



English

“The whole and wholesome development of each child in a happy, caring and stimulating learning environment”

Together we grow and learn

May Bank Infants School English Curriculum Intent Statement



Intent

At May Bank Infants School, we want the children to have a love of learning that will stay with them throughout their lives. English forms a foundation for future learning and remains an integral part of our curriculum. We believe that every child has the right to receive a rich education in reading, writing and speaking and we encourage children to articulate their thinking, be imaginative, be confident and to be successful.

Our English curriculum enables pupils to acquire and develop the knowledge, skills and vocabulary they need to be successful speakers, readers and writers. We plan a progressive curriculum to meet the needs of all children, it assists children who may need extra support to acquire skills and it also challenges children to master skills at a greater depth. Skills in speaking, reading and writing are embedded and built on as the children learn, therefore we are not putting a 'ceiling' on their learning.

From Nursery onwards our children are exposed to a wide vocabulary to increase their knowledge and understanding. By using a wide range of texts types, genres and authors we want to encourage children to develop their own opinions and preferences about what they read. We want our children to write with confidence and individual flair. Our children are encouraged to write for a variety of purposes and audiences therefore making writing meaningful. Children are taught to write with grammatical accuracy, to apply spelling patterns correctly using a neat cursive handwriting style.

By enabling our children to become competent and confident communicators, readers and writers we equip them with transferable skills that can be used in all areas of learning across the curriculum. The children are taught valuable skills to help them to succeed not only in school but for life.

Implementation

The English curriculum is planned to show progression and to develop skills across all year groups meeting the requirements of the EYFS and Key Stage 1 National Curriculum. In the EYFS the curriculum English is taught through the Literacy specific area of learning, with a focus on language comprehension, word reading and early writing. Learning opportunities to cover these aspects are planned so that children to develop their speaking, reading and writing skills through play based activities. These activities are often linked to the interests of the children, therefore providing opportunities that are engaging and highly motivating. The children are encouraged to develop their independence and initiate learning and the staff join in with play asking questions and moving learning forward in the moment. In Key Stage 1 the English curriculum seamlessly follows on from the learning in the EYFS, building on prior learning and experiences. We focus closely on age related expectations ensuring the children have embedded the skills they need to move on to and to succeed in the next year group or key stage.

Phonics is taught daily in all year groups. A Department for Education validated scheme is used across all year groups from Nursery to Year 2. This ensures clear progression in the teaching of phonics and that a consistent approach is used across the school. In Nursery there is a main focus is Level 1 phonics, this early stage is centred on speaking and listening. It concentrates on developing children's speaking and listening skills, phonological awareness and oral blending and segmenting and opportunities to support the children to develop these skills are provided in continuous provision. Prompts to support children with their early reading and writing are consistent across all classes and year groups.

The English Curriculum is delivered through daily whole-class teaching. All year groups use a range of high quality texts as a starting point for literacy work. Many aspects of our English curriculum are planned around these texts with skills being taught coherently rather than in isolation. This enables the children to make links in their learning, to apply the skills they have been taught and to see a purpose to their learning. Throughout the school year there are planned opportunities for the children to study a Whole School Text. This enables all the children throughout the school to have learning focused around the same book. The texts used for our Whole School Texts are chosen carefully so that they are appropriate for all year groups at different levels. Texts can be chosen to meet the needs of pupils in other ways too. For example, The Colour Monster was chosen to support children with their emotional and mental health when it was considered a priority. The use of a Whole School Text also enables the children across all year groups to share their learning and to connect with others over learning.

The introduction of new and key vocabulary is a fundamental part of our teaching and learning. Appropriate new vocabulary is introduced in the curriculum and used so that it becomes embedded. Our classrooms are vibrant and are vocabulary rich environments.

We give children many opportunities to relax with a good book – classrooms have an attractive and welcoming reading area for the children to access. The reading areas allow the children to browse, choose and read books they are interested in both independently and to share them with others. Visits to the school library are planned across the school. The classroom reading areas and the library offer a wide variety of books including fiction and non-fiction, covering a wide range of genres. We know that good readers are good writers and our children are read to daily. Our children are exposed to a wide range of books and stories read to them in school. These books can either be short stories, chapter books, poetry, non-fiction or appropriate articles. By providing the children with a vast wealth and variety of books being read to them, it gives the children the tools to develop their own opinions about books and authors. We encourage children to 'magpie' words, phrases and ideas from the books they read and the books that are read to them, and to use these in their own writing.

Across Key Stage 1 the children are given regular spellings to learn. These spellings are sent home so that parents and carers can support with learning, as well as being revisited in school during

lessons. The spellings that are given are closely linked to the English curriculum, spelling patterns being learnt or the phonics currently being taught in class.

We run information sessions and workshops throughout the year, these include workshops on the curriculum, phonics, Key Stage 1 SATS. The sessions are available to all parents and carers, they are welcomed and are a useful link between home and school. The information is also sent out either electronically or hard copy so that parents who are unable to attend have access to the information and also parents have the information for future reference.

In English marking is rigorous. Marking is used as a tool to support our children in identifying errors that have been made and giving opportunities for these errors to be corrected. Where possible, 'in the moment' marking takes place during a lesson, enabling the adults to identify errors and misconceptions so that they are addressed immediately. When work is marked often a 'fix it' will be given. This could be a correction e.g. a spelling, incorrect letter formation or missed punctuation or a way for a child to improve their learning further and to challenge. English book scrutinies are carried out to ensure that marking is consistent and effective.

During lessons staff use ongoing formative assessment to ensure that children are achieving the objectives set for the lesson and the curriculum. Some children will require more support to achieve these objectives and these children are identified and are supported as needed. This enables intervention to effectively take place during a lesson. Additional intervention is also provided for children who have gaps in their learning or are not yet working at an expected level. This intervention with a teacher or a teaching assistant could be on a 1:1 level, in pairs or small booster depending on the need of the children.

At May Bank we love to celebrate the success of our children and their achievements. English learning is celebrated in classrooms and around school on bright and colourful displays which promote individual achievement. We celebrate writing in our celebration assemblies when 'Sparkle Writers' are presented with a certificate as an award and their learning is displayed in the hall.

In addition, our English curriculum is enhanced through events such as World Book Day, an annual book fair, class assemblies for parents and Christmas productions, drama workshops with the local theatre and trips and visits to enrich learning where possible.

Impact

When the children leave us at the end of Key Stage 1 they are confident readers, writers and communicators. They have a fundamental base in English which prepares them for future learning and is transferrable across all subjects. Our children are confident communicators, they have the ability to express their own ideas and opinions effectively. The children have a strong grasp of phonics and have deeply embedded phonics skills which they use effectively for both reading and writing. This is also indicated by the consistently high percentage of children who pass the Phonics Screening Check. The majority of children have a strong grasp of spelling and spelling patterns. This is evident in the writing that the children produce where phonics at the appropriate level is visible across all year groups and with the correct spelling patterns being used by our older children. The vast majority of children reach end of year or end of key stage expectations and a significant number exceed this, this is demonstrated by the data from our statutory end of Key Stage assessments (EYFS and KS1) as well as the termly PIRA tests that we complete in school.

Most importantly, children enjoy reading and writing. They have a passion of reading and a love of learning that will stay with them throughout their lives.

‘The more that you read, the more things you will know.
The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go.’

Dr Seuss

‘I kept always two books in my pocket, one to read, one
to write in.’

Robert Louis Stevenson

‘There is more treasure in books than in all the pirate’s loot
on Treasure Island.’

Walt Disney

‘Once you learn to read, you will be free forever.’

Frederick Douglas

