

Buckshaw Primary School



English Policy
September 2021

*At Buckshaw we aim to prepare our children for their future
by raising aspirations and developing resilience within a
happy, safe and caring environment*

At Buckshaw Primary School we believe that English and communication are key life skills and that through the English curriculum, children will be supported to develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively with the world at large, through spoken and written language. These skills will enable the children to organise and express their own thoughts and to access the knowledge and ideas of others. We intend to help our pupils to enjoy, appreciate and respond to literature at a personal and aesthetic level, aiming to enrich our children's lives. We will ensure that we provide opportunities for the development of children's skills across all areas of the Primary Curriculum.

Aims and Objectives

The National Curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- Read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- Acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- Appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- Use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- Are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

The aims of English at Buckshaw Primary School are:

- To provide a rich and stimulating language environment, integrating speaking and listening, drama and role play, reading and writing.
- To provide an environment where pupils are encouraged to construct and convey meaning, both in speech and writing, of factual, imaginary and personal experiences.
- To provide opportunities for pupils to become confident, competent and expressive users of the language with a developing knowledge of how it works.
- To provide opportunities for pupils to be reflective users of language, able to analyse and evaluate its main features.
- To foster an enthusiasm for and love of reading and writing for life.
- To encourage pupils to present their ideas in a variety of forms, both in English and across the Primary Curriculum.

Organisation

The English Curriculum is delivered using the Lancashire English Planning documents, adapted from the National Curriculum (2014). This is a key skills approach to the subject, ensuring that children require the necessary skills to enable them to become fluent and creative readers and writers during their time at Buckshaw Primary School. The Early Years Foundation Stage ensures continuity and progression from the Foundation Stage through to the National Curriculum.

Within the curriculum, English is comprised of the two core subjects of Reading and Writing. These are in turn underpinned by speaking and listening. In terms of early English development, the teaching of Phonics is also seen as laying to foundations for all of the above subjects. Moreover, each of these subjects extend beyond English lessons, providing a range of skills that are used in every subject taught.

Reflecting the importance of each strand of the English Curriculum, Reading, Writing and Phonics are taught in separate sessions but with a number of skills crossing over in each. Each of these subjects has its own intent which outlines the key aims for their subjects.

English lessons are taught daily and usually last for one hour in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. In addition, Key Stage 1 will teach a daily Phonics lesson incorporating the teaching of spelling in Year 2. Key Stage 2 classes supplement their main English

teaching through an additional Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling three times each week. In the EYFS, the teaching of Phonics represents the main English input for the children, supplemented by additional class readers and independent writing tasks.

The Curriculum

Reading

Reading is at the centre of the curriculum at Buckshaw Primary School. All English teaching delivered in all year groups follows the National Curriculum progression of skills, centring a high quality, vocabulary rich book at the heart of all episodes of learning.

The importance of reading is promoted throughout our wider curriculum, and permeates through all subjects, ensuring the children see the relevance of the skill in all subjects in varying degrees. Cross curricular examples include: studying illustrators in art; using historical records in history; reading charts and tables in maths.

Throughout foundation stage and KS1, children receive daily phonics teaching. This follows the DFE Letters and Sounds Programme. Additional phonics sessions are provided to those children who require, as part of an intervention approach to their learning. A multisensory

approach to phonics and spelling is adopted and children work in a variety of ways to practise the skills.

The delivery of the letters and Sounds curriculum is supplemented by Bug Club phonics materials and is enhanced through apps on iPads, and websites such as phonics play and Education City.

Children are provided with multiple opportunities to practice and apply their phonic knowledge through the use of phonically decodable texts, carefully matched to the needs of the children. In addition to this, they are also provided with an additional reading book which is key-word based.

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. Independent reading provides time for both assessment and 1:1 teaching. Five daily discreet phonics lessons in EYFS and KS1 enable children to decode efficiently. This is continued into KS2 where necessary and is supported by intervention programmes.

Buckshaw Primary School uses the Bug Club Reading Scheme to support readers from Reception through to Year 6. Teachers and Teaching assistants support reading activities to ensure that children have more frequent opportunities to read with adults.

Children in EYFS classes take home a book from school and parents are encouraged to read this with their child multiple times, as well as record their progress in school reading journals. Books are changed up to three times weekly.

In KS1 children are assigned three home reading books per week. In most cases this is done through our ActiveLearn online system and children are given a levelled book according to their ability. Parents are encouraged to read with their child daily and progress is recorded online. For those families who cannot access ActiveLearn at home, children are assigned with physical copies of books from the same scheme and use reading journals to record their progress.

