

Bullion Lane Primary
School



English Policy

English

Bullion Lane aims to provide a broad, balanced curriculum which is relevant to and widens the experiences of our children in order to prepare them for the challenges they will face and inspire a love of knowledge, learning and life.

English is the gateway to success and the backbone of every subject. By speaking and listening, reading or writing, it allows children to express themselves creatively and effectively and is crucial in enabling children to engage successfully in society. At Bullion Lane, we want to ensure all of our pupils become competent speakers, readers and writers who are able to transfer these skills to every subject and to continue to develop these skills in the future.

Our whole school approach to English provides complete coverage of the aims of the National Curriculum and incorporates high quality texts at its core to engage and enthuse children in their learning.

Reading

Intent

'The journey of a lifetime starts with the turning of a page'. (Rachel Anders)

This statement underpins our whole approach to reading. We believe reading is the source of success and a fundamental part of the curriculum. Learning to read opens up the door to all areas of learning and is a skill that will last a lifetime. As a school, we aim to share our love of reading and develop and ignite a passion in children for reading. We aim for children to become competent and confident readers, who are able to decode and read fluently whilst developing solid comprehension skills.

Reading is the basis for all work in school from English teaching, curriculum and direct reading sessions.

Implementation

We have a comprehensive reading strategy in school, beginning with phonics and early language to guided reading sessions, independent reading and shared reading sessions, aiming to create lifelong readers.

Phonics:

As a school, we follow the Read Write Inc phonics teaching programme. This ensures children have the prerequisite skills for phonics learning developed effectively by following the Read Write Inc structured phonics programme which is tracked and assessed to ensure all children make effective progress from starting point to an end point of being a confident, independent reader. Phonics is taught daily in all EYFS and KS1 classes to targeted groups of children. Evidence of continued and consistent practice is manifest during continuous provision with indoor and outdoor phonics games and during 1:1 reading time.

Independent Reading:

As a school, we place a huge emphasis on independent reading and continuously keep our library stocked with new and exciting books for the children to read. As well as this, each classroom has a reading area with a variety of books for the children to read at their leisure. We believe independent reading is a crucial time where children can get lost in a book and enrich their passion for reading.

In order to ensure children are reading age appropriate books, we have a tracking system in place where pupils are regularly assessed using NFER and the Read Write Inc screening and matched accordingly to suitable texts to ensure a high level of challenge for all pupils.

For children in EYFS, KS1 and any children not meeting age related expectations, independent reading follows the phonics strategies of Read Write Inc. Children access a range of 'real' texts to explore books and stories and develop a love of reading from a young age alongside their early language development and beyond. This progresses into reading wordless picture books and then into Read Write Inc ditties and story books from RWI. Children are heard to read individually at least once per week by a RWI trained adult.

Guided Reading:

Guided reading is seen as paramount in developing children's reading even further. It gives them the opportunity to read aloud or independently and discuss texts in a small group, inferring and deducing ideas, making predictions, summarising, discussing an author's use of language and many other essential skills in developing comprehension. These sessions occur regularly across all year groups and guided reading is mapped across year groups with a range of high-quality texts available. Children in EYFS, Year 1 and 2 use RWI texts for guided reading moving onto more challenging texts as they become fluent and independent readers.

Shared/Whole Class Reading:

As well as guided reading, we also place a significant emphasis on whole class shared reading. This allows children to listen to the teacher read, which in turn helps them understand intonation and how to read fluently as well as extending their vocabulary. It also allows children to listen to the ideas of others and build upon their own, developing their comprehension, confidence and motivation to read.

Reading Intervention:

At Bullion Lane, we believe regular assessment is essential to monitor and boost the progress of children. With continuous and regular phonic assessments across the year, children who are not meeting age related expectations are targeted for personalised learning in a small group or 1:1 intervention. We use NFER tests three times throughout all year groups to determine a child's reading age and inform interventions further. We also use computer-based programs as a boost for reading such as Lexia and use Fiction Express in Year 5 and Accelerated Reader in Year 6 to develop the reading stamina, speed and the comprehension of all pupils.

Love of Reading:

We love reading ourselves and this is embedded throughout school life. We regularly share stories and reading opportunities with our children.

As a staff team, we certainly promote this love of reading from our own personal perspective.

