Blue Gate Fields Junior School

English policy

Policy details:

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Person (s) responsible for implementation and monitoring:
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Signature (Chair of governors)

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This policy describes our practice in the teaching of the various elements of English: reading, writing, spelling, phonics, grammar, punctuation and oracy. It is underpinned by the requirements of the National Curriculum, current national guidance on best practice, in-house and THEP training and professional judgement.

Vision

Literacy at Blue Gate Fields Junior School is fundamental and is the foundation for almost all the learning which takes place. It underpins the school curriculum by promoting high standards of language and literacy, enabling pupils to enrich their learning and develop their language skills. We place a special emphasis on the development of high-quality communication through the systematic teaching of effective spoken and written language, paving the way for an enjoyable and successful school experience.

English lessons are engaging and challenging and they offer rich opportunities for talk, develop a love of literature and writing and explore and embed key skills. Pupils have a strong command of spoken and written language in order to convey their thoughts, opinions, ideas and feelings with depth, clarity and meaning. Our pupils love reading and read a wide variety of texts both from our school and classroom libraries regularly for both information and pleasure.

Our overarching vision is for all our pupils to independently transfer their literacy skills across all areas of the curriculum and to create an environment in school, which produces successful learners, responsible citizens, effective contributors and confident individuals of the highest standard. We aim to bring the world to our children through authentic literature.

Aims

The National Curriculum states that the overarching aim for English is:
"To promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment."

Our aim is for all pupils to:
- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, both for 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 coherently and articulately, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use talk and discussion in order to engage in learning; pupils should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- be competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate
- be provided with a language rich, stimulating curriculum that is linked to real life experiences

Teaching and Learning

Organisation of English:

Our children are taught in ability groups, which we find to be highly effective for learning, attainment and confidence. Pupils are organised into sets across each year group, according to their progress in reading, which is based on the results of termly and yearly NFER tests and ongoing teacher assessments. Our English curriculum aspires to meet or exceed the needs of our pupils. Year 3 has six literacy groups and years 4-6 have five. Each group is taught in a separate classroom and teaching is centred on the needs of the children. Our lower attaining children are taught in smaller groups thus enabling more 1:1 time with the teacher.

Each literacy group works towards age related expectations and where appropriate, beyond. Pupils exceeding or working at the expected standard, work in more depth in larger literacy groups with a focus on deepening their experiences within the genre they are studying, while those working below or towards the expected learning outcomes (bottom 20% of cohort) are taught in smaller groups where they receive more targeted adult support allowing more opportunities for accelerated progress.

Pupils are taught literacy every day. Each literacy group receives an hour of literacy a day (which includes a range of reading, writing, spelling, speaking and listening and handwriting). Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 also have an extra two hours a week of literacy. As part of our literacy offer to pupils, each group visits our extensive school library once a week. The additional literacy provision across the school supports our pupils overcome the significant educational and linguistic barriers to learning they encounter. Literacy encompasses all the elements required to be a successful learner: oracy, vocabulary and language and the ability to read. We firmly believe that literacy is the gateway to success, enabling pupils to have deeper access to the wider curriculum.

Every child has a literacy pack, which is kept in their literacy classroom. In it is their Literacy book, Extended writing book, a notebook, RWInc. Spelling book, a RWInc. Phonics Get Writing book (for children on the Phonics programme) and all the stationary that they require. This helps the children to be well organised and prepared for each lesson and reduces time spent handing out stationary.

Planning

CLPE, RWInc. and Tower Hamlets unit plans are adapted to plan sequences of teaching and learning for speaking and listening, reading and writing. These sequences use the Tower Hamlets Toolkits to inform planning for reading and comprehension; in writing the Toolkits address spoken language, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, composition, transcription and handwriting. Children have the opportunity to experience a wide range of engaging

texts which draw them in and enhance their learning. We strive to present the children with stories and poems from a range of cultures and to ensure our pupils see themselves represented in the narratives we choose to tell and the subjects we choose to write about. Literature choices are regularly discussed and determined by the LITCOs in collaboration with Year Groups teams and our Librarian. These choices are reviewed regularly to ensure that they remain relevant, cover the appropriate range of genres and are inspiring for the pupils and teachers. Where possible, all pupils in a year group study the same, or related texts, with planning used to differentiate outcomes according to ability and needs of a particular literacy group. Related whole group novels are selected from a recommended reading list and sourced from the in-house library or the Tower Hamlets Schools Library Service (SLS).

Teachers plan sequences of lessons towards a written outcome using a Learning Journey approach. This method of 'backward planning' takes a desired outcome and then unpicks the learning needed as a journey that matches learning intentions to a finished piece of writing. They demonstrate how learning is built upon over time and support teachers and pupils to make links between stages and aspects of learning. Clear focus is given through explicit learning intentions and language, which identify what learners need to understand and be able to do in order to achieve this.

We make use of the expertise throughout the school and in year group teams to plan collaboratively and create LI overviews or medium term plans, which teachers can then tailor to the needs of their pupils. These units of work are not static and are continuously reviewed and refined in line with national requirements.

Our teachers draw on many resources to support the planning process. All RQTs and ECTs and newly appointed teachers receive induction and guidance from our Teaching and Learning Mentor and additional support from our literacy consultant, Ann Moss, who has over 20 years' worth of experience teaching in Tower Hamlets. Through book looks and learning walks, the English leads are able to ensure coherence within the planning and where necessary, provide CPD and training in response to the needs of staff (refer to support pathways document).

