

English Policy

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This policy should be read in conjunction with the Quality of Education Policy, any related subject policies and the following:

Assessment Policy
Behaviour Policy
Charging and Remissions Policy
Early Years Foundation Stage Policy
Equality and Community Cohesion Policy
Able Pupils Policy

Home Learning Policy
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
E-Safety Handbook
Home School Agreement
Marking guidelines

Throughout this policy ‘parents’ denotes those with parental responsibility. Other documents that support the teaching and learning of English:

National curriculum in England Framework document

Statutory word lists and spelling rules (National curriculum in England)

Handwriting guidelines

The school’s approach to the teaching of reading

Nurturing young readers

1. Intent

Reading: At Belmont we recognise that reading is a pupil’s passport to the world: it is an essential and key skill for all learning. It develops the mind, language and communication skills: all of which are important to allow pupils to access the breadth of our rich curriculum. In line with recent National Curriculum expectations, at Belmont, we aim to inspire a lifelong enjoyment and love of reading, and reading for pleasure, which opens doors to all kinds of new worlds for the reader that cannot be covered by the school curriculum. We also encourage pupils to discuss and form opinions about what they have read. With the right support every child can learn to read.

Writing: Writing is an essential life skill. At Belmont, we aim to motivate pupils to become fluent, passionate writers who can write for technical purpose and for pleasure. We aim to develop and apply writing skills across all the subjects in the curriculum. Successful writers are able to plan, revise and evaluate their own and others writing effectively across a range of genres. Child friendly assessment grids enable the pupils to meet these objectives and to further develop their writing skills.

Handwriting: Pupils in the early stages of reading and writing use non-cursive letter formation which follows Ofsted guidance and is linked to our Little Wandle Revised Letters and Sounds Phonics scheme. Once pupils demonstrate consistent and correct non-cursive letter formation, they move on to our cursive style of handwriting, allowing them write legibly, and at speed, as quickly as is possible.

Implementation

Reading: At Belmont we place reading and books at the centre of our curriculum. Teachers are equipped with the skills and knowledge they need to teach all children to become accomplished readers. Books are carefully matched to the curriculum and units of lessons are organised around motivating, high quality texts. At every opportunity, teachers talk with enthusiasm about reading, sharing examples of good books. Pupils are given the opportunity to recommend books they have loved to their peers. The reading environment is designed to be welcoming such that our well-stocked libraries and book corners are places where pupils visit, choose and talk about books. By engaging with parents, we ensure the culture of reading developed by the school extends into the home. We also raise the profile of reading through our class sharing books, celebrating World Book, National Poetry Day, assemblies, Book Fairs and author visits. Following a whole school strategy to embed reading for pleasure, time is built into the school day for pupils to read independently, read aloud and to be read to. The National curriculum for English at KS1 & KS2 places reading for pleasure at the heart of the English curriculum. Alongside an expectation that every school teaches children to read well, schools are expected to develop a love of reading in every child. Pupils at Belmont are inspired to read in many ways. Pupil conferences give us an insight into children’s reading habits e.g. to find out what they read, how they choose books, how often they read, where they read and other opinions about reading.

Writing: At Belmont writing is a key skill, which we develop through a rich curriculum in many subjects. High quality texts are used to plan effective writing units, which allow the pupils to analyse their structure and language. This enables pupils to develop the writing skills associated with various genres. Carefully planned lessons provide pupils with a sense of purpose and motivation for their writing. Power of

Reading resources are adapted to meet the needs of Belmont pupils and we also use elements of Talk for Writing to develop writing skills, especially in KS1.

Targeted feedback and child friendly self-assessment writing grids give the children greater ownership of their writing and enable them to more accurately identify their next steps to make further progress.

Impact

Reading: At Belmont we aspire for all pupils to demonstrate a love of reading and books. Pupils should be aware of current class readers and be able to discuss them and give an opinion about them. We strive for a culture which shows a great buzz around reading for pleasure, where the children are discussing and recommending books to each other in the same way they would do with movies, video games and TV shows. With a more targeted emphasis on a love of reading, we aim for our highly successful reading results to increase even further.

Writing: At Belmont, our goal is to create pupils who are confident, fluent writers who can write for a wide range of purposes. Our child friendly self-assessment grids give the children greater confidence at working out where they are at and where they need to go next with their writing. Along with effective feedback, this should in turn help Belmont raise our high writing attainment levels even further.

2. Approaches to Teaching and Learning

Please refer to the Quality of Education Policy

2.1 Home-school links and the role of the parents

In addition to the policy referred to above, parents provide an active role in their child's language development and are encouraged to participate and share in the process by:

- talking and listening to their children, both in English and any home Language
- reading regularly to and with their children
- providing children's literature at home whenever possible
- identifying regular times to share books and listen to their child read
- maintaining contact with their child's class teacher by making comments in the reading record books at KS1 and KS2
- encouraging their child to visit libraries regularly
- talking about their child's language development with the teacher at parent's evening and at other times if they have concerns
- attending meetings held by the school in relation to language development

See Home Learning Policy.

