

Bushfield Road Infant School



English Policy

Updated Autumn 2021

Review Date: Autumn 2022

Bushfield Road Infant School Curriculum Intent.

Bushfield Infant School is a school which recognises and respects difference; a calm, safe and inclusive school which celebrates the progress and achievements of all our children. A school which supports not only its pupils, but also their families.

Bushfield Infant School prides itself on integrity, values and high expectations and these qualities are what drive the school.

At the heart of the school is a broad and balanced curriculum, offering exciting challenges in a meaningful way, constantly encouraging children to learn and practise skills which will stay with them for life.

Raising standards, whilst supporting emotional well-being is a priority and the responsibility of every member of staff. An emphasis on language rich learning experiences promotes the communication skills which are fundamental to successful learning.

At the heart of the school curriculum, is an innovative and well embedded approach to teaching the key skills for future success.

Communication, Teamwork, Resilience, Problem solving, Creativity and Financial awareness.

Bushfield Infant school is a positive environment in which to work and learn, a safe place to take risks and accept challenge and most of all a community where we all strive to be the very best we can.

English Curriculum Intent

Phonics

At Bushfield Infant school we have developed a bespoke phonic programme which is supported by Collins Big Cat, phonetically decodable books. Our bespoke programme matches the Early Learning Goals for EYFS and matches the expectations of the National Curriculum for Key Stage 1. In the nursery, Foundations for Phonics is implemented with a focus on sound discrimination, rhythm and rhyme and also oral blending and segmenting. We use a range of resources to deliver our systematic programme.

Phonic lessons are taught in short, discrete daily sessions across the school with a wealth of opportunities for children to use and apply their phonic knowledge and skills throughout the day and across the curriculum. We have a whole class approach to teaching phonics that allows all children to keep up with age related work; and interventions are in place for children who need a little extra help to keep up with the high expectations we plan for.

The phonic code is broken down into phases and our teaching takes children through it in a logical, sequential and rigorous way. Children are taught to recognise single letters making predictable sounds, then digraphs and trigraphs - alongside recognising common words that are not phonetically decodable. This allows us to provide our children with secure lifelong phonic foundations, enabling them to confidently attempt to read and spell unfamiliar words in their independent work. We believe a good phonic knowledge helps to create resilient, confident, independent readers and spellers.

Reading

At Bushfield Road Infant School we want our children to develop a love of reading right from the very start in Nursery. We do this through basing our learning around carefully chosen, engaging high quality texts. By the time the children leave Bushfield Road Infant School they are able to recall an increasing number of quality texts in detail.

Reading opens the door to learning in our school. Children have many opportunities to read throughout the day both to their peers and adults and also across the curriculum. Daily phonic and flashcard lessons help to build the skills children need to become fluent and confident readers. We use a blended approach of whole class, group guided reading and individual reading.

Nursery children are encouraged to share books and to listen to stories and also to choose books from the Nursery lending library to share at home with their families. The teaching of early reading skills begins in nursery and continues as children develop knowledge of the basic phonic code. We have a range of books in school including fiction, non-fiction and poetry that are carefully aligned to our phonics programme and matched to each child's stage of learning. We also give careful consideration to the interests of different genders and ages of children.

We value the need to practise reading and we highly encourage parents to listen to and enjoy reading with their children at home. Children and parents are informed of the importance of re-reading a text three times. The first time the children will be working hard to decode any unfamiliar words, using their phonetic knowledge, the second time children read with more fluency, and expression is modelled and encouraged. A third read helps them to really understand the text and be able to recall it in detail. Staff record feedback weekly in home reading records, including next steps to meet individual needs. The website includes lots of valuable information and top tips for parents to enable them to help their child with reading at home.

Speaking and Listening

We recognise many of our children have limited language experiences and/or a delay in communication. Therefore, we provide a wide range of teacher led and continuous provision, which promotes hands on experiences within the school environment. Staff ensure these are language-rich activities which will help them to develop a wide range of vocabulary.