The planning is resourced using:
- Alan Peat progression in structures
- THEP exemplary planning
- RWInc.
- Descriptosaurus
- Nicolas Roberts approaches to planning for writing
- Pie Corbett Talk for Writing (non-fiction resource)
- Sue Palmer skeletons
- CLPE teaching and learning strategies (role on the wall, conscience alley etc.)

- Chris Quigley- Greater Depth in Reading approaches and strategies
- Grammar progression document (English appendix)
- Progression across genres document
- Progression within genres document
- THEP reading and writing toolkits
- Yearly non- negotiables
- National Curriculum KS1 and KS2 word lists
- Ready to progress document
- Reading Detectives

Recording Learning

Learning is recorded in children's exercise books when it is felt that it would enhance or support the children's acquisition of the concept taught through practise, or to support teacher assessment. Where lessons may involve learning taking place through drama, use of concrete resources or upon whiteboards for example, children are not expected to write in books purely for evidence. Teachers may take photos of learning, which they save in their planning folders but, to avoid unnecessary printing, are not required to stick them into children's books.

At times, the process of learning will not be recorded in exercise books, for instance, pupils draft pieces of extended writing in their notebooks. This frees pupils to be bolder in being able to allow their ideas to flow on paper and also in their editing and redrafting, as they do not feel restricted by the constraints of their exercise books.

The Components of the English Curriculum

Oracy – learning through talk:

At Blue Gate Fields Junior School, talk is valued as an educational goal in its own right and is taught explicitly. We believe that, "talk is the sea upon which all else floats" (James Britton 1970) and Professor Frank Hardman reinforces this when he states that "[Talk is] the most powerful tool of communication in the classroom and it's fundamentally central to the acts of teaching and learning." Talk underpins all written work. We know that knowledge is constructed and developed through social interaction, and that spoken language helps us to construct meaning of the world around us, and of abstract ideas and concepts. Furthermore, we want classroom talk to be preparation for the social, educational and employment settings they may encounter in the future, and is one of the key strategies we use to develop pupils' critical thinking and reasoning skills. We are teaching children to express themselves, build self-esteem and confidence; we want them to work collaboratively, to be able to communicate with their peers efficiently and to become active citizens with excellent oral communication skills.

Teachers are fully aware of their role in providing and orchestrating high quality talk in the classroom; they utilise a repertoire of skills and behaviours to teach and model talk, and understand that different types of talk are cultivated for different purposes.

- Within a school culture for learning that promotes high levels of trust between teacher and pupil, children are confident that they are heard and listened to; and understand that talk is another aspect of their learning where struggle, setback and failure are part of learning which can be 'tricky' to grapple with.
- Throughout the school we have clearly defined communicative norms for partner talk. These rules for talk partner work, along with growth mindset understanding, work towards children becoming more tolerant of each other, and to break down stereotypes. Procedures for talk are formalised, with an expectation that pupils will make eye contact, listen and talk, and understand the signals teachers give them to stop their individual discussions.

Talk Partners are created through flexible random pairings, which are changed regularly to facilitate a wide range of different talk opportunities with a variety of partners. Random pairing has been proven the most effective model for partners; it breaks down barriers between the children, makes them more likely to contribute and enables lower achieving pupils to speak. It is perceived by the children to be fair and inclusive. Pupils find confidence in working with a variety of partners; teachers find that their perception of pupils (ability, confidence, behaviour) can change.
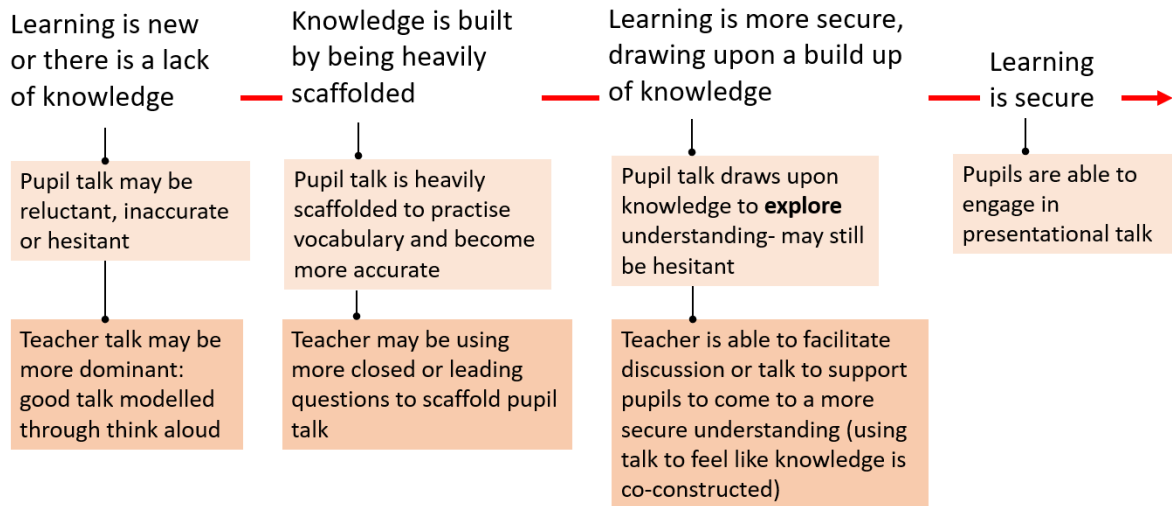
- Children with sight, hearing, mobility impairments or particular learning needs are paired, sensitively, according to the judgement of the teacher.
- Throughout the school there are defined deliberative norms for class discussion that are structured upon an ABC model that invites children to agree, build or challenge shared ideas.
Teachers understand whether they are aiming for presentational or exploratory talk from pupils, and avoid focusing upon presentational features at the expense of developing deeper understanding through exploratory talk.
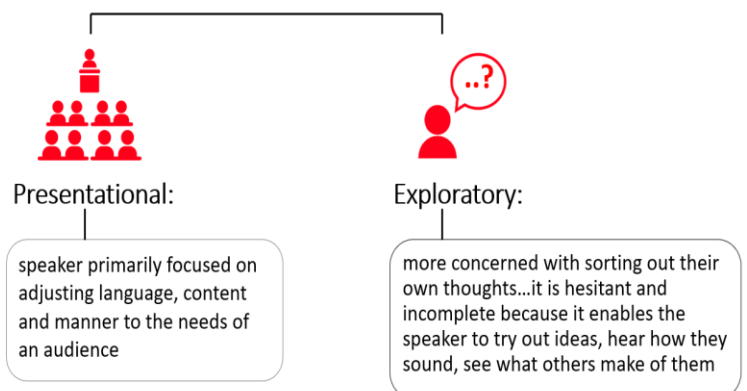
- Teachers understand that the quality of pupil talk is likely dependent upon their level of knowledge and the stage of learning pupils are at.

