English at Blaydon West Primary School

Here at Blaydon West Primary we aim to inspire and engage all of our pupils to be capable readers, writers, spellers and speakers, who can transfer their English skills to other subjects and who are prepared for the next steps in their learning. We nurture them as eloquent and articulate speakers and writers, who use a wide and purposeful vocabulary. We encourage them as readers, who select texts for purpose and pleasure. Books and reading are at the heart of everything we do.

Intention

At Blaydon West Primary School, we believe that every child should leave primary school as a fluent reader, confident communicator and purposeful writer. We recognise that language underpins all learning and therefore place reading, writing, speaking and listening at the heart of our curriculum.

Our English curriculum is designed to ensure pupils:

- develop a lifelong love of reading through high-quality, diverse literature
- become fluent, accurate readers with secure comprehension skills
- write confidently for a wide range of audiences and purposes
- acquire ambitious vocabulary and use it precisely across the curriculum
- understand how authors craft texts and apply these techniques independently
- develop secure knowledge of grammar, punctuation and spelling in meaningful contexts
- become articulate, thoughtful speakers who can explain, justify, challenge and build upon ideas respectfully.

Reading, writing and oracy are taught as interconnected disciplines.

We believe that pupils who speak confidently are better prepared to write effectively, and pupils who read widely become more successful writers.

Our curriculum provides carefully sequenced opportunities for pupils to revisit, practise and apply knowledge over time, enabling children to know more, remember more and communicate more effectively.

In our Early Years Foundation Stage:

- Children are encouraged to use talk and communication in a variety of situations with adults, peers and visitors to create confidence in the spoken word.
- Children develop their listening skills and are taught the rules of this – turn taking and listening to others.
- Early reading skills create a solid foundation to achieve success in their next learning stage.
- Reading books and reading for pleasure feature strongly with reading materials available in many different areas of the EYFS setting purposeful to their learning themes and also to encourage interest and imagination.
- Early writing skills are encouraged throughout all areas of the EYFS setting and a strong teaching focus on letter formation and writing for purpose, interest and imagination creates confident writers who are ready for KS1.

In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2:

- Children develop a love of literature.
- Children can speak clearly and fluently communicating their ideas and emotions.

- Children gain confidence to perform and recite lines in presentations such as assemblies and class performances.
- Children can access reading in many different forms especially for pleasure and through comprehension teaching developing their knowledge and skills of fiction, non-fiction, cultural and historical literature.
- Children use the school library and the local library encouraging them to develop a love of reading to support them on their future learning journey.
- Children become fluent and effective writers with natural stamina.
- Children can spell and use correct English grammar through the spoken word and through writing.

Implementation

Reading

- Reading begins with the systematic teaching of phonics through Read Write Inc. (RWI). Children are taught in closely matched groups, ensuring rapid acquisition of decoding and early reading skills. Progress is monitored half-termly and assessment ensures that teaching precisely matches pupils' next steps.

- Following completion of the RWI phonics programme, pupils continue to develop fluency and comprehension through RWI Comprehension, allowing children to bridge successfully between phonics and whole-class reading whilst continuing to develop vocabulary, inference and language comprehension.

- Accelerated Reader is used as soon as children begin the RWI Comprehension programme to promote reading for pleasure, independence and accountability. Pupils in this group and beyond, read books matched to their reading ability (assessed via STAR reading test) before completing comprehension quizzes, enabling teachers to monitor reading frequency, comprehension and progress. Weekly review of Accelerated Reader data ensures that pupils are appropriately challenged and targeted support is provided where needed. Children's successes in RWI and Accelerated Reader are celebrated weekly in an awards assembly.

- Across school, pupils study a carefully planned reading spine consisting of high-quality, vocabulary-rich, Lexile-school-year-matched texts that expose children to a wide range of classic literature, contemporary fiction, poetry, traditional tales, diverse authors, non-fiction texts and challenging themes. Texts have been selected to progressively develop children's vocabulary, cultural capital and reading stamina while exposing them to increasingly sophisticated language and literary structures.

- Whole-class reading lessons are taught daily and explicitly teach VIPERS, reflection on author's language choices and intent and wider themes such as family, loss, friendships and identity. Teachers model expert reading behaviours through regular read-aloud sessions, promoting fluency, expression and enjoyment.