Children are encouraged to work collaboratively, confidently asking for help and providing their 'buddies' with support. 'Connie Communication' skills are a fundamental part of the teaching and learning in all our curriculum areas.

Writing

"Research has shown that children who hear stories before going to school are most likely to succeed. Story telling helps children internalise language patterns, as well as providing them with a rucksack of imaginative possibilities to draw upon when creating. It is worth noting that the most proficient writers in the class are readers."

Pie Corbett - www.earlyreadingconnects.org.uk

We strongly believe that the content of what our children write is clearly informed by their breadth of reading knowledge and experiences. For this reason, writing is taught through a range of starting points, including real events and through quality texts across all year groups. Basic skills and non-negotiables underpin writing in all areas of the curriculum.

We provide many opportunities for children to write independently, using both classroom displays and resources known by the children as their 'bits and bobs' for support.

Children are consistently encouraged to spell many uncommon words correctly using their phonetic knowledge.

The children are taught that they are the authors of their own work and we instil a positive attitude embedded within our 'Mr I Can' enterprise skills and also through our embedded ethos of 'It is okay to have a try and to get it wrong'. This is the point at which new learning can take place with same day intervention.

Once children are able to write unaided and without mediation, children are taught to edit their work and they are taught and encouraged to set themselves targets, striving to be the best writers they can be.

There is a well organised system for developing handwriting skills. Regular daily practice is given and continues throughout Key Stage 1, so that by the time children leave Bushfield Road Infant School they can form and join letters and digits of the correct size and orientation.

SPaG

Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation are skills which are taught discretely. Children are also given frequent opportunities to apply these skills in their writing and across the curriculum. We strive to ensure all children can spell high frequency words, common irregular words and apply spelling rules in a range of writing genre across the curriculum.

Whole school aims to promote Communication & Interaction alongside literacy skills.

Aims:

At Bushfield Infants we aim to inspire all children to reach their full academic potential. In English this means ensuring a curriculum that is fully inclusive of all children and a curriculum which meets the following criteria:

- Develops children's ability to use the English language to communicate with others and speak confidently in a range of contexts. We focus on the oral skills first which is beneficial for all children, especially those from a socially disadvantaged background.
- Gives children the opportunities to retell and orally rehearse rhymes, poems, songs, stories and non-fiction texts, ensuring they can make the links between speaking, reading and writing.
- Enables pupils to apply their phonics skills to their reading, ensuring they can read accurately and with understanding, whilst also promoting reading for pleasure.
- Gives pupils opportunities to apply learnt spelling, punctuation and grammar skills and concepts in different meaningful contexts.
- Encourages children to develop an interest in words, their meaning, and a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms.
- Demonstrates a purpose and introduces children to the joy of writing, giving them the confidence to express their own ideas through the written word.
- Provides real life, meaningful contexts for writing across the school.
- Promotes a good growth mind-set
- Encourages children to use the **Bushfield four Bs** to promote resilience and independence. "Ask your **brain**, then the 'bits and bobs', you can ask your '**buddy**' or even the '**boss**'. *

**Ask your brain promotes - Sticky knowledge/Retrieval skills.*

'Bits and Bobs' - Resources readily available in classrooms such as sound mats, tricky word mats, dictionaries, displays and magpie board.

Ask your 'buddy'- Ask your partner for help.

Ask the 'boss'- Ask a teacher for help.

Developing Communication and Interaction skills

At Bushfield Infants we are both fortunate and privileged to have a TA with a high level of training in Speech & language, in particular the BTEC in Speech and Language. She provides excellent support of a high quality for pupils in school, but also has valuable contact and liaison with parents and speech therapists. Together the school works in partnership to improve and develop communication skills.

Research has found that a curriculum and structured programmes which focus on children's language, significantly impacts positively upon both learning and social and emotional development and well-being.

It is for these reasons that our trained TA works closely with the SALT team to provide early identification, highly structured support and deliver personalised programmes. It is also for that reason that at Bushfield Infants we prioritise communication as a key skill for future learning.