Initially pupil talk may be extremely hesitant and reluctant because children do not have enough knowledge to talk about their learning, but they are using talk/discussion to come to a more secure understanding through exploring ideas, which ultimately may support presentational talk.

| Learning is new or there is a lack of knowledge	Knowledge is built by being heavily scaffolded	Learning is more secure, drawing upon a build up of knowledge	Learning is secure
Pupil talk may be reluctant, inaccurate or hesitant	Pupil talk is heavily scaffolded to practise vocabulary and become more accurate	Pupil talk draws upon knowledge to **explore** understanding- may still be hesitant	Pupils are able to engage in presentational talk
Teacher talk may be more dominant: good talk modelled through think aloud	Teacher may be using more closed or leading questions to scaffold pupil talk	Teacher is able to facilitate discussion or talk to support pupils to come to a more secure understanding (using talk to feel like knowledge is co-constructed)	

- At earlier stages of learning, teacher talk may be more dominant. To support pupils to develop their accuracy when talking, the teacher will provide scaffolding to allow pupils to practise vocabulary, language or thinking structures. This may be through the use of strategies including sentence frames, my turn/your turn and oral rehearsal.

- Then with learning being thoughtfully sequenced so that knowledge is grown incrementally, children become more able to take the lead on talk. Teachers understand the role of secure knowledge in supporting pupils to engage in productive exploratory talk and fluent presentational talk.

- Teachers scaffold talk with an awareness of progressive language structures, which are based upon The Tower Hamlets Progression in Language Structures Document. Teachers provide scaffolds for pupil responses or group discussion in the form of sentence stems that use appropriate sentence structures and vocabulary, matching the stage of understanding of the pupils they are teaching. These sentence structures may also be written in the language section of the learning intentions for the lesson.

What do you notice about this picture?

Sentence starters:

-I noticed that...

-If you look closely, you can see...

-There appears to be...

-The ... reminds me of...
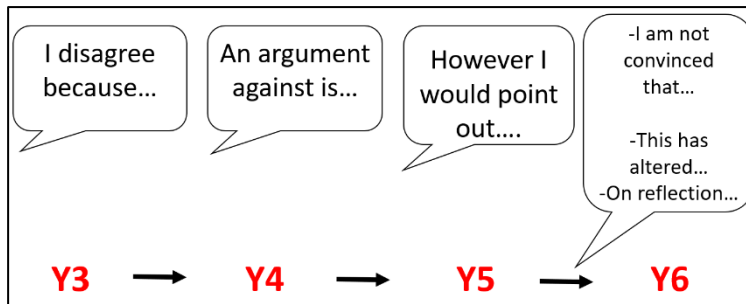
- Features of presentational talk are explicitly talk so that pupils can talk with the ability to adjust language, content and manner to the needs of an audience.
- Teachers provide a high-quality model of talk for pupils in the classroom. They use a 'think aloud' approach to model each stage and secure pupils' understanding of the learning. This provides the direct teaching of the use of new vocabulary and language structures so that pupils can secure understanding of content and engage in productive exploratory talk. It models the concept, language and thought processes. Furthermore, teacher talk models the thinking structures that develop pupils' subject specific habits of mind and critical thinking skills.
- A wide range of strategies to promote and provide frameworks for productive talk are used, including utilizing carefully chosen retrieval practice starters; dual coded diagrams; See, Think, Wonder.
- Teachers use pupil talk to support their responsive teaching: based on the feedback they receive as they listen to pupils, they are able to make decisions about the next steps to take in the lesson.
  In particular, where pupils lack the knowledge and understanding to engage in productive talk, the teacher intervenes and models high quality talk through think aloud or clear explanations.
- Teachers carefully phrase their questioning to create the conditions for their desired pupil response: they make effective choices about whether to utilize closed or open questions, matching them appropriately to pupils' current understanding and the best way to secure learning.

Phonics

Read Write Inc. Phonics (RWInc phonics) is a proven approach to teaching literacy for children that produces fluent readers, confident speakers and willing writers. The aim of the phonics programme is to close the gap for pupils who are not working at age related expectations. Additional provision, alongside the broad and rich literacy curriculums, is made each day for pupils who need to catch up with reading and writing. For pupils who arrive at Blue Gate Fields Junior School with either no or very little English, experienced TAs support them with early English acquisition and deliver the phonics programme to help pupils to read.

