

Buckshaw Primary School



READING POLICY

September 2019



At Buckshaw Primary School, it is our belief that reading is an absolutely vital and lifelong skill, which we use every day of our lives in order to access and engage with the world around us. It is of the utmost importance that the children in our care are taught to be fluent, competent and confident readers by the time they leave us on move on to secondary education. Our reading philosophy at Buckshaw is comprised of two main elements of success. The first is being able to read words in a variety of contexts and mediums. The second is to have a solid understanding of the words, sentences and paragraphs being read.

On entry to our school, many children have no prior knowledge of phonics and the different sounds made by letters of our alphabet. In the foundation stage, we give our children those tools by teaching the different phonemes and how they fit together to form words (blending). Learning this gives the children the skills they need to begin reading and recognising different words in the world around them. Daily phonics sessions and regular reading, both at school and at home, allow the children to become more familiar with an increasing bank of words which they eventually recognise automatically and can read 'on sight'. By the time children reach Year 3, they can use their acquired phonics knowledge to decode unfamiliar words, as they now have an extensive bank of automatically recognisable words which they can read and understand immediately, giving meaning to the text they are reading.

Phonics underpins our teaching of reading during the early years at our school, however it is also important that the children understand that what they are reading carries meaning. Regular reading and the discussion of books to the class are therefore vitally important and form part of our day to day routines all the way through school. Further up in school, this becomes a mixture of reading to the class and reading with the class.

As children progress through school, the teaching of reading becomes less about decoding particular words and more about the meaning of the words when read together in sentences and paragraphs. This begins at a basic level in KS1, where understanding is more about simple comprehension, and talking about what has happened in a story. In upper KS1 and lower KS2, children are taught the beginnings of inference and deduction, learning that there might be things going on 'beneath the surface' of what they are reading; learning to look for clues to identify themes, ideas and messages that might not be explicitly stated. This becomes a vital tool in upper KS2, where the teaching of reading encompasses straight forward comprehension, more complex inference and deduction, evaluative skills, and learning to investigate language and how it has been used in more detail. Throughout all year groups, children are continually encouraged to investigate and discover new and exciting words,



extending their vocabulary and internal word bank.

On entry to our school, children are given a reading diary (which forms part of our ongoing assessment of reading and which parents are also encouraged to comment in, after hearing their child read) and a home reading book. The choice of home reading books is very carefully structured in the FS and KS1, as children work their way through a catalogue of books organised according to difficulty. Group guided reading forms part of our daily routine, after which evaluative comments will be written in reading diaries.

From Year 3 onwards we encourage the children to become much more independent readers and, in many cases, children choose their own home reading books (though this is supervised by the class teacher to ensure each child is choosing a book that will provide the right amount of challenge, not too easy or too hard). This is important because children need to learn to make their own selections and understand/discuss why they have made a particular choice. In KS2, we use the shared area bookshelves to choose appropriate books depending on challenge and year group. Each classroom also has its own bookshelf for independent reading, as well as a display dedicated to reading. Bookshelves are well stocked with up-to-date resources which are colourful and eye-catching and appeal to a range of different interests. In upper KS2, as many of the children are reading novels by this stage, a whole section of novels is available to the children which is organised according to genre, to encourage the children to read a range of different books and text types.

Assessment is key to ensure the children in our care are gaining the skills they need and making good progression in their reading. In the foundation stage and KS1, children are assessed and tracked on their phonics knowledge and progression. This information is used to tailor our teaching to the needs of the children. Teacher assessment and observation are also key and used as part of our day to day, ongoing assessment of the children's learning. Alongside this, children in KS1 take part in comprehension exercises which further inform teacher assessments of reading. Further up the school, children take part in optional SATs Reading tests three times a year and this information is again used to track their progression and to tailor our teaching to the individual needs of our children. Children in KS2 are also assessed through our guided reading scheme 'Bug Club', which identifies gaps in the children's learning over an extended period of time. Children identified as not making the expected progress in reading or experiencing difficulties are quickly identified and given extra support.

Children in our school are taught to be fluent and competent readers, secure in their ability to decode unfamiliar words and to fully understand what they are reading.



However, at our school, it is also part of our philosophy not just to teach the children to be able to read, but to encourage them to WANT to read; the enjoyment of reading and reading for pleasure is something we value and see as extremely important and something that we hope our children will take with them into adulthood.

Cross-Curricular Writing

The National Curriculum states that pupils should:

- Develop the stamina and skills to write at length.
- Use accurate spelling and punctuation.
- Be grammatically correct.
- Write in a range of ways and purposes including narratives, explanations, descriptions, comparisons, summaries and evaluations.
- Write to support their understanding and consolidation of what they have heard or read.

The 2014 Curriculum divides writing skills into two dimensions:

- Transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- Composition (articulating ideas in speech and writing)

We recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods. We recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, reading, grammar and vocabulary.

We encourage and promote writing to reflect a genre in a cross-curricular unit which will promote extended writing. We use the writing process which allows time for planning, drafting, editing and improving, then presenting longer pieces of work.

Every half term, each class carries out an 'extended write', focusing on the children's ability to use a varied vocabulary, conjunctions, sentence openers, advanced punctuation etc. Extended writes are fully independent pieces of writing which are linked to the current topic.