

# Blanford Mere Nursery & Primary School



## English Policy

<b>Date adopted by governors</b>
February 2021
<b>To be reviewed</b>
February 2024

# ENGLISH POLICY

In the teaching and learning of English we will have opportunities to cover the following UNICEF articles:

**Article 12:** *You have the right to give your opinion, and for adults to listen and take it seriously.*

**Article 13:** *You have the right to find out things and share what you think with others, by talking, drawing, writing or in any other way unless it harms or offends other people.*

**Article 17:** *You have the right to get information that is important to your well-being, from radio, newspaper, books, computers and other sources. Adults should make sure that the information you are getting is not harmful, and help you find and understand the information you need.*

**Article 28:** *You have the right to a good quality education. You should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level you can.*

**Article 29:** *Your education should help you use and develop your talents and abilities. It should also help you learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.*

**Article 30:** *You have the right to practice your own culture, language and religion - or any you choose. Minority and indigenous groups need special protection of this right.*

## AIMS

Our aim is for children to enjoy English; to become independent and confident readers and writers, applying a range of skills creatively.

By the end of Key Stage 2, our children will have:

- made good or rapid progress, compared to their starting point in Reception.
- learnt to read accurately, with understanding and enjoyment.
- learnt to write accurately and with meaning, in a range of genres.
- learnt to listen actively and speak in a way which is meaningful and engaging.

The majority of pupils at Blanford Mere Primary School will leave Year 6:

- reading and writing with confidence, fluency and understanding, using a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct;
- with a love of reading and a desire to read for enjoyment;
- with an interest in words and their meanings; developing a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms;
- understand and enjoy a range of text types, media types and genres;
- able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the situation;
- have a suitable technical vocabulary to articulate their thoughts.

## STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum (2014) and in the Communication and Language, and Literacy, sections of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2012).

**The Governing Body**, receive regular reports on the progress of English provision.

Please note that Handwriting and Phonics have separate, specific policies. Both are referenced throughout this policy, but for further detail, please refer to those separate policies.

## REMOTE LEARNING

Remote learning for English (reading and writing) will be shared with families when they are absent due to Covid related reasons. Remote learning will not be available to those who are ill with a non-Covid related illness and would not normally attend school, or to those children whose parents choose to keep them at home when they have not been advised to do so. This is because children need to be in school and, in line with Government guidance, the school will strongly promote face-to-face contact through school attendance.

Work will NOT be set on the first day of isolation to allow staff time to prepare. Work will be sent from the second day onwards. Staff will prepare work the day before it is set and will ensure that it is published the following morning.

- A child who has a member of their household, who has tested positive for Covid-19 and are not permitted to attend school because they have been in close contact and have been advised to self-isolate;
- A child's whole bubble or identified pupils who is not permitted to attend school because they, or another member of their bubble, have tested positive for Covid-19.
- A child unable to attend school due to a local or national lockdown

## **SUBJECT ORGANISATION**

### **Foundation Stage**

In Foundation Stage, children have daily discreet phonics lessons. Children have opportunities to develop their communication, language and literacy skills daily in both adult-led and child-initiated activities. Adults regularly read to children to encourage a love of reading and develop a greater knowledge of the wider world.

Fantastic Foundations – EYFS:

In both Nursery and Reception, teaching is underpinned by the principles of 'Fantastic Foundations'. Following EEF research, this programme aims to boost the spoken and written vocabulary of children in the EYFS. Through devices and games such as Picture Power, Together Talk, Word Collector and Together Writing, children are encouraged to develop their spoken and written vocabulary. The three principles that underpin Fantastic Foundations are;

1. Understanding of the uniqueness of each child
2. Nurturing deep talk and developing listening
3. Providing a rich repertoire of real and imagined experiences to ignite writing

### **Key Stage 1**

- Daily phonics lessons (see Phonics policy)
- Daily handwriting lessons (see Handwriting policy)
- Daily English lessons; covering Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPAG) writing and comprehension.
- Twice weekly Guided Reading lessons
- Four times a week; shared reading with the class teacher
- Regular independent reading opportunities
- Regular cross-curricular writing opportunities

In Key Stage 1, daily discreet phonic lessons continue. Children have daily mixed-ability English lessons with an emphasis on real texts. Children take part in 'Guided Reading' sessions and are encouraged to read for a range of purposes within all curriculum areas. They have regular story times to develop a love of reading and experience a range of age-appropriate authors. Literacy skills are developed across the curriculum. Provision is made for children who require extra support through intervention programmes and differentiated class teaching, targeting children who have not reached the expected standard for their previous year.