In Key Stage 2 children choose books to take home and read. Those children who still require a more structured approach to reading have access to the 'Project X and Bug Club' series of books to help them continue to grow in confidence as readers with a text that is appropriate for their current ability level.

Children are provided with language rich opportunities throughout the wider curriculum- with enhanced reading based on a weekly text, daily read-aloud sessions and guided reading groups to ensure reading remains at the highest of priorities.

Writing in EYFS

We believe that communication and language, with opportunities to explore reading and writing underpins the future learning of our children. Within our reception class children have access to planned whole class or group writing activities but also many opportunities for child-initiated writing activities.

These may include the following:

- Opportunities to develop and experience speaking and listening skills.
 - Experiences that develop fine and gross motor skills through play and mark making activities.
 - Sharing and enjoying a range of rhymes, songs, stories and books.
 - Immersion in a print rich environment with opportunities for oral language and written communication.
 - Whole class shared text activities.
 - ICT opportunities on PCs, iPad and smartboard.
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- A focus literacy session in the morning with different activities that teach children early communication language and literacy skills.
 - A daily phonics session which provides opportunity for children to practise the cursive script.
 - English integrated throughout the Early Years curriculum.

Writing in KS1

Clear assessments for the early years teacher allows for a smooth transition into key stage one where children continue to develop their love of writing.

- Explicitly taught and planned English sessions following the guidance and objectives of the statutory English curriculum.⁶
- Extended opportunities for discussion of writing, e.g. role play, pair talk, drama and hot seating to prepare children for the writing process.
- Modelled, shared and guided writing examples.
- Opportunities for children to write for and share their writing with different audiences.
- Songs, rhymes and games to develop English skills.
- Spelling and grammar work building on and deepening key skills across different year groups. In Year One there is a focus on phonics which then develops into spelling rules and strategies by the end of Year Two.

- Text level work using a range of genres and texts which will develop comprehension skills and understanding and enjoyment of books, helping to promote a love of writing.
- ICT work that complements and supports work in English, helping children to develop skills learnt through quality first teaching.
- Immersion in a print rich environment that promotes a reading culture and develops children's oral and written communication. Where possible using examples of the cursive handwriting style which is used in school.

Writing in KS2

- Explicitly taught and planned sessions following the guidance and objectives of the statutory English curriculum.
 - Use the Phillip Webb planning sequence and resources to engage the children and aid their learning.
 - Experience of a wide range of genres used in reading and writing.
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- Grammar, spelling and punctuation work led by quality texts to develop grammatical awareness and key punctuation skills building on and deepening key skills across different year groups.
 - Text level work reading a range of genres to develop comprehension skills and support writing.
 - Also making cross curricular links where possible to help promote sustained composition.
 - Spelling and grammar games and activities introduced by Phillip Webb to familiarise children with key skills.
 - Extended independent writing opportunities to apply the skills learnt when writing within different genres. Also the opportunity for children to draft, edit and refine their own work alongside that of others.
 - Immersion in a print rich environment that promotes a reading culture. Where possible this should be linked to the cursive style used in school.
 - Extended opportunities for discussion of writing, e.g. role play, pair talk, drama and hot seating to prepare children for the writing process.
 - Modelled, shared and guided writing takes place in the classroom.
 - Opportunities for children to write for and share their writing with different audiences.
 - ICT work that complements and supports work in literacy, helping children to develop skills learnt through quality first teaching.

Spelling

Buckshaw Primary School believes that foundations in spelling should be put in place from an early age. Within RYFS and KS1 the focus is on phonics and children are immersed in the world of phonics (closely linked to their reading) as soon as they enter school. All children within EYFS and KS1 access a daily lesson of phonics. The children in Years 1 and 2 also learn the common exception word lists for their year groups.

As children move towards the end of KS1 the focus changes from phonics to the learning of spelling rules and strategies. Within Year 2 children are also beginning to learn words from the national curriculum word list.

Within KS2 we currently follow the 'Nelson' programme which allows teachers to follow a flexible approach to spelling tailored to the individual needs of their class. Key spelling strategies and rules are taught within the classroom at least 3 times per week. Children may receive weekly spelling lists or individualised spelling lists to learn at home.

Alongside learning spelling rules and strategies Years 3/4 and Years 5/6 are also expected to learn the words lists as stated in the national curriculum. This is supported through spelling games to provide an interesting and engaging approach to learning spellings.