The Role of the T.A. with Responsibility for Speech and Language includes:

- Regular liaison with the speech and language therapist, attendance at reviews/assessment clinics, telephone conversations and meetings held each term.
- Following programmes of work set by the SALT with children on the SLT caseload.
- Meeting with parents to discuss children's progress with regards to their speech, language and communication needs.
- Completing Language Link Assessments to identify pupils with speech/Language difficulties and identify those requiring referral to SALT.

The English Curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Within the Early Years curriculum 'Communication and language' is one of the prime areas of learning. Consequently, giving children opportunities to speak, listen and understand in a range of contexts helps underpin all the teaching and learning in Early Years. 'Reading' and 'Writing' are specific areas of learning and we have a clear focus on 'closing the word gap' in those early years of education. Opportunities for children to develop all these skills are provided through child initiated learning and adult directed teaching and learning. The Early Years curriculum is delivered using a cross curricular approach with teaching and learning linked to 'Quality Texts'.

To ensure children get the best possible start to their education we provide them with a wealth of different experiences to develop their skills in all areas of English.

These include:

- Nursery rhymes, Use of story sacks and puppets, Inviting book corners, with carefully chosen selection of books that are changed frequently (Both fiction and non-fiction) with a match to phonics focus, Circle time, sharing news and listening to others, Story and singing where children are encouraged to join in with repeated refrains.
- Adult modelling of good listening and speaking.
- Children are asked to verbalise drawings and talk about what they are doing throughout the day.
- Creating their own story books, where the children draw a picture then verbalise their story.

- Reception children progressing onto reading books carefully matched to their phonetic ability.
- Providing a variety of multisensory resources and opportunities for mark making to ensure children develop and strengthen oral muscles and core strength.

The English Curriculum in Key Stage One

English is planned using the intent and objectives of The National Curriculum. At Bushfield we recognise that the skills taught in English lessons are vital to enable children to access other curriculum areas. The ability to speak, read and write fluently is fundamental to all subject areas. Particular fidelity to phonics, letter formations and SPaG taught each week is incorporated into all recorded work. There is a strong focus on the transference of skills and maximising opportunities for children to both practise and to use retrieval skills.

'Quality Texts' are carefully chosen to promote a love of reading in all curriculum areas. Therefore, some texts lend well to Geography and History for example. Whilst some children will still be mastering the EYFS curriculum when they enter KS1, teachers ensure all children enjoy a range of language rich texts. Texts are chosen to widen children's vocabulary at age appropriate levels and to continue to narrow the 'word gap'. Lessons are taught at a good pace, ensuring ALL children are actively answering questions during the input, in order for teachers to check understanding swiftly, address misconceptions and ensure there is full engagement at a challenging level.

Whole School Continuity and Progression

The curriculum planning in English is carried out in three phases (long-term, medium term and short-term). The English subject lead oversees this process and liaises with class teachers to ensure continuity and progression throughout the school. The Long Term plan maps out genres, stories and texts taught in each year group to ensure a range of texts and genres are covered. Curriculum English maps further break down termly coverage of objectives to ensure there are no gaps in learning and key skills are built upon each term and within year groups. Teachers not only know the coverage of their own year group but the coverage of prior and future year groups. This knowledge and understanding ensures they are building on prior learning and checking long term retrieval skills, whilst also identifying gaps. Class teachers use the given Long Term Plan, Curriculum Coverage Map and Medium Term Plans to create their own weekly short term plans. These outline the specific learning objectives and the teaching and learning in individual lessons. These plans also outline how individual and group needs are met through differentiation, and is shared with support staff.

