

# Beaconsfield Primary School

*'Shining a Light on Learning'*



- B** - **Belief**
- P** - **Perseverance**
- S** - **Success**

## English Policy

February 2017

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## **English Policy**

At Beaconsfield Primary School we believe that language and English is fundamental to the overall development of the child and their access to the curriculum in all its aspects. We recognise that the acquisition of English, both spoken and written, will empower our pupils and provide the foundation for all future learning. We promote a culture of reading, not simply as a life skill, but to also develop in pupils a love of books and literature that will not only support their learning across the curriculum, but also enrich their lives.

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum in England: English Programmes of Study – Key Stages 1 and 2 and in the Communication and Language and Literacy sections of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Our curriculum is drawn from these documents.

We believe that our children will learn best when given the opportunity to apply their skills across the entire curriculum in rich and varied ways. We acknowledge and celebrate the diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds from which our children are drawn and value and respect children's expertise in their first language. Throughout their time in our school all children will be supported and encouraged to achieve their personal best. We therefore recognise that children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and those with English as an Additional Language (EAL) should be given additional support if required so that they may achieve their full learning potential.

## **Overall Aims and Objectives**

By the end of Year 6 we want all our pupils to:

- be able to communicate effectively and confidently in standard English;
- be able to listen to the spoken word attentively with understanding, pleasure and empathy;
- be able to read a range of materials fluently, critically and with understanding, for enjoyment and for information;
- be able to write effectively for a range of audiences and purposes using spelling, punctuation and grammar accurately and confidently.

## **Speaking and listening**

We recognise the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum - spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life. In our school, children are given regular opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills in varied ways across the curriculum. We also provide regular whole school activities such as taking part in class assemblies, end of term plays, whole school debates during citizenship week etc. The school has an on-site Speech and language Therapist for two days each week to support this area.

## **Aims**

- To listen, evaluate and respect the opinion of others
- To speak expressively and confidently in front of others
- To use drama and role play to explore a range of issues and further understanding of texts

## **Examples of teaching and learning strategies used to support speaking and listening**

- Use of talk partners
- Class discussions and debates
- Retelling stories
- Performing poetry
- Talk for Writing
- Role play and drama (e.g. conscience alley, hot-seating, mantle of the expert etc.)
- Listening to a range of texts read aloud

- Listening, responding to and evaluating their own and others' contributions.

## Reading

### Aims

- To create a reading culture that promotes a life-long love and enjoyment of books
- To read with confidence, fluency and understanding
- To use a full range of reading cues (phonic, graphic, syntactic and contextual) to monitor their reading and correct their mistakes
- To help children become critical readers to give them greater understanding of the wider world

### Teaching and Learning

- In EYFS and Key Stage One discrete phonics lessons are taught in a systematic way on a daily basis. The skills learnt in these sessions are explicitly modelled and applied across the curriculum.
- Children from Years 1 to 6 take part in a daily mixed ability English lesson with an emphasis on the use of whole texts rather than extracts. The English fiction curriculum map assigns a high quality fiction text to each year group every half term throughout the year. The non-fiction curriculum map identifies a range of genres to be covered throughout the year with meaningful links made with foundation topics such as history or science. The curriculum map also includes a termly poetry topic.
- A minimum of two English lessons every week have a specific reading focus. Teachers are encouraged to use strategies drawn from '**The Power of Reading**' scheme to explore the text and promote engagement with and enthusiasm for reading.
- Thirty minute guided reading sessions take place on a daily basis. Class teachers and teaching assistants work with a different group each day on a text matched to their reading ability. The remaining groups are expected to be engaged in a purposeful reading activity during this time. This can include: reading comprehension boxes; literature circles; '**First News**' comprehension activities; follow up tasks from the guided reading session etc.
- Guided reading resources are organised into colour banded sets and stored in the reading cupboards in the 'Food Technology' Room. These resources and books for 'Book Corners' are updated on a yearly basis by the English Leader.
- In addition to daily English and guided reading lessons, reading skills are developed across the curriculum through a wide variety of subjects.
- Pupils are encouraged to read at home with an adult on a regular basis. They take colour banded books home matched to their reading ability and are expected to complete their reading record to document their home reading. These reading records are checked regularly to ensure home reading is taking place. Parent workshops take place to develop parents' knowledge of strategies to develop their children's reading skills.
- The school has a very well stocked library which children access on a regular basis and are able to borrow books to take home. The school library is made available to different year groups from 8:30am each morning to encourage parents to make use of this resource with their children. Teachers also encourage children to make use of their local library with trips organised to visit Southall library as part of 'Book Week'.
- Every classroom is expected to have a dedicated 'Book Corner'. This area should be made as attractive and inviting as possible with books appropriately organised. Classrooms are monitored on a termly basis by SLT to ensure 'Book Corners' are in place. Displays around in classrooms and around the school contribute to a culture of reading.
- 'Book Week' takes place on a yearly basis to promote a love of reading. Children take place in a wide range of activities during 'Book Week' such as 'Dress up as your favourite book character' day, DEAR (Drop Everything And Read!), special assemblies, visits from authors etc.

