English Policy

May 2025

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1. Curriculum Statement - English

Intent

Here at Bishop Monkton, our English Curriculum securely reflects our vision. We intend to *support our children to be healthy, happy and vibrant individuals*, *preparing them to become responsible and respectful citizens in the wider world.*

Our English curriculum will teach the children the skills and knowledge required to communicate their ideas and emotions. The curriculum will also assist their development of individual choice. Through the power of books, it will nourish and stimulate their love of learning, and will therefore provide the tools the children need to explore themselves, others and the world.

Our English curriculum revolves around a heart of ambitious, stimulating, diverse and high-quality texts which will kindle an excitement in oracy, reading and writing. These carefully chosen texts will provoke discussion, exploration and provide a motivation for all individuals to develop and thrive. The English curriculum for both adults and children at Bishop Monkton, is galvanised by our phrase, 'Love to read…read to succeed.'

Implementation

We have a rigorous, progressive and well-organised English curriculum which provides purposeful and enjoyable opportunities for reading, writing and discussion.

Writing: A framework of genres provides guidance to ensure progressive coverage and our suggested book list ensures that we use diverse texts which stimulate and excite our children into becoming people who write for pleasure. We use The Literacy Tree and Literacy Shed as our main resources for writing from EYFS to year 6. These provided a wide variety of opportunities to write and to model writing, using outstanding, diverse texts and stimulus. They also brilliantly embed the teaching of punctuation and grammar. We will always contextualise the teaching of grammar and punctuation where possible. Using our long-term plans for grammar, punctuation and spelling, we monitor our coverage and we will offer stand-alone lessons to ensure that the curriculum needs are fully met. The intention of the writing opportunity is at the heart of all teaching.

Handwriting:

- Handwriting in the Early Years at Bishop Monkton is modelled using non-cursive formations by all staff.
- EYFS – Y6 handwriting is consistently taught using a planned sequence of lessons using Letter Join. All pupils are provided with a Letter Join log in for home practice. In EYFS and Y1 the children use the Little Wandle mnemonics to support their letter formation.
- In Y2-Y6 the children are taught to join letters and develop their fluency, style and speed. Children who continue to misform letters will continue having focused input whereas those who are joining accurately and fluently will be monitored through their written work. All staff will model the continuous cursive style.

Spelling: In EYFS, spelling is taught through the structure of the Little Wandle scheme. Children on catch-up will receive teaching through their sessions.
Once the children leave the Little Wandle Scheme, they will be formally taught spellings through Spelling Shed sessions. This provides consistent and familiar teaching methods that build on Little Wandle practice. The children from Y2-Y6 will have a weekly 'check' of spelling patterns taught.
Spelling Shed lessons will include:
Meaning - exploring the meaning of the weekly word list using a thesaurus, dictionaries and discussion.
Orthography of the words - breaking down spellings into the smallest units of sound and cluster them into syllables in order to read and write words efficiently. We call these 'sound buttons'.
Morphology – lessons that consolidate children's knowledge of common morphemes such as root formations, prefixes and suffixes.
Etymology – exploring the origin of words.
Spelling Shed also provides an online home practise app. (Log ins provided for children Y2-Y6)

In line with the National Curriculum, the children are taught to edit their writing for spelling errors. They will be aware of the tools available to them such as, online spelling apps, dictionaries, thesaurus, Grow the Code charts and peer support.

Reading: Reading is centre to all our English teaching at Bishop Monkton. Our school library is well stocked and continually added to. New books are highlighted in whole school assemblies and promoted. Our Book Bingo Award Scheme helps families to explore a wide range of genres from science non-fiction to humorous poetry to stories set in other countries. We hold performance poetry afternoons across the school and always celebrate World Book Day with style.

In EYFS, a foundation for the love of reading is developed through the exploration of sound. Here, there are opportunities to listen, remember and talk about sounds through rhythm games, songs and book sharing. Then in Reception, the children begin their formal teaching of reading through 'Little Wandle'. Little Wandle provides a consistent, daily approach to the teaching of phonics. It uses the 'Big Cat' scheme of books to lead the children through the accumulation of knowledge. Once the children are confident in all the phonics phases, they may move onto our second scheme: Book Life. If the children are not secure in all the phases, then they shall receive 'catch-up' teaching using the Little Wandle resources. For this to happen effectively, the children are continually monitored and assessed to ensure the rigour of this resource.

