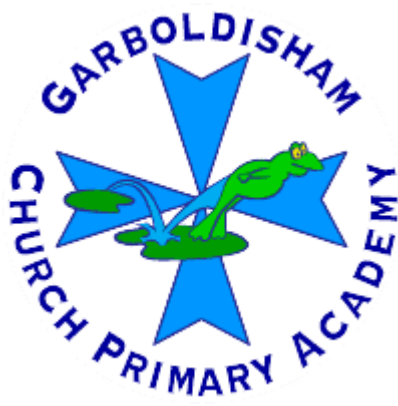


# Beacon Federation



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## ENGLISH POLICY

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## English Policy

### Introduction

At the Beacon Federation, we believe that the development of language and literacy skills is of the highest priority. English is the main instrument of teaching and learning throughout the entire curriculum and the skills and knowledge acquired in this area inform and underpin all subjects and every area of life both within and outside the two schools. The purpose of this English policy is to enable and ensure progression and continuity throughout the federation and aid in the monitoring of the teaching and learning of language.

### Aims

- To create a language-rich environment, where children happily and naturally acquire skills and knowledge, in a whole-school climate of praise, encouragement and stimulation.
- To foster the growth of independence, co-operation, confidence and self-motivation.
- To develop powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness through an appreciation of the English language.
- To equip every child with the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening with confidence, fluency and understanding.
- To involve parents and carers in their child's linguistic development.

### Objectives

#### Reading

- To promote the love of books and try to ensure that children see reading as an enjoyable and enriching activity and a source of information and interest.
- To use a variety of methods to teach reading and comprehension skills.
- To develop in each child a full range of reading cues (phonic, graphic, syntactic, contextual) to monitor their reading and correct their own mistakes.

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- To make available, alongside the favoured reading scheme in EYFS (Collins Big Cat at Dickleburgh and Bug Club at Garboldisham) and KS1 (Collins Big Cat), the widest possible range of material including fiction and non-fiction and to update this provision regularly.
- To encourage effective use of non-fiction resources.
- To actively promote partnership and dialogue with parents in their child's reading progress.
- To provide a variety of reading situations including silent, group, paired, class and individual reading aloud with expression and clarity.

## Writing

- To encourage children to write effectively in a range of styles and formats suitable to purpose, subject and audience.
- To enable children to become aware of and develop the role of spelling, punctuation, presentation and grammar in their writing.
- To develop skills in planning, drafting, revising and editing writing.
- To use a variety of strategies to teach spelling leading to independence and self-correction.
- To teach children correct letter formation and orientation leading to a fluent and legible handwriting style.

## Speaking and Listening

- To provide opportunities for children to participate fully as speakers and listeners in a variety of situations including role-play, drama, debate, school council and imaginative play.
- To understand the need to vary oral language to suit the situation with an emphasis on the promotion of standard English where appropriate.
- To recognise and celebrate performance skills in whole school and class productions.

## Computing

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We encourage all children to use computing as a resource for learning, whenever it is appropriate. We believe that the use of computing enables children to use and apply their developing skills in English in a variety of ways, such as research skills, communication and developing phonics.

### **Teaching and Learning**

Development Matters statements are used throughout the year in EYFS to check if pupils are on track to reach the Early Learning Goals for Communication and Language as well as Literacy by the end of the year. To ensure continuity and progression, in Key Stage 1 and 2, we follow the objectives in the revised National Curriculum for English (2014) for all English skills.

Our English planning is based on high-quality fiction and non-fiction texts as well as poetry, all of which provide inspiration for a range of extended written outcomes. Teachers place talk at the centre of the classroom, embedding speaking and listening as key teaching approaches.

In the Foundation Stage, children are encouraged to speak, listen and represent ideas in their activities. They use and develop their communication, language and literacy skills in every part of the curriculum whilst being immersed in an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication.

At Key Stage One, children should learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They should begin to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They should use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.

At Key Stage Two, children should learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They should read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They should explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works.

### **Early Reading and Phonics**

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We aim to develop confident, fluent and passionate readers and writers from an early stage.

Application of phonics to reading The National Curriculum for English (2014) 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.

Reading underpins children's access to the curriculum and it clearly impacts on their achievement. There is considerable research to show that children who enjoy reading and choose to read benefit not only academically, but also socially and emotionally. To be able to read, children need to be taught an efficient strategy to decode words. That strategy is phonics. It is essential that children are actively taught and supported to use phonics as the only approach to decoding. Other strategies must be avoided. Phonic decoding skills must be practised until children become automatic and fluent reading is established.

From September 2021, we have been using the government validated systematic synthetic phonics programme (SSP) called 'Little Wandle: Letters & Sounds Revised'. The programme is designed to teach children to read from Reception to Year 2, using the skill of decoding and blending sounds together to form words. The Little Wandle programme provides a full progression through all commonly occurring Grapheme Phoneme Correspondence (GPC - sounds), working from simple to more complex, and considering the frequency of their occurrence in the most commonly encountered words.