Writing

- Writing is taught through a consistent whole-school writing cycle that enables pupils to understand how expert writers construct texts before applying these techniques independently.
- Each writing unit begins by exploring a carefully chosen WAGOLL (What A Good One Looks Like). Children identify the purpose, audience and language features before analysing how the author achieves the intended effect. KS2 pupils develop a writer's

toolkit through discussion of author's intent, while KS1 pupils first identify the text's tense, audience and purpose (TAP) before gradually building their toolkit throughout the unit.

- Writing units follow a carefully structured sequence:
    - analyse high-quality model texts
    - identify writing tools
    - explore author choices
    - plan using the "Box It Up" strategy
    - explicitly teach grammar in context
    - complete short burst writing
    - deepen and improve writing
    - gather ambitious vocabulary
    - orally rehearse ideas
    - independently complete a Hot Task
    - edit and improve

- Grammar is taught explicitly but always within meaningful writing contexts; it is driven by assessment information and genre requirements rather than isolated exercises, allowing pupils to understand why grammatical choices matter and their impact on the overall effect of a piece of writing.

- Teachers model writing through shared composition sharing their 'writer's brain' when using a "ping-pong" approach, gradually releasing responsibility until pupils write fully independently.

- Children write both warm task paragraphs and independently written hot tasks, allowing teachers to accurately assess pupils' independent application of learning without additional adult support. Writing toolkits and working walls ensure learning remains visible throughout each unit and provide continual opportunities for retrieval and independent application.

Speaking and Listening (Oracy)

- Speaking and listening is woven through every aspect of English teaching (and the wider curriculum) and is recognised as a key driver for improving reading comprehension, vocabulary development and writing quality.

- Across school, teachers deliberately plan structured opportunities for pupils to:
    - rehearse ideas before writing
    - explain thinking aloud
    - justify opinions using evidence
    - build upon others' ideas
    - respectfully challenge viewpoints
    - present to different audiences.

- Our whole-school oracy framework includes:
    - Listening Ladders to explicitly teach effective listening behaviours
    - Talk Frames to scaffold high-quality academic language
    - Kagan Cooperative Learning structures to maximise purposeful pupil interaction
    - explicit vocabulary pre-teaching before reading and writing

- vocabulary displays to encourage retrieval and application
- structured group discussion
- oral rehearsal before independent writing
- sentence stems to promote reasoning and explanation.

- Teachers carefully model spoken language and provide opportunities for all pupils to develop confidence as communicators. This ensures that pupils are equipped with the language required to articulate increasingly sophisticated ideas before transferring them successfully into writing.

Vocabulary

- Vocabulary development is a central priority throughout the curriculum. Children encounter ambitious vocabulary through:

  - high-quality literature
  - explicit vocabulary instruction
  - model texts
  - discussion
  - subject-specific language
  - writing toolkits
  - classroom displays.

- Vocabulary is revisited regularly through retrieval activities and is expected to transfer into independent reading, speaking and writing.

Enrichment

- World Book Day is celebrated yearly
- Take part in the Northern Children's book festival, yearly, welcoming visiting authors, illustrators and poets.
- Visit the local library termly and our school library weekly to choose books based around their own interests.

Impact

By the time pupils leave Blaydon West, they are confident readers, thoughtful writers and articulate communicators who possess the language, knowledge and confidence required for success in secondary education and beyond. Learning is retained because knowledge is deliberately revisited through retrieval practice, discussion, oral rehearsal and repeated application across multiple writing opportunities.

Pupils are:

- Engaged, inspired and challenged
- Fluent and grammatically accurate speakers who have a wide vocabulary and who can speak in a range of different situations including day-to-day interactions and planned debating and performances.
- Confident and independent writers who can write for a range of audiences and purposes, drawing on what they have read.
- Able to understand the choices that authors make and increasingly apply these techniques within their own writing.
- Proud of their work and produce work of a high standard.

- Fluent, confident and comprehensive readers who read with increasing understanding and who have developed a love of reading.

Assessment is both formative and summative. Assessment directly informs future planning, intervention and grammar focus, ensuring teaching is responsive to pupils' needs.

We will measure the impact of our English curriculum through the following methods:

- Accelerated Reader STAR Half-Termly Tests
- Termly tests using Test Base materials for reading comprehension and SPAG
- Termly spelling tests bespoke to each year group and spelling rules taught
- Hot Tasks – assessed using Writing GAP sheets
- YARC Reading Tests to ascertain fluency and comprehension capabilities
- Words Correct Per Minute assessments
- Half termly RWI assessments
- Phonics Screening Test (Year1 - Year 2 where appropriate)
- Termly learning walks, pupil voice, book looks and moderation (in-school and with local cluster)

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