### **Key Stage 2**

- Regular handwriting lessons (see Handwriting policy)
- Daily English lessons; covering Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPAG) writing and comprehension.
- Weekly Guided Reading lessons
- Daily spelling lessons in discrete year groups
- Three times a week; shared reading with the class teacher
- Regular independent reading opportunities
- Regular cross-curricular writing opportunities

In Key Stage 2 children have daily English Lessons which include spelling, punctuation and grammar. Additional sessions include guided reading and handwriting. All Literacy skills are developed across the wider curriculum. Provision is made for children who require extra support through intervention programmes and differentiated class teaching.

## **APPROACHES TO SPEAKING AND LISTENING**

The four strands of Speaking and Listening: Speaking; Listening; Group Discussion, Interaction, and Drama permeate the whole curriculum. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise reading and writing standards. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life.

Opportunities to develop these skills include: talk partners and regular discussion as part of everyday classroom practise, class assemblies, drama, performance poetry and additional performances throughout the year. Children who require extra support in speaking and listening benefit from the expertise of a specialist HLTA and suggested weekly programme, conducted by our support staff. We recognise the need for all pupils to speak, read and write Standard English fluently and accurately, while acknowledging that a pupil's own dialect, or other language is of prime importance. It is our school policy to model our own language to the children, which encourages Standard English; both in speaking and writing.

## **APPROACHES TO READING**

Teachers model reading strategies during shared reading sessions, whilst children have the opportunity to develop reading strategies and to discuss texts in detail during guided reading sessions. Daily discreet phonics lessons in FS and KS1 enable children to decode efficiently. This is continued into KS2 where necessary.

A range of reading schemes are used to support early readers as well as book banded 'real books' used for guided reading. Teaching assistants support reading activities to ensure that children have more frequent opportunities to read with adults. Children take home a levelled book from school according to their reading fluency. Parents are encouraged to hear their child read the book and then record how they have got on. This encourages teacher – parent communication. In addition to this, all children are encouraged to visit the school library at lunchtimes to choose a book to read for pleasure. Each child has a home-school reading diary that teachers and parents can use to share information about a child's reading. Parents are encouraged to read with their child daily. Guidance for Parents on reading and phonics will be provided through our 'Induction to School' meeting, 'Transition to Year 1' meeting and invitations to work alongside their child throughout the school year.

We strongly encourage all readers to share a book at home with their grown-ups. We believe that this not only helps to develop inferential skills, but also supports a lifelong love of reading. Throughout their time at school, children will become more independent in recording what they have read in their reading journals.

We recognise the value of adults (both in school and at home) reading aloud to children, in order to improve their grasp of story language, enthusing them with a love of books and to inspire them as writers.

During our Guided Reading lessons, we use the acronym VIPERS to support and guide our teaching. Each letter relates to a different reading skill that will be covered during the lesson/s. These VIPERS will be displayed in classrooms and known by the children. Each skill is supported by a range of question stems, see below for KS2 examples.

**V** – Vocabulary

**I** – Inference

**P** – Prediction

**E** – Explanation

**R** – Retrieval

**S** – KS1: Sequence. KS2: Summarise

## Vocabulary

Find and explain the meaning of words in context

### Example questions

- What do the words ..... and ..... suggest about the character, setting and mood?
- Which word tells you that.....?
- Which keyword tells you about the character/setting/mood?
- Find one word in the text which means.....
- Find and highlight the word that is closest in meaning to.....
- Find a word or phrase which shows/suggests that.....

## Infer

Make and justify inferences using evidence from the text.

### Example questions

- Find and copy a group of words which show that...
- How do these words make the reader feel? How does this paragraph suggest this?
- How do the descriptions of ..... show that they are .....
- How can you tell that.....
- What impression of ..... do you get from these paragraphs?
- What voice might these characters use?
- What was .... thinking when.....
- Who is telling the story?