3. Resources

Each class has an organised reading area, from which pupils can select a reading book. Both fiction and non-fiction books are considered a valuable choice for a reading book, although balance is important. The pupils are encouraged to select their own books, with appropriate guidance from staff. Language areas also contain classroom-based resources, such as dictionaries and thesauruses. Children in the early stages of reading are allocated decodable reading books that match their phonic knowledge.

Additional language and reading resources can be found in the central resources area and include; guided reading books, book band individual readers, dual language books, videos/DVDs, photocopiable resources, plays, poetry and story sacks.

The school also benefits from the Hounslow school library service, where books are changed on a termly basis in line with class topics.

The Infant Library, for pupils in Nursery to Year 2, has a wide range of texts, which are genre coded for ease of selection. Infant children can borrow from the library on a weekly basis. The Junior Library is a lending library for Years 3 to 6 and is also used as a reference library by pupils and staff. Children can borrow books on a regular basis with each class having an allocated library time.

The school benefits from funding from the school's active Parent Teacher Association (PTA) which helps to provide reading material and workshops linked to English and Drama topics.

See the Charging and Remissions Policy for replacing books.

4. Learning Environment

Please refer to the Quality of Education Policy.

5. Planning

At Belmont we plan for continuity and progression throughout the school by using the National curriculum in England Framework document. Long and short-term planning is completed by individual teachers, in order to meet the needs of their class.

Learning intentions are aligned to the programmes of study, encompassing the full curriculum in the primary phase as detailed in the National Curriculum for English, to demonstrate progression in each strand. This includes spoken language, reading (word/comprehension), writing (transcription/composition) and spelling, grammar and punctuation. The Power of Reading and Talk for Writing are also tools used to deliver the curriculum.

Planning in the Early Years follows the EYFS Framework, including the language, communication, speaking and vocabulary aspects of the framework.

Reading for enjoyment

Reading is an essential and key skill for all learning. It develops the mind, language and communication skills: all of which are important to allow pupils to access the breadth of our rich curriculum. At Belmont, we aim to inspire a lifelong enjoyment and love of reading, and reading for pleasure, which opens doors to all kinds of new worlds for the reader. We encourage pupils to discuss and form opinions about what they have read.

Each class has a class reading book which is read on a daily basis to further promote a love of reading.

5.1 Guided and Group Reading and Writing

Key Stage 1

Guided and group reading and writing are taught weekly within English lessons. With the support of the Teaching Assistants (TAs) SEN groups receive additional intervention focusing on specific targets linked to handwriting, spelling, reading and writing.

Key Stage 2

Discrete, whole class Guided Reading lessons are taught with adult support targeted at individuals or groups who require additional support. Guided/Group writing is mainly taught within English lessons. Additional reading support slots are timetabled outside these to ensure children's progress. Additional support groups will be allocated throughout the week as with children in Key Stage 1.

5.2 Spelling

Within the National Curriculum for English there are specific spelling words lists contained in the

appendices. Children's knowledge and use of these words is recorded and monitored by class teachers. In the Early Years and Key Stage 1, phonics is taught daily using the Little Wandle Revised Letters and Sounds Programme which forms part of the school's approach to the teaching and learning of spellings. At Key Stage 2 children learn spelling rules and strategies covering all the National Curriculum objectives.

In marking pupils' writing, the focus is on helping children to apply the rules/strategies learnt and their knowledge of common words, enabling them to develop knowledge further and to learn new strategies for spelling a word. These errors may then be used as a focus for further specific teaching, on an individual or group level. If there are numerous incorrectly spelt words then the teacher will select a limited number of words to correct to enable children to focus on a few at a time and to maintain high self-esteem.

5.3 Handwriting

Handwriting, and the presentation of work, are skills which should be taught and improved in line with the individual child's needs on a regular and progressive basis. Pupils at the early stages of reading and writing use non-cursive letter formation, linked specifically to the Little Wandle Revised Letters and Sounds Phonics Program. Once pupils can consistently form all non-cursive letters with accuracy, they are then taught to use un-joined cursive letter formation which is then developed into cursive joined script as the individual child develops their fine motor skills. Pupils are given the opportunity to practise their handwriting regularly and teachers make clear to the pupils their different expectations of presentation (depending on audience and purpose of the piece of writing).

As individual children's writing becomes joined, legible and fluent during Key Stage 2, then the use of handwriting pens is gradually introduced and they are awarded a pen licence.