We start teaching Phonics in Pre-School at Dickleburgh Primary Academy, which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school. Phonics lessons in Reception begin at both schools as soon as the pupils start in September. As a result, all our children are able to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. We also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum.

Fluent decoding is only one component of reading. Comprehension skills need to be taught to enable children to make sense of what they read, build on what they already know and give them a desire to want to read. Reading increases children's vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. Furthermore, children

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who read widely and frequently also have more secure general knowledge. We have a strong focus on language development for our children because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

The teaching of Phonics is fast-paced, and we encourage all children to actively participate in each lesson.

## **Implementation**

Children are given regular opportunities to apply the phonics they have learned by reading fully decodable books. The phonic progression in these books must match the progression of Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised. Reading practice sessions take place daily during the phonics lessons and all pupils take part in a weekly group reading session using the appropriate Big Cat phonetically decodable books, with those identified as needing more support prioritised for additional sessions. Each reading practice session has a clear focus, so that the demands of the session do not overload the children's working memory.

The reading practice sessions have been designed to focus on three key reading skills:

- decoding
- prosody – reading with meaning, stress and intonation
- comprehension – understanding the text.

## **Resources**

In order to ensure a successful reading practice session, prior preparation is key. The following resources are prepared in advance of the sessions:

- grapheme cards
- word cards
- tricky word cards
- pages from the book which will be used to model prosody
- comprehension questions
- reading books

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At the Beacon Federation, we believe that reading and writing is an essential life skill and we are dedicated to enabling our children to become enthused, engaged and successful lifelong readers and writers. To support this, we implement the following:

*Foundations for Phonics in Pre-School (at Dickleburgh Primary Academy)*

We provide a balance of child-led and adult-led experiences for all children that meet the curriculum expectations for 'Communication and Language' and 'Literacy'. These include:

- sharing high-quality stories and poems
- learning a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes
- activities that develop focused listening and attention, including oral blending
- attention to high-quality language

We ensure Pre-School children are well prepared to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and blending in Reception.

*Daily Phonics Lessons in Reception and Year 1*

We teach phonics for up to 30 minutes a day. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible.

- Children make a strong start in Reception: teaching begins in Week 1 of the Autumn term.
- Children in Reception are taught to read and spell words using Phase 2 and 3 GPCs, and words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with fluency and accuracy.
- Children in Year 1 review Phase 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs with fluency and accuracy.

*Daily Phonics Lessons in Year 2*

Due to COVID 19 we have adapted our current Phonics programme to meet the needs of the children.

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· In the Autumn Term we teach phonics for up to 30 minutes a day with an emphasis on revising Phase 5 from Year 1 Summer Term planning. This prepares the children for the re-scheduled Screening Test taking place in December.

### **Daily Keep-up lessons ensure every child learns to read**

We timetable daily Phonics intervention sessions for any child in Year 2 or 3 who is not fully fluent at reading or has not passed the Phonics Screening Check. These children urgently need to catch up, so the gap between themselves and their peers does not widen. We use the 'Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised' assessments to identify the gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach to these using the keep-up resources at pace. These resources are also used to identify and support Reception and Year 1 children who require individual or group daily keep-up sessions.

· If any child in Year 3 to 6 has gaps in their phonic knowledge when reading or writing, we plan phonics 'catch-up' lessons to address specific reading/writing gaps. These short, sharp lessons last 10 minutes and take place at least three times a week.

### **Progression Document**

Please see the progression document [here](#).

[https://www.lynsted-norton.kent.sch.uk/docs/Programme-Overview\\_Reception-and-Year-1.pdf](https://www.lynsted-norton.kent.sch.uk/docs/Programme-Overview_Reception-and-Year-1.pdf)

### **Parents**

Parents are able to access the Little Wandle website (link below) to find more information. The 'For parents' section provides videos of how to pronounce the Phase 2 and Phase 3 sounds and how we teach the reading of words.

<https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/for-parents/>

### **Reading**

We believe that pupils should develop a love for reading and be given the opportunity to read a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry texts, accessing a wide selection of texts and genres. Each of our classrooms has a designated reading area which contains texts of all

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genres and is designed to be an inviting and appealing place for our pupils to read for pleasure. Reading is taught in a variety of ways as outlined below.

### *Group Reading (EYFS and KS1)*

Pupils in EYFS and KS1 take part in group reading once a week. The pupils are grouped following assessment of their phonetic understanding and reading level. Appropriate Big Cat books or short chapter books, non-fictions and poetry texts are chosen by the teacher and used for these sessions. During these weekly sessions, we focus on the three key reading skills of decoding, prosody and comprehension. The children take the book from their session home to practise their reading skills with their parents.