Some ideas we use to promote a love of reading are:

- Staff sharing what they are reading at home with the children
- Our volunteer librarian regularly changes displays in our school library and ensures new authors and books are available
- At playtime we have a reading trolley on wheels that goes out to the KS2 yard. This is where children can enjoy stories together in their free time. .
- Books are available in our garden area at lunch and break times for children to read at their leisure.
- Accelerated Reader quizzes with certificates given as an incentive.
- Guest author visits
- Theatre and pantomime productions twice yearly- often traditional tales linked or classical texts.
- Class trips to library.
- Book clubs
- Class trips to the local bookshop where books are taken and exchanged
- Regular book recommendations for parents on the Class Dojo
- Stay and play story sessions and family learning in EYFS.
- Whole school text focus linked to classical literature.
- World Book Week.
- Assemblies around staff's favourite books

Impact

When children leave Bullion Lane at the end of Year 6, they are confident and competent readers with a passion for reading. They are able to read and comprehend a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry texts and participate in discussions about books, inferring ideas by reading between the lines, making predictions and evaluating an author's use of language and the impact this can have on the reader. As a result, they will have a good level of comprehension and build upon their vocabulary knowledge. They also read books for pleasure and recognise the importance reading has for success in all other areas of the curriculum.

Writing

Intent:

At Bullion Lane, we believe that all pupils should be able to confidently communicate their knowledge, ideas and emotions through their writing. We want them to write accurately and coherently, for a variety of purposes and audiences whilst obtaining a broad vocabulary, a solid understanding of sentence structure, a concrete understanding of grammar and be able to spell new words by applying the spelling patterns and rules previously learned. As well as the content of our children's writing, we believe that all pupils should be encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their writing and hold high expectations. We ensure this by teaching and developing a joined, cursive handwriting style. We believe it is absolutely crucial that children learn to edit and improve their writing regularly and encourage independence in doing so – an essential skill in becoming a successful writer. We promote creativity and want to build self confidence in children when writing.

Implementation:

The highest standards of education in English are provided. We strive, at every key stage, to ensure our children reach their full potential and assess and monitor progress to ensure this is continued throughout their time with us.

The skills taught within English are embedded throughout the whole curriculum through a planned link to basic skills and all learning will be explicit to pupils.

Quality First Teaching Writing:

Writing is a fundamental part of the curriculum and is used as a vehicle for cross curricular learning. Writing is the basis for all work in school: in English teaching and within the whole curriculum. Staff are highly skilled teachers of writing and grammar and Lead Practitioner support is put in place if necessary to ensure all teachers and support staff are upskilled quickly to ensure the greatest impact. Regular working and planning scrutinies take place across the year. These scrutinies are very useful and provide staff with rapid feedback and whether any changes need to be made. Regular lesson observations are also planned throughout the year. This tight monitoring system ensures the highest standards of teaching and learning are upheld at all times.

Our English programme is text based with the majority of English teaching stemming from a focus on an understanding of and love of texts. We believe children learn to write by writing and therefore all children are given regular opportunities to practise their writing skills in meaningful contexts.

Writing in EYFS is taught through early mark making. This then develops when the children begin RWI phonics where they are taught the correct letter formations. Children begin to write CVC words (first in the air to familiarise themselves with the movement and then onto whiteboards and paper). Children then move onto short sentences using the sounds they have been taught which continues into Year 1 where children are encouraged to use the sounds they have been taught and are given regular opportunities to practise writing. This then progresses further throughout the year groups using a variety of different strategies.

We often use drama techniques to further improve our writing. Allowing children to put themselves into a character's shoes, leads to a deeper understanding and makes their writing more meaningful and is an extremely effective writing tool.

Modelling is 'key' to the teaching of writing and at our school, teachers regularly model to the children before writing tasks to demonstrate what is expected as well as demonstrating the editing process. As well as teacher modelling, as a school we also use 'shared writing' where children are able to contribute ideas together and revise and edit these ideas. This increases confidence and allows children to develop their vocabulary and skills further.

We place a huge emphasis on vocabulary and during our daily class reads and all lessons throughout school, we discuss the meaning of new vocabulary, put the vocabulary into context and find synonyms and antonyms to deepen children's understanding. This focus on vocabulary develops the vocabulary the children use and in turn apply to their writing. We use vocabulary boards where children are able to use these words and put them into context successfully.

Before commencing writing, as a school, we always ensure children are familiar with the features of that particular text type and ensure they understand the purpose for writing and their audience – essential to ensure a deep understanding.

Spelling rules are taught weekly throughout each year group with a focus on RWI phonic sounds in Early Years and Y1. The rules are taught discretely or within English lessons, practised regularly and tested at the end of every week to monitor any gaps in children's learning. (Spelling rules for each year group are set out in the yearly overview).

Grammar is drip fed throughout every English lesson from speaking and listening to looking at and unpicking texts. However, we also teach discrete Grammar lessons to ensure full coverage of all Grammar objectives. We hold high expectations of all staff throughout school to use accurate grammar when speaking and writing.

Intervention through marking and feedback.