## Predict

Predict what might happen from the details given and implied.

### Example questions

- From the cover what do you think this text is going to be about?
- What is happening now? What happened before this? What will happen after?
- What does this paragraph suggest will happen next? What makes you think this?
- Do you think the choice of setting will influence how the plot develops?
- Do you think... will happen? Yes, no or maybe? Explain your answer using evidence from the text.

## Explain

- Explain how content is related and contributes to the meaning as a whole.
- Explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of language.
- Explain the themes and patterns that develop across the text.
- Explain how information contributes to the overall experience.

### Example questions

- Why is the text arranged in this way?
- What structures has the author used?
- What is the purpose of this text feature?
- Is the use of ..... effective?
- The mood of the character changes throughout the text. Find and copy the phrases which show this.
- What is the author's point of view?
- What affect does ..... have on the audience?
- How does the author engage the reader here?
- Which words and phrases did ..... effectively?
- Which section was the most interesting/exciting part?

## Retrieve

Retrieve and record information and identify key details from fiction and non-fiction.

### Example questions

- How would you describe this story/text? What genre is it? How do you know?
- How did...?
- How often...?
- Who had...? Who is...? Who did...?
- What happened to...?
- What does... do?
- How ..... is .....
- What can you learn from ..... from this section?
- Give one example of.....
- The story is told from whose perspective?

## Summarise

Summarise the main ideas from more than one paragraph

### Example questions

- Can you number these events 1-5 in the order that they happened?
- What happened after .....
- What was the first thing that happened in the story?
- Can you summarise in a sentence the opening/middle/end of the story?
- In what order do these chapter headings come in the story?

## APPROACHES TO WRITING

We aim to develop the children's ability to produce well structured, detailed writing in which the meaning is clear and engages the interest of the reader. Attention is paid throughout the school to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling. To support our teaching of writing, we use Alan Peat 'Exciting Sentence types'. Encouraging different sentence types to improve and up level writing begins in Year 1 and progresses throughout school. Teachers 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. There are many opportunities for children to improve their writing inspired by drama techniques, film clips and other visual stimuli. They may be asked to produce writing on their own or as part of group. Children will also be given the opportunity to use ICT for their writing.

In Foundation Stage, handwriting is taught within the Phonics session. Children are able to practise the sound of the day through a range of multi-sensory approaches that they can use in guided and child initiated time; designed to improve fine and gross motor movements. Integrated in children's play are resources that allow pupils to use one-handed tools and equipment. They are also encouraged to manipulate objects with increasing control. Such activities have a positive effect on handwriting. Physical activities are encouraged to improve pencil grip, pressure and letter formation. Children are encouraged to think about handwriting by grouping the letters. For example, curly caterpillar letters, to remind them of starting points.

## CROSS-CURRICULAR LITERACY OPPORTUNITIES

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. They will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum, where the same standard of writing is expected as seen in English books.

## THE USE OF COMPUTING

We recognise the important role Computing has to play in our school in the development of English skills. Technology is used on a daily basis to enhance the teaching of English and to give all children the opportunity to experience, read and write multimodal texts and develop visual literacy. The use of Computing is cross – curricular.

### **ASSESSMENT AND TARGET SETTING**

Work will be assessed in line with the Assessment Policy.

### **INCLUSION**

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English, according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment. Gifted and talented children will be identified, and suitable learning challenges provided.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Blanford Mere has universal ambitions for every child, whatever their background or circumstances. Children learn and thrive when they are healthy, safe and engaged. In order to engage all children, cultural diversity, home languages, gender and religious beliefs are all celebrated. Our curriculum includes a wide range of texts and other resources which represent the diversity and backgrounds of all our children.

We believe in ‘valuing what the child brings to school’ and recognise the importance of supporting a child’s first language, not only to foster self-esteem, but to assist in the learning of English.

### **ROLE OF THE ENGLISH TEAM**

The English Team (BW – Reading, Phonics and Handwriting, HO – Writing and GPS) are responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through:

- monitoring and evaluating English:-
  - pupil progress
  - the quality of English teaching and learning
  - the quality of the Learning Environment,
- taking the lead in policy development,
- auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD,
- purchasing and organising resources,
- keeping up to date with recent English developments.

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