receive children from many different settings and they are often not used to sitting for main teaching, listening and attention is a strand of communication and language that we have to work on quickly in September, finding opportunities for children to sit for short periods of time to share stories and sing nursery rhymes and songs. This said, a large proportion of the day during Autumn term is allocated to child led learning, during which times, carefully planned provision allows children to develop their language and communication through play as well as lots of opportunities to develop gross and fine motor control, laying the foundations for writing.
- High quality interactions with adults ensure that children are given the opportunity to engage in back and forth conversations, encouraging them to listen and respond to others. Whilst evidence collection has reduced with the 2021 EYFS Framework, when engaging with children, we use the model of a dialogue to record. For example T – what have you made? C – a rocket T – wow! Where will you go in your rocket? C – to the moon T – What do you think it'll be like on the moon? What will you see? C - ... by approaching interactions like this with children, all staff will be consciously thinking about how to extend an interaction and encourage the back and forth dialogue.
- Within the environment, there are lots of opportunities to develop children's Communication and Language skills through play with others. Equipment such as puppets, role play, small world play, books, pictures and activities that require problem solving and team work are available to encourage children to speak to each other, listening and responding to the ideas of others.

- For any children who are identified as having speech and language difficulties (whether this has been identified by their previous setting or by our staff during the first weeks in Reception) they will be referred to Mrs. Bircher, our speech and language trained member of staff who will carry out an assessment and ascertain whether they need a referral to the Speech and Language team at the Gem Centre or whether they may need in school support with her. We have also introduced Makaton to support children who are less developed in their verbal communication, those who have English as an additional language and as a way to encourage children to communicate with each other. This is something that has been developed as a whole school approach, involving all children, staff and parents.

Reading

- Alongside our text of the week, there are also 2 daily slots for stories and texts chosen by the children to promote a love of reading in the classroom. Reading areas are prominent and reflect the work of significant authors, following the same format as the rest of the school. Book areas contain a range of texts including those that promote diversity.
- We follow RWI as a systematic synthetic approach to phonics. We start this during the second week in September, introducing a sound a day. Children's phonic ability is assessed through the RWI baseline assessment and also the NFER baseline. Throughout Autumn 1, children are taught as a whole class with the support member of staff picking up those children who are ready to blend more independently or those who are finding sound retention difficult. As advocated in the RWI programme, children are taught to write sounds from the beginning. For those who do not have the

fine motor control to access this, gross motor activities and activities to strengthen core muscles for writing are provided to support these children. Following a RWI assessment, children are put into ability groups from Autumn 2 allowing those who are ready, to progress to blending and segmenting and those who are not, to revisit the sounds. Staff quickly identify any children who are finding phonics difficult and they receive 1:1 daily RWI intervention. For those who are making rapid progress, the RWI leader may be asked to assess early and they will be moved into the appropriate group for their ability. In addition to the 20-30 minutes RWI session daily, 'speed minutes' are also timetabled at various points throughout the day to encourage rapid sound recognition. Each week, a RWI video from the RWI portal is sent home to be accessed as homework. This is evidenced using the home-school app 'Class Dojo'.

- Like the rest of the school, Lexia is used in EYFS to support children's development in reading with children on average accessing the programme at their level for 10-15 minutes weekly by Spring term.
- Children also take a reading book home each week to be shared with an adult and they have a weekly session in the school library.
- During our termly parent sessions, a reading area is set up with key questions for parents to ask when reading with their child. At these sessions, children are also offered the chance to choose a book to keep and share at home.
- In Autumn 2022, school facilitated a visit to Bilston Library for parents and children to attend a story telling session aimed at EYFS children. We aim to continue the link with the local library in the hope that some of our children may start to use it to extend their access to children's literature.

Writing

- Usually, the majority of children enter Reception with little prior experience of writing, this is shown through swapping hands, holding the pencil with a palmer grasp or lacking any kind of weight or control behind the pencil to make purposeful marks. The majority of children are also unable to recognise or write their names. From September, there are lots of opportunities for emergent writing within the environment with a range of tools and media to use to record. We develop the foundations for writing through mark making on different scales, development of gross and fine motor control through large movement activities such as ribbons, hula hoops and large mark making equipment in the outdoor area and smaller development through dough disco, tracing, cutting etc.
- On entry into school each morning, children are given a laminated picture of themselves with their name, they begin by tracing over the name then when they are more confident with writing their name, they begin to write it from memory, with a scaffold to copy if needed. Those who can, are encouraged to write their full name. This is used as a 'self registration' activity which children enjoy.
- During Autumn term, writing is taught through RWI. Children are taught to form letters linked to the sounds using the RWI rhymes and begin to write sounds from memory. As children progress, they will be expected to segment to spell words and write these during their RWI sessions. There will also be lots of opportunities within the environment to practise writing sounds and words taught in RWI sessions. By the end of Autumn term, we are hopeful that many children are able to segment CVC

words more independently. For those who can't additional support is timetabled to give children additional practice.