Inclusion

All teaching and learning opportunities are planned and resourced to ensure that all children can access the curriculum and make good progress in class. Children with SEND may have specific needs which need to be addressed to enable them to make continued progress (See SEND policy). Where appropriate children may have targets on their ILPs relating to English. Their needs may be further addressed within intervention groups outside the classroom. TA's are briefed about individual needs and ensure reading books are linked to any phonic targets detailed on their personalised 'Individual Learning Plan'. (ILP)

Independent Reading

Reading relies on the successful acquisition of both word reading and comprehension skills. Throughout the day, there are opportunities for children to engage with reading activities. For example, a '**stop, drop and read**' session where they have the opportunity to read their home school books to themselves or a partner. Each class also has a book corner with quality books for the children to enjoy. Daily class story times are embedded within our timetable and the children actively vote for the book they want to listen to. Children read individually once a week with class teachers or TAs. Reading diaries are implemented to foster communication between home and school, ensuring that parents/carers are informed of progress and next steps.

There is a clear focus on providing daily extra intervention to the lower achievers including reading and phonics, with 'Phonic Buddies' and 'Reading Champions' in place for Year 1 and Year 2.

Shared Reading

Shared reading is based around our 'Quality Text'. When a book is first read to the class this is purely for enjoyment. We re-read the text many times with a focus on decoding, reading with expression and on comprehension. The Teacher's role is to demonstrate what good readers look like: acting as a model, a demonstrator and an instructor whilst encouraging the children to join in. The teacher facilitates responses, drawing attention to reading strategies and features of text, appropriate sentence and word levels, age appropriate experience and the ability of the majority. Sensitive questioning and prompting of individual children helps to ensure maximum participation and understanding. Tier 3 vocabulary from the Quality Texts are displayed in the classroom and children are taught the meaning of these words in a variety of contexts and are encouraged to apply them in both verbal conversation and written work across the curriculum.

Guided Reading

Guided reading provides the opportunity for children to apply their existing reading skills. Children are taught how to establish meaning at text, sentence and word levels. Teachers provide opportunities for children to work and communicate together in order to share strategies and enjoy reading with their peers. By Year 1, all children are involved in weekly

Guided Reading sessions, with Reception children beginning Guided Reading when appropriate. Children are grouped in their classes according to their reading age, comprehension skills and speaking and listening ability. Each Guided Reading session has a focus taken from the year group's Reading Assessment. Teachers ensure that during Guided Reading, there are opportunities for children to refer to and retrieve prior learning.

Phonics

At Bushfield Road Infant School we are determined to raise English standards in our school and strive for our children to achieve higher than National standards. We believe a solid foundation in Phonics is crucial to a child's success as they progress through their Primary years. At Bushfield Infants we have developed a bespoke approach to the teaching of phonics and reading. Our revised reading 'code' which establishes a clear and structured sequence enables children to begin to read and write simple words, phrases and sentences as early as possible. We ensure that children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabet code, mastering phonics to help them encode and decode as they move through the school. As a result, our children are able to tackle unfamiliar words as they read, with growing confidence, across all curriculum areas. The development of fluency helps children to become successful readers who willingly choose to read and find pleasure in it.

In Nursery, children learn to identify environmental and percussive sounds through the explicit teaching of rhymes and songs. This enables them to begin to make the distinction between different sounds, in preparation for identifying Phase 2 sounds and phonemes at the beginning of the Reception year.

Phonic activities in the nursery encourage them to listen intently, to speak with more confidence, to interact with others and to become more inquisitive about the world around them.

In Reception, we explicitly teach the phonemes and corresponding graphemes through daily phonics lessons. From Reception to Year 2 we maintain a consistent approach; **Revisit, Teach, Practise and Apply**. Children are encouraged to 'sound talk' using their phonic fingers.

These discrete structured lessons begin very early in the autumn term after baseline assessments have been completed. We expect children to leave Early Years with a sound knowledge of Phase 3 phonemes which they can incorporate within reading and spelling of some Phase 4 words.