Once the children are ready, they will move to our Booklife scheme. A huge range of books rotated between the classrooms and the library have been colour banded according to maturity of content, vocabulary, structure and size of text. Books are banded using Peters Books website. This banding provides a loose structure to guide the continuing development in reading skills. These books are broad and diverse with the aim to encourage a personal

love for reading. Teachers monitor choices through reading diaries in years 2 and 3, planners and 'Reading Journals' in years 4-6.

Once the children have left the Little Wandle Scheme, then the teaching of reading continues to build on the Little Wandle methods to ensure consistency. From Y2-Y6, the children have 3 dedicated, whole class reading lessons. These use short texts from a range of resources which may be poetry, non-fiction, plays or narrative texts.

Lesson 1: The text is modelled and tricky vocabulary explored. The children will use the tools available to them to explore their pronunciation and meaning (dictionaries, thesaurus, iPad, discussion, 'Grow the code' chart and knowledge.

Lesson 2: The text is modelled with the focus on prosody and fluency. The children practise reading with prosody.

Lesson 3: The children explore their comprehension of the text. They will explore structures, inference, summarising, words and phrases and learn how to retrieve information.

Oracy: Children at Bishop Monkton are provided with many opportunities to develop their speaking and performance skills. Each class, from Nursery to year 6 will take part in performance such as nativity and summer productions. All will contribute to our services at Harvest-time, Christmas and Easter with the year 6 leading the rest of the school. Each class will present an aspect of their learning to parents and the school, once a term through class assemblies. In the summer, our year 6 children will put together their leaving service giving them the opportunity to express their experience of their time at Bishop Monkton through music, dance and prose.

All children from Reception to year 6, will develop the skills needed to read aloud and engage their audience through weekly prosody lessons. They will use these skills whilst sharing work in their classrooms and celebrating their achievements during our weekly celebration service.

Alongside the above, the children in KS2 shall explore the art of debate through regular opportunities provided by their study.

Impact

Bishop Monkton Primary School is a community of enthusiastic readers where pupils understand that reading is at the heart of all learning. Children will leave Bishop Monkton being able to write clearly and can adapt their written and verbal language to suit a range of contexts, purposes and audience. Our pupils acquire a wide range of vocabulary which effectively supports their ability to communicate and explore their own ideas and those of the world around them. Most importantly, they develop a love of reading and writing which equips them for the next stage of their education.

2. Teaching and Learning

Our literacy provision follows the 2014 National Curriculum and is taught through daily English lessons. The timing for each lesson will vary according to the objectives of the lesson.

We recognise that spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. Teachers ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in their knowledge of spoken language and listening skills. They are assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others. Teachers ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy any misconceptions. Verbal feedback is given a priority.

Building on this foundation, we teach English using a range of strategies which include:

- Group Discussion – Children discuss and interrogate new ideas in a small group or whole class setting. They listen to and value each other's ideas whilst taking on board feedback so as to improve their own explanations.
- Partner Talk – Children work in partners to discuss their ideas. They are able to explain their ideas about texts they have read and prepare their ideas before they write.
- Questioning – Teachers use a range of questioning strategies to establish children's current understanding and develop their learning. Higher level questioning is used to elicit a deeper understanding.
- Modelled writing – Teachers model writing and editing to demonstrate the high expectations they have. They verbally 'think aloud' in order to make the writing process explicit and provide a rich and varied vocabulary for the children to utilise in their own work.
- Shared Writing – Teachers use the ideas from the children to create shared pieces of writing. This enables the children to see the writing process in action as well as having pride and ownership over the finished piece.
- Comparing, Analysing and Evaluating – Children review written texts, speech and drama and compare, analyse and evaluate them. They establish the strengths and weaknesses of different examples and incorporate these ideas into their own work.

All English lessons have clear success criteria so that the children understand the expectations of the task and how they can achieve their best in the lesson. These may be given in either written form or verbally.

3. Monitoring and Assessment

Children are assessed formatively through thorough questioning and marking to ensure that teachers understand where children are currently in their learning and what their next steps need to be. Assessment for learning is continuous throughout the planning, teaching and learning cycle. Assessment is supported by use of the following strategies:

● Observing children at work, individually, in pairs, in a group and in class during whole class teaching.

● Using open-ended questions with appropriate scaffolding that require all children to explain and unpick their understanding.

● Providing effective verbal and written feedback, guided by the school's Marking Policy.

● Book moderation and monitoring of outcomes of work, to evaluate the range and balance of work and to ensure that there is consistency throughout the school. Moderation will also take place in our local schools cluster to support our development in the teaching of English.