These pupils are grouped according to their need and follow the Phonics programme which teaches pupils to:

- decode letter-sound correspondences quickly and effortlessly, using their phonic knowledge and skills

- read "tricky" words on sight
- understand what they read
- read aloud with fluency and expression
- write confidently, (with a strong focus on vocabulary and grammar)
- spell quickly and easily, with a strong focus on vocabulary and grammar
- spell quickly and easily by segmenting the sounds in words

Once pupils have successfully completed the RWInc. Phonics programme and are confident decoders, we continue to provide them with opportunities to apply and consolidate their phonics skills and therefore become fluent readers. Pupils can now start RWInc. Spelling to continue developing spelling strategies and rules as required by the National Curriculum. (Refer to Phonics rationale)

Spelling
At our school, we have embedded a systematic and rigorous spelling programme. Pupils across the school follow the Read Write Inc. Spelling programme that prepares pupils for the higher demands of the statutory spelling assessments in England; it is in line with the National Curriculum for spelling. Spelling is taught daily for 10 to 15 minutes within the literacy hour or three days a week for 15 to 20 minutes, although teachers are equipped with the flexibility to sequence spelling sessions to support the needs of their particular literacy group. Some pupils in year 6 benefit greatly from an additional, bespoke spelling programme which strengthens spelling knowledge and supports pupils to fill in gaps.

Reading
Our priority is both the teaching of reading skills and the enjoyment of literature. We want pupil enjoyment of and engagement with texts to be at the heart of reading at Blue Gate Fields Junior School, enabling pupils to become lifelong learners (reading to learn) and confident readers. By the time pupils progress from lower to upper KS2, the majority have learned to read with automaticity. As pupils continue to build stamina, higher order fluency skills and comprehension become our main areas of focus, whereby pupils develop a secure understanding of the content they have read through in depth discussion, by forming and expressing opinions and excellent questioning. Once proficiency is attained in the ability to comprehend, pupils' learning is supported through the exploration of literature: how authors communicate ideas and how knowledge is imparted and expanded through the written word.

A Culture of Reading
The school has a thriving library of 23,000 books which houses a wide range of high quality fiction, non-fiction and poetry for pupils to borrow and read. Classroom libraries are a staple of every classroom at Blue Gate Fields Junior School. They are inviting, stimulating and easy

to navigate, epitomising what our school offers to encourage reading. Classroom libraries, which are supplemented by our well-resourced in-school library and the Tower Hamlets Schools Library Service, have a positive impact on the choices pupils make and are a great source of encouragement in making them active readers. Teachers plan for and resource classroom libraries to reflect current themes, learning and exposure to wider literature with a 'less is more' approach so as not to overwhelm pupils. Our mini-libraries are regularly refreshed and replenished, making the books attractive and easy for children to find.

Classroom libraries contain the following:
- a wide and relevant range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry
- an area comprising of a general range of fiction and non-fiction that is broken down into smaller specific categories (linked to History, Geography, RE, PSHE, Science)
- an area of books that have been more carefully selected as wider reading to enhance children's understanding of the themes and genre being studied in literacy lessons
- age appropriate texts in which pupils have the chance to inhabit the lives of those who are like them
- age appropriate texts that help pupils learn about the lives of those whose experiences and perspectives differ from their own
- a range of books that expose pupils to unfamiliar authors
- an opportunity for pupils to revisit books that have already been read to them

There are a wide range of additional resources and enrichment activities made available to further stimulate pupils' interest in, and love of, a range of literature:
- regular author visits
- timetabled sessions for all pupils in the school library
- lunch time and after school opportunities for pupils to browse, read and borrow books from the fully computerised school library, with guidance from our full-time librarian
- Book Fair and Brick Lane Books Pop Up Shop
- Tower Hamlets Book Award Group
- Royal Society Shadowing group
- shadow the Greenaway Book Award
- theatre visits, workshops and performance drama

- library competitions
- themed days such as World Book Day
- reading daily to pupils: class novel, poetry, newspaper articles
- story telling week
- poetry week
- learning songs in music
- Newsround and discussion sessions
- Mrs Wordsmith-lunchtime 'chit-chat'
- opportunities for children to read silently and independently for stamina and for pleasure
- regular reading aloud of aspirational and engaging texts, both in literacy groups and in class

The Teaching of Reading
Rationale
In lower KS2, the teaching of reading is "directed more towards developing pupils' vocabulary and the breadth and depth of their reading, making sure pupils become independent, fluent and enthusiastic readers who read widely and fluently". By upper KS2, the majority of pupils are "reading widely and frequently for both pleasure and information" (National Curriculum, 2014).

Fluency and Taught Comprehension
Reading fluency is one of the pillars of effective reading instruction. It is important because it provides a bridge between word recognition and comprehension. In the teaching of fluency, there are two essential components: automaticity and prosody (Pikulski and Chard (2005), A Critical Bridge in Reading).

These are the four aspects of fluency instruction taught explicitly:

1. Expression and volume: the varying of expression and volume to match the interpretation of the passage being read.
2. Phrasing: the reading of words and clauses with appropriate pauses, with an awareness of reading mostly in clauses and sentences over individual words.
3. Smoothness: any breaks or difficulty in reading are resolved with self-correction.
4. Pace: an even, conversational reading rhythm.

Multidimensional Fluency Scale, Timothy Rasinski

The teaching and practice of fluency is explicit and is part of the reading routine in every classroom at Blue Gate Fields Junior School. There are two half hour class reading fluency lessons timetabled in weekly. In the first session, teachers use a carefully selected extract to model fluent reading, dependant on the need of the class or group, giving pupils the opportunity to hear and practise what fluent reading sounds like.