- During Spring term, children will have been assessed again using the RWI assessment and sorted into the appropriate ability group. During these sessions, some will continue to write individual sounds, some will be learning to segment to spell using magnetic boards, some will be reading and writing CVC words more independently and some will have moved on to holding a short sentence or phrase and recording this. In order to reach the Early Learning Goal for writing, children realistically need to be writing phrases by the end of Spring term. Whilst RWI focusses heavily on the reading element of phonics, in order to achieve the ELG, we have introduced an additional writing slot onto our Reception timetable. During this time, teachers model to all children (regardless of phonic ability) how to say, segment and write a phrase or short sentence. Without this, children in the lower RWI groups, would not have access to sentence writing. Within the environment there are scaffolds and pictures to prompt writing that children can access independently. For those children who are in RWI groups 1B and 1C, additional support is in place to move them from word writing to phrase writing. As RWI assesses reading ability, we do have children who can read and blend but not write as their fine motor control is not yet developed, for these children, there are lots of opportunities to work on their gross motor and fine motor within the environment and also hand over hand guidance when using smaller equipment for mark making or writing sounds.
- By Summer term, our aim is to make children more independent in their writing, being able to apply the skills they have learned to write phrases and sentences independently. This will support them with the transition to Year 1. There will be a balance of child led and adult led activities, with children

being asked to complete a set task on occasions. For those who are not ready, support and modelling will continue within in 1:1, small group or play based situations.

- Each area of EYFS has a writing area, including the outdoor area where children have continuous access to a range of media and tools with enhancements made to these areas to create interest for the children or to link to the current topic or text.

Below is our skills and knowledge map for Areas of Learning related to English in Reception:

COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE				
Listening, Attention and Understanding				
I can follow instructions.	I can follow single step instructions 'Hang up your coat. Sit on the carpet...'	I can predict the routines of the day.	I can follow instructions with two steps 'Go the toilet and put on your coat.'	I can follow multi-step instructions, asking for clarity where needed.
I can engage with a shared text. <i>See Literacy - Comprehension</i>	I can sit and listen to a story with pictures. I can join in with songs, rhymes and poems. I enjoy listening to stories.	I can sit and listen to a story with pictures, answering questions to show my understanding (see Literacy – comprehension) I can join in with repeated refrains. I engage with both fiction and non-fiction texts. I enjoy listening to stories.	I can sit and listen to a story with or without pictures, answering questions to show my understanding (see Literacy – comprehension) I understand and use new vocabulary in different contexts. I engage with both fiction and non-fiction texts. I enjoy listening to stories.	Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions. Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding.

Speaking				
I can share relevant ideas coherently.	I can speak in sentences of 4-6 words. I can use talk to organise myself and my play: "Let's go on a bus... you sit there... I'll be the driver."	I can speak in longer, coherent sentences. I can use a variety of question words – what, where, who? I can learn and use new vocabulary.	I can articulate my ideas and thoughts in well-formed sentences. I can connect one idea or action to another using a range of connectives. I can explain how things work and why they might happen. I can ask questions to find out more and to check I understand what has been said to me.	Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.
I can initiate and hold a conversation with 1 or more person.	I can respond to questions or simple conversations with an adult or child.	I can join in a conversation with an adult or peer and continue the conversation, taking my turn to speak.	I can join or initiate a conversation with an adult or peer and continue the conversation, listening to the ideas of others and taking my turn to speak.	Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary.
I can talk about events in the past, present and future	I can talk about events that are relevant to me in the present.	I can use a wider range of irregular verbs accurately in the past. (eat – ate, see – saw, go – went...)	I can use the past tense to talk about events in the more distant past.	Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-