●Standard assessments provide regular data to compare individual and cohort progress compared. This will be used to inform planning. Rising Star assessments are used for reading and grammar from year 1 – year 6, each term. Phonic progression will be assessed formally in year 1. Children following the Little Wandle scheme, shall be assessed using the scheme resources after every phonics phase taught. Statutory Assessment Tasks will be delivered for year 6 which will provide data in reading and spelling, punctuation and grammar. Writing will be teacher assessed in each year group each term.

Post Little Wandle : the children will have weekly revisits as part of their teaching. Each half term, the children will have a more formal assessment on their National Curriculum lists (Rising star GaPS will provide 3 out of the 6).

4. Planning and Resources

Handwriting

- Letter Join

Reading

- Little Wandle and Collin's Big Cat Scheme.
- Book Life banded scheme.
- Peter's Books
- 'Literacy Shed Plus' provides reading practice texts.
- Twinkl

Writing

- Literacy Tree
- Literacy Shed
- Teaching from Text
- Hamilton Trust
- Oak Academy

Class text progression guidance
In class folders
Spelling and grammar

- Little Wandle
- Spelling Shed

5. Equal Opportunities

At Bishop Monkton Primary School, we are committed to providing a teaching environment which ensures all children are provided with the same learning opportunities regardless of social class, gender, culture, race, special educational need or disability. Teachers use a range of strategies to ensure inclusion and also to maintain a positive ethos where children demonstrate positive attitudes towards others.

Support for specific individuals is well considered and planned for, with consideration given to how greater depth and further challenge can be provided for and demonstrated by children who require further challenge.

6. Inclusion (eg EAL/SEN/PP/Provision for HA)

All pupils are entitled to access the English curriculum at a level appropriate to their needs.
Children with English as an additional language:
It is vital that children who have English as an additional language have English modelled accurately by all staff at school. Collaborative work with peers (where English is their first language) is essential and EAL children should be provided with consistent opportunities for this verbal interaction. All teachers include a range of strategies to support children with EAL which includes: teacher and peer modelling and consistent use of visual support, repetition and recasting of language features, word banks and scaffolded speaking and listening activities.

Teachers work with the SENCO to best meet the needs of individuals within their classes. Children who are new to English are assessed and support is put in place to help them make rapid progress. In addition, class teachers use their teaching assistants to provide targeted support and the use of home language support and peer-buddying is encouraged.

Special Educational Needs
To ensure inclusion, teachers use a range of strategies in line with the school's inclusion policy. Independent tasks, as well as teaching, are also carefully adapted to ensure full accessibility, as well as to provide appropriate challenge to different groups of learners. The school makes full use of additional adults who are deployed effectively to ensure that identified children are able to make progress and 'keep up' in each curriculum area. Where possible, interventions should be given alongside or just after the learning.

High Achievers - Children who achieve highly in English will be supported and given opportunities to deepen their knowledge and skills through the reading and writing groups

and differentiation. The success criteria for the lesson also indicates how greater depth has been taught within the context of the lesson and how this can be demonstrated by the child in outcomes of work. They will also have opportunities for enrichment when appropriate e.g. County debating.

7. Role of the Subject Leader

The role of the subject leader in English is to coordinate the teaching of reading, writing and communication across all phases of the school. This is in order to secure high quality English provision for every child, including consistent, outstanding English teaching and learning, effective use of resources and the highest standards of achievement for all. Some key duties that the English subject leader should undertake over the course of the year include:

- Monitoring of writing, grammar and punctuation, reading, handwriting and spelling
- Reading walks and other lesson observations where necessary
- Planning and organising English enrichment opportunities and competitions
- Helping identify and facilitate the professional development needs of staff
- Liaising with Headteacher to help implement school improvement priorities
- Liaising with the school SENCO to best support children with literacy difficulties
- Organising, maintaining resources
- Keeping up-to-date with new initiatives in literacy teaching through attending county network and local cluster meetings

8. Parents

We recognise how crucial the home/school link is for supporting children to have the highest standards of achievement in literacy. At the 'Meet your teacher' meeting at the beginning of every academic year, the English standards of the year group are explained, as well as further meetings throughout the year to support parents to understand new English initiatives e.g. reading developments within school. The school website is used to promote good standards of English.

Homework: There is an expectation that children shall read every day at school and at home. All classes will be set reading homework. Parents of Y2-Y6 are asked to support the children with their weekly spelling objectives using Spelling Shed. Some children may receive extra handwriting practice.

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