A small number of pupils who are unable to decode automatically, receive bespoke fluency instruction from HLTAS to support their automaticity.
In the follow up lesson, the extract from the previous lesson is discussed and unpicked before answering a related comprehension question (written or verbal). Fluency is taught progressively rather than the idea of absolute fluency. Teachers support pupils gain fluency at each stage; the complexity of the text increases, but the actual process of becoming fluent remains the same.

Further teaching of reading is meticulously integrated within each teaching unit. All children engage in focused reading sessions where teachers 'guide readers' to help them acquire a love for reading, knowledge, understanding and the skills and strategies required by the reading domains.

Reading is taught in literacy groups. These lessons:
-   Are built around the teacher reading high-quality and challenging texts, which are dissected by the group through high level questioning and discussion.
-   Include a range of activities- not all of which have a written outcome- that enable pupils to develop their vocabulary and comprehension skills.
-   Promote reading for pleasure, knowledge and information.

We firmly believe that this approach works better than the traditional 'guided reading' method for a number of reasons:
-   Pupils are regularly immersed in high quality children's literature.
-   All pupils are taught by skilled teachers and HLTAS.
-   Reading happens every day.
-   Pupils are able to develop their speaking and listening skills as well as developing comprehension skills.
-   More time is given to modelling skills rather than assessing ability.
-   Behaviour for learning and attitudes towards reading are improved as all pupils are engaged in the lesson.

The process:
1. Teachers select a high quality, authentic text with guidance from the literacy team and our librarian which challenges the abilities within the literacy group. It is at a level beyond that at which they can read independently, as specified by the National Curriculum. The text where possible, will be linked to a relevant topic and used to benefit other subjects.
2. The learning objective is the same for all pupils. All pupils have access to the same activities, a depth in the levels of questioning, but with differing levels of support or activity.

3. Teachers read the text, modelling fluency, automaticity, prosody and comprehension, with pupils following the text with at least one copy between two pupils.
4. Teachers use skilful questioning and discussion to help pupils get to grips with new vocabulary and develop their understanding of the text.
5. Vocabulary is explored deeply and within context. They are taught to be playful with vocabulary, but not at the expense of precision and accuracy.
6. Activities to support and develop pupils' comprehension are led by teachers. There will not always be a written outcome as sometimes an in depth discussion or drama will be used to explore a character through role play, freeze frames, debates or conscience alley.
7. The teacher makes formative assessments at the end of lessons to inform planning of future sessions.

Listening to pupils read
Teachers take opportunities to listen to individuals read (if necessary) after they have read and modelled good practice. For example, they may:
- engage in echo reading, modelling fluent reading of a short excerpt and asking pupils to repeat
- ask pupils to work in pairs or groups to read a passage/extract from the text
- provide opportunities for performance reading (Reader's Theatre)
- a formalised written answer (in the style of SATs or NFER) may evidence pupil understanding alongside discussions around the text to indicate the depth of pupil understanding

<u>Writing</u>
Carefully selected texts inspire our pupils to delve into imaginary worlds and engage with unfamiliar experiences and contexts, especially through reading for pleasure. Consequently, we provide many purposeful writing opportunities which allow coverage of both fiction and non-fiction genres, meticulously mapped out on our literacy curriculum map ensuring progression across and within genres. Each year group has a number of core books that form the basis of their English curriculum. From these, the teacher plans for grammar application opportunities and good quality writing opportunities across a range of genres, by providing models of the structure, features and language of a given text.

To develop our children as writers we:
- Provide experiences where the children can acquire confidence and a positive attitude to writing.

- Provide stimulus for pupil writing outcomes from a range of first-hand personal experiences including trips and workshops, as well as from the wide range of fiction and non-fiction, authentic, rich texts, studied.
- Develop and sustain writing skills by providing opportunities for children to write for a range of purposes and audiences.
- Use writing sessions to model writing skills, teaching children how to compose, edit and revise their writing.
- Teach children to become critical readers of their own writing by using self-evaluation and checking their work independently for sense, accuracy and meaning.
- Teach children to be kindly critical peer support for writing.
- Teach grammar and punctuation in the context of children's own writing, as well as through discrete lessons.
- Pupils are encouraged to make use of and apply spelling, grammar, syntax and as sophisticated a range of vocabulary and imagery as possible.
- Teach children to develop their ability to organise and present.
- Teach strategies for spelling to enable children to become confident and competent spellers.

Writing process:
With the final writing outcome in mind, teachers plan 'backwards' to achieve a desired outcome. The writing learning journey through a literacy unit of work follows the structure below:

1. **Reading as a reader**
- Immersion, engagement with the text and absorption of language
- Exploration of themes and genre
- Predicting: What clues tell us what might happen? Use life experience and background knowledge to support predictions
- Visualisation, annotating, making links to knowledge of world
- Exploring the plot, characters and setting
- Understanding and inferring the feelings, motives and influences of the main characters
- Focusing on precise vocabulary to describe personality traits
- Opportunities for drama and role play
- Exploration and teaching of the skills required by the reading domains

Key Stage 2

2a	2b	2c	2d	2e	2f	2g	2h
Give / explain the meaning of words in context	Retrieve and record information / identify key details from fiction and non-fiction	Summarise main ideas from more than one paragraph	Make inferences from the text / explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text	Predict what might happen from details stated and implied	Identify / explain how information / narrative content is related and contributes to meaning as a whole	Identify / explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of words and phrases	Make comparisons within the text