Marking and feedback is the process of refining feedback given to pupils in teachers' marking to help encourage them to improve the quality of their work and providing additional challenge to extend their learning even further. Again, staff are highly skilled teachers of writing and grammar and Learning Practitioner support can be put into place to ensure all teachers and support staff are upskilled quickly to ensure the greatest impact. Marking in the moment provides instant feedback and in turn means the learning is more meaningful to the child and is more likely to be embedded for future pieces of work. We use two different coloured pens. Red is used to correct spelling and grammar mistakes, a red stamper is used for next steps and general improvements and redrafting opportunities and green is used to highlight the successes within a child's work. Children across all year groups are very familiar with these colours and understand their use. A target sheet can be found at the front of every child's book and these targets are stamped and dated when achieved. Teachers use these targets within their marking and feedback and refer to children's targets in the front of their book, to recognise and praise them when they have been achieved as well as pointing children towards a particular target to focus on. This ensures children are fully aware of their individual targets and in turn makes the learning more meaningful.

Assessment of Writing

As a school, we use formative and summative assessment in writing. Marking in the moment with the children provides formative and instant feedback. As well as this, each year group completes a writing assessment every term. These writing assessments are marked by the teachers using a specific grid and correspond with our 'steps' assessment system. This summative assessment allows teachers to see easily from the grids how much progress the children have made each term and specific targets children need to work on and which ones they have achieved.

Love of Writing

We believe a love of writing comes from a love of reading; writing begins and flourishes from storytelling and reading. All of our staff love to read and reading is embedded in everything we do from everyday lessons to our class read time at the end of the day. This love of reading is then transferred to writing using vocabulary and ideas from books to produce a range of writing styles. Early exposure to language is crucial in developing writers and in EYFS, we expose our children to an array of language and stories daily, tapping into their interests and allowing them to choose what they would like to write about. This exposure to language continues all the way through school and where writing is more directed, we always ensure children understand the purpose of the writing in order to ensure engagement and

enthusiasm. We love to share children's writing with peers during celebration assemblies or in lessons, allowing other children to listen to the ideas of others to spark their creativity and in turn foster a love of writing.

***The Desire to Write Grows with Writing.* – Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536).**

This quote sums up our approach to writing. Along with reading and an exposure to language, giving the children the opportunity to write regularly with a purpose, clear teacher modelling and positive reinforcement will lead to a 'love of writing' and successful writers.

Impact

When children leave Bullion Lane at the end of Year 6, pupils are capable and confident writers and enjoy writing across a range of genres and for a variety of audiences and purposes. All pupils make a good level of progress and succeed due to differentiation and appropriate scaffolding. Due to a huge emphasis placed on reading and vocabulary, children use a wide range of vocabulary in their writing. They are able to effectively apply spelling rules and patterns they have been taught throughout each year group and they leave us with a passion for writing.

Speaking and Listening

Intent:

Speaking and listening is pivotal to Bullion Lane's Curriculum. We teach pupils to speak clearly and to convey their ideas in an articulate and confident manner.

Implementation:

We develop children's speaking and listening from an early age in EYFS and this continues throughout every single year group across the whole curriculum. In EYFS, we nurture children's speaking and listening skills through an array of approaches including exploratory play and story time, where language is repeated and discussed and displayed around the setting.

This discussion of language and exploratory based learning continues throughout school as well as other techniques such as drama activities like hot-seating. We recognise the importance of working collaboratively across subjects, where children are able to work and communicate together, expressing their ideas confidently and listening to those of others.

As well as speaking and listening opportunities during lesson times, we also offer performing arts club for children to develop their speaking and listening skills further through 'acting'. This promotes and boosts confidence and allows them to develop an understanding of how and why people speak in a certain manner and what impression it creates.

Impact

Speaking and listening skills are invaluable in order to communicate with the world around us. Children leave us in Year 6 as confident and articulate speakers and

listeners. They are given a range of opportunities to develop these skills, in a safe and stimulating environment.

INCLUSION / EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

This school promotes equal opportunities for all pupils ensuring equal access to the curriculum for all our children. All children are included in the teaching of English regardless of race, gender, background, ethnicity or attainment. Special provision is made for those children with special educational needs who are provided with differentiated activities designed to meet those needs. Where a Teaching Assistant or Higher-Level Teaching Assistant is available, additional support is provided for these children. The needs of those children who have been identified as being more able and talented in English are met through extension activities and the opportunity to participate in out-of-school activities.

HOMEWORK

Teachers provide English homework activities on a weekly basis, which may be linked to other curriculum areas. In addition, children take a reading book home weekly.

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years.
Next review date: February 2024

This policy has been reviewed July 2023 to highlight the significant work completed this academic year