### *Whole Class Reading*

All KS1 and KS2 classes take part in whole class reading sessions at least three times a week. This approach ensures that children of all abilities are immersed in the same high-quality literature and the discussions that these texts promote.

In these sessions, a wide range of texts are studied including book extracts, non-fiction texts from a variety of sources, poetry and songs. A range of reading strategies are used: choral reading to develop speed and fluency; echo reading, allowing the teacher to model expression and intonation; paired reading; and independent reading.

Every session begins with an opportunity to explore new and challenging vocabulary in the text as well as a selection of rapid retrieval questions for pupils to answer verbally. The skills covered in these sessions are recorded on B-Hub which allows teachers to ensure coverage of the National Curriculum reading content domains.

### *Bedrock*

Bedrock is a vocabulary programme which 'narrows the word gap between different groups of students and improves outcomes across the curriculum for all students' (*Bedrock website*). Pupils are introduced to tier 2 vocabulary, through engaging fiction and non-fiction texts, which is personalised to a level which is appropriate for them. Since Autumn 2022, we have introduced a grammar session within the weekly Bedrock slots. The intention of this is to further develop children's exposure to, application of and embedding within the [Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation progression](#), as derived from their holistic assessment, to support and extend their knowledge.

Pupils complete two sessions a week: one at home and one at school. These sessions will also be used to listen to readers who would benefit from more practice reading aloud.

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## *Comprehension*

Comprehension is embedded within the Mastering English approach and a stand-alone lesson takes place every other week.

**At the Beacon Federation, it is our aim to develop a love of reading outside of daily English lessons. Reading for pleasure novels are enjoyed daily together as a class, all children are encouraged to borrow books regularly from our school library and a paired reading session takes place weekly: this is an opportunity for younger and older pupils to come together as learning partners and share in the joy of reading.**

## **Writing and SPaG**

The Mastering Approach was introduced in the autumn term of 2021. It provides a progressive and structured approach to teaching reading and writing to primary aged pupils with approaches adapted from T4W, Power of Reading and the previous National Literacy Strategies. The teaching of punctuation and grammar is interwoven within the Mastering English approach to ensure that it is taught within a relevant context. Teachers will also identify gaps in punctuation and grammar knowledge, and address these through short-burst sessions, with triangulated coverage from our overviews and aforementioned progression document.

The Mastering English policy outlines our approach to teaching writing which can be found in the appendix.

## **Spelling**

In EYFS and Y1, spellings are taught during phonics sessions with a focus on the graphemes/phonemes being taught over the week. The focus links directly to Little Wandle's sequence of learning.

In Y2 and KS2, Rising Stars spelling is used as a structure to ensure all spelling rules, high frequency words and National Curriculum words are covered. These lessons use an investigative approach and encourage the children to use a range of strategies when learning spellings such as sounding the word out as well as using their knowledge of root words and word families. Spellings are not tested formally each week and instead informal quizzes are used and all opportunities are taken to highlight the spelling rule or vocabulary being explored in Whole Class Reading sessions, utilising the Working Walls in classrooms and through foundation subjects.

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## **English as an Additional Language**

Children with English as a second language (EAL) will be catered for in line with the school's policy.

## **Special Educational Needs**

We aim to match material, method and activity to the child in order to extend fully the talents, interests and abilities of each individual pupil.

We address special needs across the federation with the help and input of the SENCO. Work in English takes into account the targets set for individual children and may include individual or small group support.

The needs of high achievers will be met by extra provision from the class teacher through differentiated planning and activities.

We are aware of gender and race equality and are prepared to bring about any necessary changes in the teaching of English to allow equality of opportunity.

## **Assessment**

Assessment in English should reflect the general principles and procedures laid down in the school's Assessment Policy.

## **Homework**

Homework for English will be set as laid down in the school's Homework Policy.

## **Evaluation**

The success of this policy will be measured in a variety of ways.

- An increase in the percentage of children reading and writing at the expected and exceeding levels.
- An increase in the number of more able readers.

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- Confident, competent spellers skilled in using a dictionary.
- A portfolio of written work showing continuity and progression throughout the school.
- Planning and resources clearly linked and regularly monitored, and addressed as needed, by subject leads.
- Higher standards and expectations of written work on display around the school and in the children's books.

## **Monitoring and Review**

Monitoring of this policy is the responsibility of the Head Teacher, English subject leaders and nominated Governor.

This policy will be reviewed as scheduled by the Governors' Curriculum and SEN Committee.

The work of the subject leaders involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The leader has specially-allocated management time to enable them to review samples of the children's work, undertake lesson observations of English teaching across the school, review SATs data and audit resources.

## **Resources**

Classes have their own stock of resources appropriate to age and ability. Library resources are held centrally.

## **Appendix**

Mastering English policy:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1RFe346Nyd-F7KpROCKCuczYDYMnFz5RJHzuZafLxf00/edit?usp=sharing>

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