2. Reading as a writer

- Read authentic examples of text type
- Explore purpose, audience and register
- Discuss the effectiveness and unpick the features of 'What makes a good one?'
- Discuss the desired impact on the reader
- Explore the language and organisational features
- Explore how sentence structure is manipulated
- Explore the authors choice of language and punctuation
- Explore and understand the authors voice/stance
- Vocabulary acquisition: group text, wider reading materials, Descriptosaurus and thesaurus (word webs)

3. Writing

- Explicit teaching of grammar relevant to the text type to aid writing outcome
- Teachers model in shared writing
- Pupils use word webs to orally rehearse sentences
- 1st draft in notebooks
- Use visualiser to address gaps in learning and celebrate impactful writing (responsive teaching)
- Peer conferencing
- Redrafting and publishing
- Peer evaluation against impact grid
- Peer feedback commenting on authorial choices

The Writing Process at Blue Gate Fields Junior School

The process	Planning	Feedback opportunities and strategies		Resources
		teacher	pupil + peer	
Text analysis of 'what makes a good/bad one'	• vocabulary structures • language features formality	• responsive teaching • 1:1 support • continuous whole class feedback • my turn-your turn • focus groups • lesson structure: mini plenaries	• self-regulation (self-assessment) • self-efficacy (children's ability to receive the feedback and confidence/belief that they are able to improve as a result) • peer editing • talk partners • Growth mindset strategies	Sue Palmer skeletons Tower Hamlets Writing Toolkit Alan Peat sentences Descriptosaurus for teacher Teacher crafted text
The Learning Journey	• learning + impact: to create a display poster	Teacher makes judgements about prior learning.		Classroom display
Learning intentions, success criteria and impact are planned	• lesson planning • Nicholas Roberts methods • CLPE approaches			Texts and other related texts Tower Hamlets Writing Toolkit Descriptosaurus Thesaurus
Explicit teaching	responsive teaching	• responsive teaching • 1:1 support • continuous whole class feedback • my turn-your turn • focus groups • lesson structure: mini plenaries	• self-regulation (self-assessment) • self-efficacy (children's ability to receive the feedback and confidence/belief that they are able to improve as a result) • peer editing • talk partners • Growth mindset strategies	Working walls Sentence strips Visualiser Growth mindset strategies
Drafting processes	responsive teaching	• responsive teaching • 1:1 support • continuous whole class feedback • my turn-your turn • focus groups • lesson structure: mini plenaries	• self-regulation (self-assessment) • self-efficacy (children's ability to receive the feedback and confidence/belief that they are able to improve) • peer editing • talk partners • Growth mindset strategies	whiteboards + notebooks + lined paper visualiser red pen (used with professional judgement and preference) Growth mindset strategies
Publishing	Assessments to inform future teaching and learning cycles	Teacher feedback		Red pen (used with professional judgement and preference)
Evaluation	Create an evaluation proforma to evidence success (linked to The Learning Journey)	Teacher uses the pupil completed evaluation proforma to make assessments. Does the pupil evaluation of success match the teacher's judgements?	• Self-regulation with highlighter to show evidence of impact and identification of potential areas for improvement: evidence proforma • Peer evaluation of completed writing	evaluation proforma

Vocabulary

To address the knowledge and linguistic gap of our pupils, we focus on the teaching of precise vocabulary choice that is accurately transferred. Teachers plan for the teaching of new vocabulary in English as well as across the curriculum and use strategies for talk to support pupils to practise their understanding of new words and terminology. Vocabulary may be collected in 'word webs' (Nicolas Roberts) as a way of scaffolding pupils to form descriptive sentences.
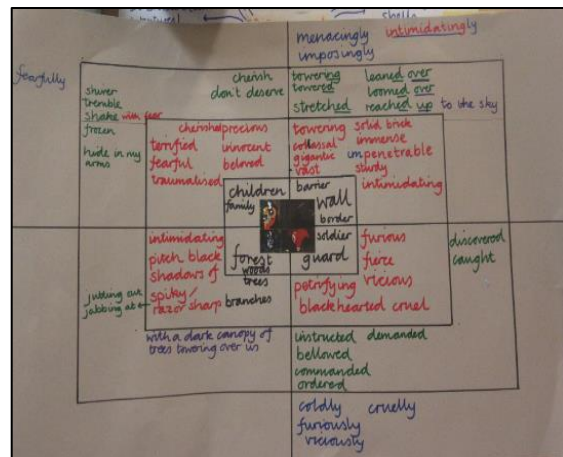
Grammar

An understanding of how to use grammar correctly, use relevant meta-language and identify word classes and sentence types is taught both in the context of a piece of writing and explicitly in whole class work. Linked to the National Curriculum guidelines for year groups, grammar is taught and planned to fit in with relevant genres of writing. Teachers use the grammar appendix to teach grammar and the Alan Peat progression document to deliver grammatical concepts in more memorable ways. The teaching of grammar is embedded and taught in context where appropriate, allowing pupils to use it with understanding so they can communicate clearly and convey their meaning effectively and for impact.

Editing, redrafting and evaluation

Oracy is integral to the writing process and is embedded throughout the writing process, enabling pupils to retain a good understanding of the genre and language structures. This helps develop pupils' ability to construct and articulate their ideas into meaningful sentences. Pupils are encouraged to take an active part in revising their own drafting as well as helping their partner revise their work too, reasoning through their choices.