### Additional Support

- Children who require additional support with phonics are identified by class teachers. In addition to quality first teaching in class, they receive targeted support through phonics interventions delivered by trained teaching assistants.
- Children in Key Stage 2 who are competent in decoding but require additional support with their comprehension skills take part in 'Inference Training'. This is a highly structured support programme delivered by trained teaching assistants twice a week over the course of 12 weeks. The programme has proven impact on comprehension skills and specifically inference and deduction skills. All

teachers have also received training on the key strategies which are taught during these support sessions and so they can reinforce them in day to day teaching in class.

- Year 6 booster classes and tuition sessions are used to ensure children meet the age related expectations (ARE's) in the KS2 SATs.

## **Assessment**

Children are assessed against the 'Assertive Mentoring' reading criteria from Years 1 to 6. Teachers will use a wide range of evidence to make these assessments and will use the information gathered to inform future planning. This will include:

- Evidence gathered during daily guided reading sessions. Teachers will make written notes during these sessions and assess children against the criteria based on their decoding skills and verbal responses to questions. This evidence will be kept in class guided reading folders.
- 'Assertive Mentoring' running records linked to the Oxford Reading Tree scheme. Teachers will use these running records to inform their judgements about when a child is ready to move on to the next colour band. Running records will be kept in pupil folders.
- Termly comprehension tests (Years 2 to 6).
- Half termly phonics tests (Year 1).
- Evidence gathered during daily English lessons (e.g. written or verbal responses to comprehension questions based on the whole class text).
- Reading moderation sessions (in school moderation and Ealing moderation sessions).

As a result of ongoing assessments, children will be set two personalised reading targets during termly 'mentoring meetings' which are then shared with parents.

## **Writing**

### **Aims**

- To understand the importance of audience and purpose
- To develop strategies to communicate effectively through the written word
- To recognise that drafting and redrafting is an essential part of the writing process
- To develop powers of imagination and inventiveness through writing

### **Teaching and Learning**

- We believe that children need to be exposed to a wide range of high quality texts in order to promote their writing skills. Therefore we use the 'Raising Achievement in Writing' strategies which stem from the use of high quality whole class texts. Teachers should give children regular opportunities to discuss what makes a good piece of writing so that children may apply this in their own work.
- Teachers explicitly model writing strategies and the use of phonics and spelling strategies in shared writing sessions.
- Guided writing sessions are used to target specific needs of both groups and individuals.
- The children are given frequent opportunities in school to write in different contexts using quality texts as a model and for a variety of purposes and audiences. The text types which are required to be covered by the National Curriculum are outlined in our long term plans for each year group to ensure that there is a breadth of coverage.
- Children are expected to complete a piece of extended writing every week during the 'Big Writing' session. This often takes place towards the end of the week however teachers have flexibility to change this where appropriate.
- Children should be given regular opportunities to edit and redraft their work using based on feedback given from adults, through self or peer assessment.
- We recognise that children write best when it is made meaningful to them. Therefore they should be given regular opportunities for: talk for writing; to explore the writing task through drama and role play; to write from experience etc.

## Additional support

- We expect children to have their needs primarily met through quality first teaching in class. Additional support may be given to children in writing through a wide range of resources such as word banks, writing frames, talk for writing, visual cues, Clicker 7 etc.
- We currently run a highly structured writing intervention '1<sup>st</sup> Class @ Writing' in Year 4. We are looking to extend this to Year 3 in the future.

## Assessment

Children from Year 1 to 6 are assessed against the writing criteria adapted for the new National Curriculum. Teachers will use a wide range of evidence to make these assessments and will use the information gathered to inform future planning. This will include:

- Writing in their English books
- Writing from across the curriculum
- A half termly 'assessed piece' of writing will be kept in pupils' mentoring folders. This will be an independent piece of writing which takes place at the end of a fiction or non-fiction unit studied in class. Children will be given the opportunity to plan, write and then edit and improve their work over the course of 2-3 lessons. Any edits must be child initiated.

As a result of ongoing assessments, children will be set two personalised writing targets during termly 'mentoring meetings' which are then shared with parents.

## Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling and Handwriting

### Spelling

- We follow the 'Assertive Mentoring' spelling programme from Years 1 to 6. This is a highly structured spelling programme which meets all the requirements of the new National Curriculum. Children are explicitly taught spelling rules on a weekly basis. Homework is given to support this and children take part in a weekly spelling test to monitor progress. In addition to this, a half termly test is administered to monitor how well children have retained the spelling rules which have been taught over the preceding 6 weeks.
- As explained in the above 'Reading' section, daily phonics sessions take place in EYFS and Key Stage One and children who require additional support with phonics from Years 1 to 6 receive additional intervention sessions from trained teaching assistants.
- Although spelling is taught discretely we realise that children learn best when they are given regular opportunities to apply this knowledge in lessons.