<p>using tenses correctly.</p>	<p>I can recall some key moments that are important to me in the past. I can usually use past tense regular verbs correctly (need – needed, shout – shouted...)</p> <p>I can anticipate what might happen in the immediate future. 'Putting on my coat = going outside.'</p>	<p>I can talk about future events in my daily routine, using prompts to support where appropriate – 'Now I am eating my lunch, next I will go out to play.'</p>	<p>I can use the future tense to begin to make sense of my future and the future of things/people around me. 'When I am older, I will be a teacher.' 'Next year, my brother will start Nursery.'</p>	<p>fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate.</p> <p>Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.</p>
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PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Gross Motor Skills

<p>I can balance and move skilfully</p>	<p>I can go up steps and stairs, or climb up apparatus, using alternate feet.</p> <p>I can skip, hop, stand on one leg and hold a pose for a game like musical statues.</p> <p>I can make large circular and linear movements with my arms.</p> <p>I can collaborate with others to manage large items, such as moving a long plank safely, carrying large hollow blocks.</p>	<p>I am showing improved balance on a range of climbing equipment.</p> <p>I can move and stop confidently.</p> <p>I can use my core muscle strength to achieve a good posture when sitting at a table or sitting on the floor.</p> <p>I can combine different movements with ease and fluency.</p> <p>I can confidently and safely use a range of large and small</p>	<p>I am developing confidence, competence, precision and accuracy when engaging in activities that involve a ball.</p> <p>I am developing overall body-strength, balance, co-ordination and agility.</p> <p>I am further developing and refining a range of ball skills including: throwing, catching, kicking, passing, batting, and aiming.</p>	<p>Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others.</p> <p>Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing.</p> <p>Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.</p>
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Fine Motor Skills				
I can use a pen or pencil with good control to write recognisable letters and numbers.	I show a preference for a dominant hand.	<p>I hold my pencil with an effective grip.</p> <p>I can mark make on a small scale and I'm beginning to write recognisable letters and numbers.</p>	I can write recognisable letters and numbers that are becoming more consistent in size.	<p>I can use a fluent style for writing letters and numbers correctly.</p> <p>Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases</p>
I can use a range of small tools accurately (scissors, pens, paintbrushes...)	<p>I can hold scissors appropriately and safely.</p> <p>I can mark make using a range of small tools (pens, crayons, paintbrushes, chalk...)</p>	<p>I can cut with scissors showing some control.</p> <p>I show increasing control when mark making with a range of small tools.</p>	<p>I can cut with scissors showing increasing control and precision.</p> <p>I can choose and use small tools for specific purposes.</p>	<p>Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paintbrushes and cutlery.</p> <p>Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.</p>
LITERACY				
Comprehension				
I understand the texts that I read	I know that text carries meaning.	I can identify the parts of a book.	I can retell a story with greater coherency.	Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and

<p>and those that are read to me.</p>	<p>I can hold a book and turn the pages carefully.</p> <p>I can talk about the pictures in a book. Who are the characters? What are they doing?</p>	<p>I show an awareness that English language is read from left to right.</p> <p>I can make simple predictions about what might happen next.</p> <p>I can retell a story in simple terms.</p> <p>I am beginning to understand 'why' questions. 'Why do you think the caterpillar got fat?'</p>	<p>I can understand 'why' questions, like: "Why do you think the caterpillar got so fat?"</p> <p>I can retell a story using full sentences with some reference to language from the text.</p>	<p>narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary.</p> <p>Anticipate (where appropriate) key events in stories.</p> <p>Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, nonfiction, rhymes and poems and during role play</p>
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Word Reading

<p>I can read words in line with RWI expectations.</p> <p>I can read simple sentences consistent with my phonic knowledge.</p>	<p>I can hear the initial sound in words.</p>	<p>I can read all Set 1 Sounds.</p> <p>I can orally blend the sounds in words.</p>	<p>I can blend sounds to read words.</p> <p>I can read ditties and beginning to read Red level story books.</p>	<p>I can read some Set 2 sounds.</p> <p>I can read Green level story books.</p> <p>Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs.</p> <p>Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending.</p>
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				Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.
Writing				
I can write simple sentences.	I can speak in sentences. I give meaning to the marks I make.	I can hear some of the sounds in words and record them using recognisable letters. I can write my name.	I am beginning to split simple phrases into words, build and record these words using phonic knowledge.	<p>I can orally compose simple sentences and record them in phonetically plausible words using recognisable letters.</p> <p>I show an awareness of using a capital letter and full stop in my sentences.</p> <p>Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.</p> <p>Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters.</p> <p>Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others</p>