The editing and redrafting processes are used to respond to teacher feedback, up-level writing and to evaluate the impact of the writing outcome. Editing is guided by the teacher, but executed by the pupils during peer conferences to ensure writer independence.

The impact grids are used as a means of self-evaluation. The features of the text type on the impact grid are evidenced and numbered in the writing outcome to ensure pupils have included all the elements for a strong outcome. With greater emphasis on the writer's voice, pupils are trained to edit through impact; they are able to comment on the authorial

choices. The impact grid is also used by teachers as a formative tool; it is a way of identifying gaps in learning and inform future planning. Writing culminates in peer evaluation and celebration, with pupils responding to a finished piece of writing as readers.

Peer feedback examples

Impact Grid

Exemplification of writing evaluation against an Impact Grid

Handwriting

Handwriting is planned using the Jarman Handwriting Scheme of Work which ensures a consistent, progressive approach to letter formation, joining and style.

Learning Environment

Classrooms at Blue Gate Fields Junior School predominantly show learning process rather than final outcomes. Working walls display work in progress and support independence in accessing learning. It is important that the classroom environment supports the learning and teaching of English. A high quality working wall offers pupils opportunity to have readily accessible any teacher models and to be able to magpie words, phrases, sentence structures and punctuation examples taught. Vocabulary and sentence stems across subjects are

displayed to support pupil talk and learning. The literacy working wall is also a constant source of reference during the writing process. Pupils are encouraged to draw on examples displayed, having been collected during the reading phase and grammar sessions.

We provide a rich and stimulating literacy environment:
- through working walls in every classroom, which support memory and recall
- through providing a wide range of resources for teacher and pupils to use
- through displaying ABC sentence stems to support and scaffold talk
- through displaying relevant and new vocabulary in the form of word webs
- through providing pupils with readily accessible thesauruses and dictionaries

The 'Learning Journey' has become a vital tool in the teaching and learning of English at Blue Gate Fields Junior School. Shirley Clarke talks about 'The Learning Journey' as a process to think about a lesson – before, during and after. Learning Journeys support teachers to map out the steps in learning to achieve a final outcome. This empowers pupil with a clear vision of their reading and writing including composition and vocabulary through the teaching process of a literacy unit. The shared learning journey acts as a constant visual of the steps for learning, the key tools of that text type and allows pupils to build connections within their learning.

Our rationale:
- To exemplify the stages of learning, in a step-by-step way, to enable children to have a reference as they work towards a writing outcome.
- To show that all lessons have a purpose that is a piece in the jigsaw that will complete a successful writing outcome.
- To provide opportunities to be explicit about the IMPACT that the writing will have on the reader.

Equality

At Blue Gate Fields Junior School our teaching styles are responsive to, and learning arrangements are organised according to, the learning needs of the pupils. This supports to ensure all pupils have equal access to a broad curriculum.

Lessons are adapted by each teacher to meet the individual needs of the children that they teach. Differentiation of the learning supports the needs and challenges all children in the class, including children with Special Educational Needs. For example, large-print resources are prepared for children with visual impairments to enable them equal access to the learning. Visual displays with images next to key vocabulary supports children with English as an Additional Language. Teachers are models of the expectations we have of our pupils'
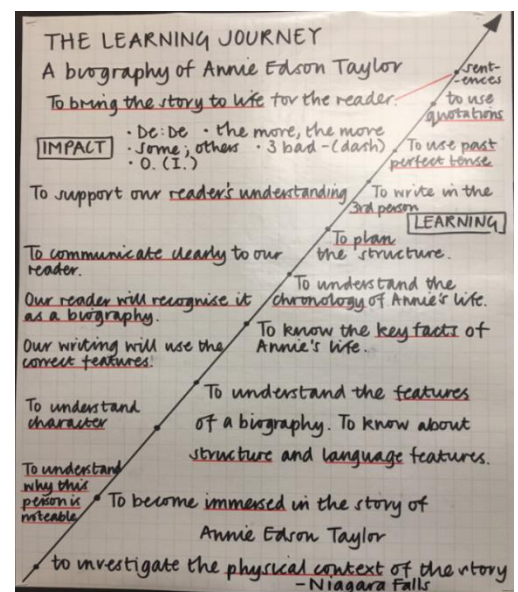
speaking and listening. Teachers also model the correct use of new vocabulary and support the children to use it accurately in oral and written work.

Assessment

Literacy learning is predominantly assessed through responsive teaching. Teachers formatively assess knowledge, understanding and key skills during lessons through high-quality, targeted questioning, reflecting on work in books and oral feedback with children.

In order to make the most accurate judgements about how to move forward with their teaching within the lesson, teachers will plan in variety of opportunities to gain formative feedback from pupils on their level of understanding. These opportunities may take the form of monitoring pupils' practice on whiteboards and notebooks; questioning; monitoring responses during pupil talk; visualiser stops; other forms of mini-plenaries. Through this constant assessment of pupil understanding at all stages of learning, teachers are able to make increasingly accurate judgements about what level of support and challenge to provide. It also allows them to tailor the feedback they will give to pupils so that learning is able to move forward.

"Evidence about student achievement is elicited, interpreted, and used by teachers, learners or their peers to make decisions about the next steps in instruction that are better, or better founded… [Teachers get] the best possible evidence about what students have learned and then use this information to decide what to do next"
Dylan Wiliam (2018)

Summative assessments are carried out regularly:

Reading	Writing
• Baseline reading (year 3, early readers and newcomers) • Phonics assessment using RWI phonics for lower attaining pupils • End of term NFER tests • End of KS2 tests- SATs • CGP test papers- Year 6	• Baseline writing (year 3 and newcomers) • Writing collection- 2+ outcomes in extended writing books • End of term and end of year key stage writing assessment • THEP led moderation • In school writing moderation • Pupil progress meetings • MCubed moderation • SPAG tests in year 6 • Book looks • Learning Walks

Teachers understand that groupings in literacy are fluid and work closely with their year group team to identify pupils who could be further challenged or may need increased support, which could be achieved in another group setting.