As soon as Reception staff begin formally teaching Phonics, they show commitment to giving every child the opportunity to 'keep up' as they progress through teaching the alphabetic code. Staff check retrieval skills of the daily grapheme throughout the day. TAs are skillfully used throughout the day to provide extra intervention for individuals who need support in mastering a specific phoneme in order for them to 'keep up' with the pace of the whole class teaching. Our TAs are fully trained to support delivery of our Bushfield

phonics curriculum and classroom teachers consistently brief them on how to support children in each particular lesson.

To accompany the 44 phonemes taught in Reception, we initially teach actions to engage our learners. This particularly supports some of our EAL learners and identified SEND pupils to cue into the sounds, and helps teachers to assess the phonic skills of our higher than average proportion of children with speech and language difficulties.

As children move into Key Stage One, the skills and knowledge already taught are reinforced and built upon. Year 1 children are taught alternate graphemes to specific phonemes through explicit phonic lessons, and writing takes place every day. Teachers maximise learning opportunities for children to apply their newly acquired knowledge throughout the day in all curriculum areas, showing fidelity to our phonics programme. Staff continue to ensure children 'keep up' and retrieval is checked throughout the day and where appropriate, swift intervention is put in place based on individual needs. Our formal phonic assessments take place termly. Staff track progress and use this as a tool to inform future planning, and where some children may not have maintained the ability to 'keep up', a 'catch up' group begins on entry to Year 1 with a commitment to narrowing the gap. We expect children to have a sound knowledge of Phase 4 and 5 sounds by the end of Year 1. We strive to ensure all children, including SEND meet the pass mark of the Phonic Screening Check and termly practice tests help to monitor and identify those who need extra daily support through our 'Phonic Buddies' scheme.

Children move into Year 2 with a greater shift from learning to read at a basic skill level, to reading to learn in the application of their knowledge. Year 2 follow the National Curriculum and we expect children to leave Year 2 as confident, fluent readers.

Writing

In the foundation stage, children are encouraged to mark make and write emergently with a range of tools. Through continuous provision, children are constantly given opportunities to write, via both adult led and child initiated activities. Children are encouraged to develop fine motor skill through pre-writing activities such as tracing, streamers, sand tray, etc. They are encouraged to use a range of mark making tools and to hold them correctly. Children are provided with a range of activities such as threading and dough gym to help develop their hand muscles.

In Key Stage 1, a range of writing activities are planned through the use of quality texts and the school's cross-curricular approach. Children are provided with daily opportunities to write for a purpose, about real and first hand experiences. They are encouraged to write using different genres, e.g. Recounts, letters, narratives, poetry, instructions and non-chronological reports. Basic skills and non-negotiables underpin writing in all areas of the curriculum.

Children are encouraged to experiment as writers and to write confidently and independently, using both classroom displays and resources. (Bits & Bobs). Opportunities

are provided for children to use and apply their newly acquired phonic knowledge. Sound mats support children to spell unfamiliar words. Children are taught Spelling,

Punctuation & Grammar skills discretely, but are also given frequent opportunities to apply these skills in their writing. Once children are able to write unaided and without mediation, children are taught to edit their work and develop fluency and accuracy.

Handwriting is taught discretely in short, frequent sessions. Teachers demonstrate letter formations and joins daily. Children practise by carefully copying and repeating. **See Handwriting Policy.**

Assessment

The school tracks progress and identifies gaps in learning through a range of formative and summative assessments. Assessments are acted upon swiftly to help ensure children are working within the age related expectations of their peers. Same day intervention takes place at the point any misconceptions are identified.

Each term two pieces of unaided writing with a common focus is assessed against agreed criteria linked to the writing assessment framework. Attainment is recorded on termly pupil tracking grids and used to demonstrate pupil progress and make predictions.

Children's work is consistently marked with constructive comments and targets are identified to further improve their work.

Self and peer assessment is consistent across the whole school and has a positive impact on achievement. Pupils are encouraged to identify their own targets.

Assessment records are maintained to track pupil progress in phonics, key words reading and writing. These records alongside ongoing assessments and termly testing are used to inform the levels of achievement identified on tracking grids.