See the Belmont Handwriting Guidelines for further information including the school's chosen script.

6. Assessment

During the summer term, in line with statutory requirements, Year 1 teachers carry out a Phonics Screening Check to assess whether individual pupils have learnt phonic decoding to the expected standard. The test has been designed to identify the children who need extra help, so that they are given support by their school to improve their reading skills. Children who do not meet the threshold retake the check in Year 2 so that schools can track pupils until they are able to decode.

At the end of Key Stage Two pupils are formally assessed, against national interim frameworks, in reading, writing, spelling, and grammar and punctuation.

Class teachers keep a record of reading observations on a regular basis, including those made by reading volunteers. Pupils are heard to read individually at least until they are fluent and show competent comprehension skills. All children read within the context of class or guided reading groups.

Further details of the cycle of assessment can be found in the Assessment Policy, the document 'The School's Approach to the Teaching of Reading' and the Early Years Foundation Stage Policy.

7. Cross Curricular Opportunities

7.1 Reading, writing, communication, maths and ICT

Reading, writing and speaking and listening skills are fostered across the curriculum in other subject areas. Teachers are encouraged to set clear learning intentions and success criteria in topic and science lessons where the pupils complete extended pieces of writing. Reading activities and comprehension activities are linked to topic work when possible.

ICT is integrated into the delivery of English where appropriate. It is used as an essential tool to assist in

shared reading, comprehension and writing. English games and other whiteboard resources are used as a tool to enhance the children's learning. Specific software and web sites such as Badger Interactive Comprehension, PurpleMash, Education City, Espresso and BBC educational web sites are regularly used throughout the school to support the key objectives. Word processing, Publisher, and PowerPoint programs are used as ways for children to present their work.

7.2 Foundation subjects

English objectives from the primary curriculum are taught and developed through links to other subjects. Topics provide many appropriate contexts for the teaching and learning of English objectives as shown in 'Writing across the Curriculum' e.g. Year 6 newspaper report on Mary Anning's fossil discovery. Books are chosen to embrace cultural diversity (see section 9).

8. Enhancing the Curriculum

Each class has a daily English lesson, generally lasting one hour; extended writing lessons are longer. Teachers are encouraged to use the classrooms, hall space and outdoor areas creatively, particularly with speaking and listening or drama activities. Throughout a unit of work there is a balance between reading, speaking and listening and written opportunities to develop and consolidate skills and understanding. Discussion, co-operation and collaborative learning is encouraged and pupils often work in pairs or small groups as well as individually.

Key vocabulary is displayed within classrooms with displays being changed (Working Walls) according to the unit of work currently being taught.

8.1 Enrichment

To enrich the curriculum further, we have an annual Book Week where children have the chance to listen to and work with visiting authors. Story writing competitions are often linked to authors' visits and children are encouraged to enter. Trips to the local library are organised and parents and other members of the community are invited into school to read stories to the children during Book Week. We celebrate National Poetry Day by reading, sharing and writing poems.

9. Inclusion

9.1 Equal Opportunities

We make every effort to ensure that the books and resources available in school are free from racist and sexist stereotypes, and challenge issues such as race, gender and relationships.

Teachers are expected to show awareness of both boys and girls as readers, extending their knowledge of books through guided experience of a range of texts. It is recognised that some children, particularly boys, can be reluctant readers and writers and therefore we aim to provide a range of reading materials and writing opportunities to interest both boys and girls. The reading of newspapers, comic books, and media related fiction should be validated so that boys can identify themselves as competent readers of a variety of texts.

9.2 Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

Reading materials in book corners reflect the abilities of the children in the class, including the less and more able reader. Within English lessons, learning opportunities are differentiated for ability groups, either by the activity or by the level of support from the teacher or TA in Guided or Group Reading or Writing activities.

Pupils who need extra support with their reading benefit from additional one to one adult support from Belmont staff and also from Beanstalk trained reading helpers.

9.3 Gifted and Talented

Gifted and talented pupils at Belmont are given the opportunity to take part in workshops alongside gifted and talented pupils from other local primary schools, facilitated by successful authors.

9.4 English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Respect for other dialects and languages is fostered by learning about how language works and by providing a range of materials from other languages and cultures. Literature is an excellent starting point from which to develop learning programmes for bilingual pupils. It provides an opportunity for the development of language in a meaningful context. Picture books especially, afford good visual support for bilingual learners across the curriculum. We celebrate diversity at Belmont by having 'Language of the Month' each month, where pupils learn some basic words from a different language each month.

10. Health and Safety and Safeguarding

Please refer to the Quality of Education Policy.

11. Roles and Responsibilities

Please refer to the Quality of Education Policy.

12. Policy Review

In addition to the review cycle, the English Policy will also be updated as necessary to reflect changes to the curriculum.