Homework CGP

Homework is set twice weekly by each group teacher and is generally extra practice of learning completed in the days prior. This is to support our children's memory and recall of strategies. The homework content is specific to each group and is planned with an understanding of the barriers some pupils will face. For example, space for studying at home may be at a premium, with younger children in competition with older siblings for space and resources. Many families on low incomes do not have access to the internet or the financial resources to access cultural activities. We set one short task e.g. spelling linked to the patterns being learned in literacy or practice applying a grammatical concept; a longer piece of homework usually entails a comprehension task through bug club activities, where possible. If pupils do not have access to the internet at home, we offer lunchtime ICT and homework clubs as a means to access Bug Club and complete homework.
All pupils are expected to read for 20 minutes each day, and teachers will encourage pupils to develop a love of reading, and will promote and recommend a range of texts to drive pupil interest.

Teacher subject knowledge and confidence

To ensure high-quality teaching and consistency in approaches and strategies, all staff regularly benefit from CPD regardless of their levels of experience. All teachers, and some HLTAs are CLPE trained. Literacy staff meetings are used to share, develop and improve pedagogy and are either led by the English subject leads or a THEP consultant. We build strong links with the Infant School to share teaching approaches, especially in the teaching and delivery of phonics and support the children's transition from Year 2 to Year 3. Teachers, who teach the 'educationally vulnerable', receive regular phonics and early reading training from within the local education partnership to build and extend teacher knowledge and confidence. The subject leads and other members of the teaching staff have enriched their teaching with external training by organisations such as CLPE (Power of Reading) and THEP.

We monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching and learning to inform the individual support systems that we may need to put in place, and the wider response we may need to formulate in the professional development we provide.
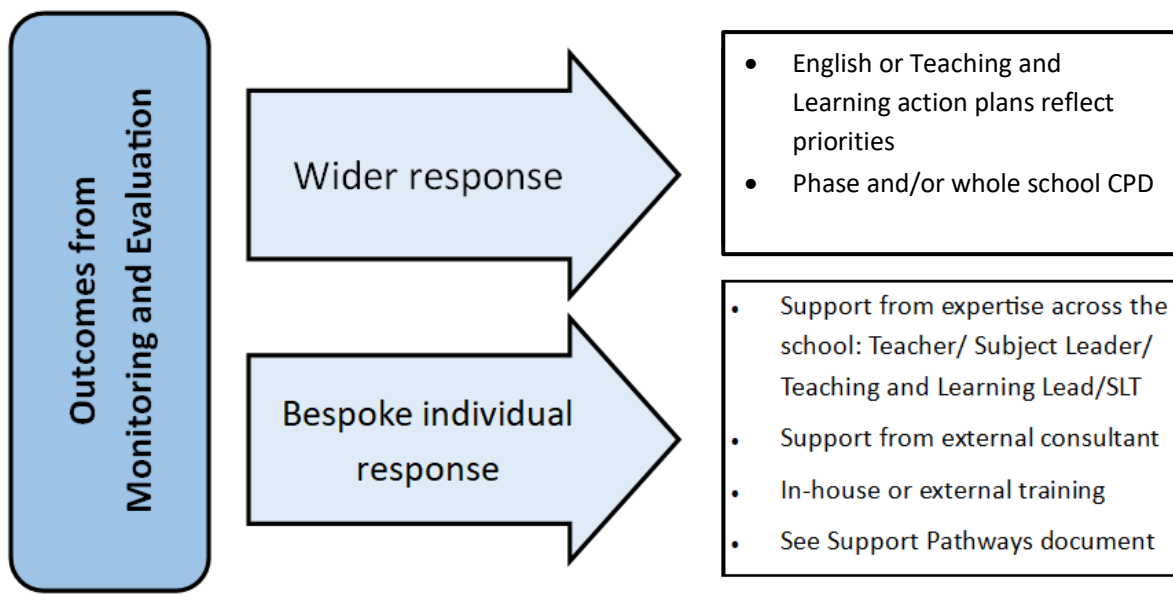
Monitoring and evaluation take the form of lesson observations, learning walks, drop-ins, book monitoring and moderation.

The subject leads develop their leadership approaches through support and development within the MCubed partnership, networking meetings with other English leads across the borough, working alongside other Tower Hamlets schools, THEP consultants and external CPD

The English curriculum team are responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through the monitoring and evaluation of the subject. This will involve:

- monitoring of pupil progress
- analysing data
- Identifying strengths and areas for development across year groups and the school.
- monitoring the provision of English in line with the national developments
- taking the lead in policy development
- modelling excellent practice.
- auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD
- purchasing and organising resources
- analysis of SATs results to identify areas for development
- checking that assessment for English is carried out in line with the school's assessment policy.

To ensure English is running successfully throughout the school the Subject Leader also monitors and evaluates English through:

- Pupil progress.
- The quality of planning, teaching and feedback.
- The quality of the learning environment.
- Providing summary reports which evaluate strengths and weaknesses and indicate areas

for further improvement.

- Using allocated leadership time to review evidence of the children's work and to observe English lessons across the school.