Spelling is important to all children and it is essential that they are given every opportunity to embed key spelling rules so that they are then able to apply them to their own writing. Spelling is a non-negotiable at Buckshaw Primary School.

Grammar and Punctuation

Buckshaw Primary School teaches grammar as an explicit part of the curriculum.

This begins in KS1 and follows through into KS2. It is essential that children are taught to use the correct vocabulary from an early age and all teachers model the use of this when they teach grammar.

The first stage of our grammar teaching is the explicit stand-alone session. This allows teachers to explain and model for the children the grammar or punctuation which is being taught. Children are then able to practise this new skill (usually through a written activity or cloze procedure). This develops the use of fluency of the new grammar/punctuation skill.

The second stage then shows the teacher modelling the grammar or punctuation through the class text or a cross curricular example. Children are then able to see the new learning being used in context. Finally children would be expected to use the new learning in their own writing therefore embedding the skill. This learning is then quite often assessed in an end of unit piece of writing.

Speaking and Listening

Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language which pupil's hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing.

At Buckshaw Primary School we believe children should have the opportunity to access the following:

- Book Talk - understanding and responding to what children read or have read to them.
- Eliciting and extending responses and encouraging critique of books and writing.
- Language development – acquiring new words, ideas and knowledge of the world and having the opportunity to talk about them.
- Storytelling – retelling well-known and familiar stories to assimilate the rhythms and patterns of story language.
- Story making - creating 'new' stories orally and/or as a preparation and rehearsal for writing.
- Talk for Writing - exploring ideas and gathering the content for writing - what to write about. Creating characters and settings, exploring characters' feelings, sequencing and roleplaying the order of events – knowing your story or organising information before writing it down.
- Rehearsing what is to be written – composing sentences orally and refining them.
- Preparing for and taking part in debates.
- Opportunities to rehearse and learn different texts and present to different audience.

Resources

There are a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries and a range of age-appropriate small apparatus. All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts. The school have two libraries; one for each Key Stage. Children from every class are welcome to browse and loan books from either library depending on their ability level. Each child in school has a login and continued access to our ActiveLearn Bug Club subscription. This enables them to access independent and guided reading books on a range of electronic devices both inside and outside of school. Each Key Stage has a set of iPads which are regularly used to enrich English lessons and aid multimedia approached to teaching and learning.

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 progress in order to close the gap. This

will be done in discussion with the class teacher at pupil progress meetings. This information will then be shared with the SLT, SENCO and parents if required.

More able children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided to deepen and strengthen their skills in English.

Buckshaw Primary School has high expectations 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 different children.

We recognise that parents play a large part in the education of their children. At Buckshaw Primary School. School parents and staff work together in partnership to encourage the qualities, attitudes, knowledge, understanding and competences which are necessary to equip children for later life.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Reading

Children are assessed using our ActiveLearn 'Progress & Asses' scheme. Children are assigned a personalised progression map at the level they are currently working at. This progression map will be amended when the children achieve targets and meet the 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.
- Observation of records linked to Bug Club independent reading books. 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 are available as part of the school's ongoing subscription to ActiveLearn.
- Half-termly comprehension tests (Years 1 to 6).
- Half termly phonics tests (Years 1 and 2).
- Evidence gathered during daily English lessons (e.g. written or verbal responses to comprehension questions based on the whole class text).
- Reading moderation sessions.

Writing

Children from Year 1 to 6 are assessed against the writing criteria outlined in Lancashire's 'KLIPS' document, adapted from the 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 individual English books.
- Writing from a variety of cross-curricular sources.
- A half termly 'assessed piece' of writing. 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.

Monitoring

English and Foundation books/Learning Journals are selected for regular work scrutiny to ensure children are learning age-related skills and being provided with ample opportunities to produce sustained independent writing to put these skills in to practice.

Lesson observations are carried out by the English Subject Leader, Head Teacher, SLT or School Improvement Partner, where the focus is primarily on the learning, progression, key skill acquisition, engagement and productivity of pupils.

We give great importance to the implementation of regular Pupil Voice questionnaires in order to ascertain the views and opinions of our young learners.

We also carry out Learning Environment monitoring, with these findings also contributing towards our English Action Plan.

Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the [National Curriculum programmes of study](#) for English, which all maintained schools in England must teach.

It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014](#) and [Equality Act 2010](#), and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's [Governance Handbook](#).

In addition, this policy acknowledges the requirements for promoting the learning and development of children set out in the [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#).

David Worswick (English Subject Leader)

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