### Grammar and Punctuation

- The majority of English lessons will begin with a brief 'starter' in which the grammar and punctuation elements of the National Curriculum are taught or revisited. We recognise that children then need regular opportunities to apply this knowledge in the rest of the English lesson in order to make meaningful links.
- A '**Grammar Hammer**' test is administered every two weeks throughout Key Stage One and Two to allow children to revisit the key concepts appropriate for their year group on a regular basis. In addition to this, children take part in a termly GPS progress test. The results from these assessments are used to inform future planning.

### Handwriting

- Children are taught cursive handwriting from Reception where they are learn how to form letters with the correct orientation with leaders and exit points.
- Our expectation is that by the end of Key Stage One children will be able to join their writing with emphasise on presenting writing that is neat and legible.
- Children continue to take part in weekly handwriting sessions throughout Key Stage Two.
- Children are encouraged to use neat and joined handwriting through the 'Pen License' scheme in which children earn the right to use a handwriting pen. They are awarded a certificate when they are able to use joined handwriting neatly and consistently.

As a result of ongoing assessments, children will be set two personalised GPS targets during termly 'mentoring meetings' which are then shared with parents.

### **EYFS (Communication, Language and Literacy)**

In both small and large groups, children are encouraged to extend their vocabulary and fluency by talking and listening, by hearing and responding to stories, songs and rhymes. Children are helped to understand that written symbols carry meaning, to be aware of the purposes of writing and to use drawn and written symbols for themselves and, when ready, begin to read and write words and sentences. A well-stocked book corner gives every child the opportunity and encouragement to become familiar with books, to be able to handle them and be aware of their uses.

Nursery and Reception introduce a structured Phonics programme using 'Letters and Sounds'.

Examples of activities used to encourage Communication, Language and Literacy include:

book corner	taped stories	stories	poems	water
mark making	using a variety of media both small and large		drawing	sand
writing (child initiated and adult focus)		role play	small-world	
music	songs	circle time	construction toys	

### **English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

At Beaconsfield Primary many of the children speak a language other than English at home and this is a skill which we value. However we also recognise the need to provide appropriate support to children who are developing their skills in English. We deploy a wide variety of strategies to provide this support to pupils with EAL. These will include:

- Creating a welcoming environment which reflects the cultural diversity of pupils (including the use of stories from other cultures)
- A baseline reading and writing assessment when children join mid-phase in order to assess areas of need
- Monitoring of data to track progress
- Visual support in class
- Word banks
- Writing prompts/templates/sentence stems
- Use of ICT such as Clicker 7
- Pre-teaching and talk for writing
- Making efficient use of support staff including bilingual TAs
- Pairing children with competent English speakers who speak their home language
- Additional support and interventions e.g. to address gaps in phonics knowledge

### **Parental/Community involvement**

We believe it is vitally important to work together with parents and carers to support their child's development of English. We promote a positive home/school partnership in the following ways:

- Asking parents/carers to read regularly at home and record and write comments in the pupils' reading record.
- Parent workshops to provide practical advice on how parents can support their children in English.
- Sharing termly targets set during mentoring meetings in reading, writing and GPS.
- Celebrations – special events such as World Book Day, assemblies, displays, book fairs, etc
- Home Learning - in line with our homework policy and home/school agreement;
- Visits to the school library

### **Staff Development**

Supported by the English Leader, teachers are expected to keep up to date with subject knowledge and use current materials that are available in school. Training needs are identified as a result of whole school monitoring and evaluation, appraisal and through induction programmes. These will be reflected in the School Development Plan and the English Action Plan. Additional adults who are involved with support programmes will receive appropriate training as required.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

English is monitored and evaluated in the following ways:

- The monitoring of teaching and learning by the SLT and English Leader through observations, learning walks, monitoring of planning, monitoring of displays etc
- Sampling of pupil work and assessments by the English Leader/SLT
- In school and Ealing borough moderation sessions
- Analysis of data
- Parent and pupil questionnaires

Having identified priorities, the English Leader constructs an action plan. This forms the basis for any monitoring activities and will clearly identify when, who and what is to be monitored and how this will take place e.g. classroom observation, planning scrutiny, work sampling etc.

### **Governors**

It is the role of the English Governor to:

- Play a key role in the monitoring and evaluating of English throughout the school. This will include focussed visits, discussions with the English leader, policy evaluation and review of data and results.
- The English Leader will keep governors informed of the implementation and changes in policy and changes in legislation and curriculum.