



Faith, Family and Fascination

English Policy

Boutcher C.E. Primary School

Reviewed by: Megan Whitton

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*“Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.”
John 13:34*

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Mission Statement

The English Policy will support the delivery of the Mission Statement. English takes place within the context of the Christian aims and ethos of Boutcher School as reflected by our Mission Statement.

“The aims and practice of Boutcher School seek to reflect the life and teachings of Jesus Christ as told in the Gospels. Jesus taught us, through His example of unconditional love and compassion, that we are all of equal value to God. Everyone is entitled to be regarded with dignity, fairness and respect. We strive to ensure that our school enshrines the values which Jesus taught us.”

The children at Boutcher discussed our Mission Statement and created their own interpretation of it.

“In our school everyone has the right to learn, the right to feel safe and the right to respect. They have the right to learn the good news of the Gospels and to know that God loves us all equally (whether we are rich or poor, young or old.)

We strive to live in the way that Jesus would want us to. We tell others Jesus's stories so that they can learn from them too and we try to set an example for other people in the way that we act. In all that we do we help each other and love others as Jesus would want us to.

Boutcher CE Primary School tries its best to remember that Jesus loves us, even when we make mistakes.”

SMSC Statement

Through the teaching of English children's SMSC is promoted and supported. We aim to prepare our children to maximise opportunities, develop their responsibility and enhance their experiences now and in the future.

Through lessons we promote our Boutcher values of Faith, Family and Fascination. We enable every child to develop and flourish in a loving and open environment in lessons. We actively promote the fundamental British Values as stated by the Government and design opportunities in the curriculum to do this. We want English to be an enjoyable subject where children are fascinated by the learning of themselves, others and the world around them. At the heart of our school, is a rich and diverse culture and community that we enjoy and celebrate. We seek opportunities to work with the local community, explore our local area, welcome visitors to the school, go on trips and take part in community events and projects.

For further information, see the SMSC Policy.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

In English we are committed to promoting and providing all children with high expectations and an equal entitlement and opportunities regardless of race, gender, culture, class, SEN or disability. We aim to meet the needs of all our children by personalising our English curriculum, promoting inclusivity to fully engage and motivate all children. This involves providing opportunities for SEND children to receive support and/or scaffolding as well as challenging all children to take an active part in their learning and to achieve their potential.

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Aims and Objectives

National Curriculum Aims

The English National Curriculum (2014) states that:

‘The overarching aim for English in the National Curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading and enjoyment.’

Boutcher Aims

At Boutcher C.E. Primary School, we believe the exposure of children’s literature within the primary school setting is vital as a rich context for learning; not only within English as a subject but to support building a reading culture throughout the school.

We use high-quality and diverse books that offer opportunities for empathy and can aid philosophical enquiry, as a means of developing the spoken language requirements through debates, drama and discussion using the issues raised through, and within, texts.

The Writing Curriculum

At Boutcher C.E. Primary School, we believe that the mastery of written language is one of the most powerful gifts that we can provide to our children. We believe that writing should be purposeful, rich and enjoyable for all.

Aims

- to have real reasons to write whether to explain, persuade, inform or instruct and that where possible, this can be embedded within our text or linked to a curriculum area
- to make writing opportunities meaningful; whether short or long, and to have a clear audience for their writing
- to develop stamina and skills to write at length, with accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling
- to help the children to develop an understanding that writing is both essential to thinking and learning and enjoyable in its own right
- to enable children to improve their writing through the editing process

Organisation, Planning and Delivery

High quality texts are at the core of our English teaching. By placing books at the centre, we are allowing teachers to use them as the context for the requirements of the National Curriculum. The National Curriculum states that:

‘This guidance is not intended to constrain or restrict teachers’ creativity, simply to provide the structure on which they can construct exciting lessons.’

In order to meet the objectives of the 2014 National Curriculum and to ensure that children are inspired and have a meaningful purpose to write, stimulating texts are carefully chosen and used as a starting point for their writing.

Working alongside The Literary Curriculum, we have developed a programme of high-quality and suitably challenging texts from Reception through to Year Six, which include a range of genres and cover a diverse range of themes. Teaching staff attend regular training and new books are brought into the selection of texts from this. Where possible, we make thematic links with other areas of the curriculum.

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Early Years Foundation Stage

In the Foundation Stage, there is a big emphasis on phonics and letter formation. The structure of the week for English lessons is as follows:

In structured English lessons, children hear the phoneme and the lesson focuses on the recognition of this. Children learn and practise writing the grapheme for the phoneme (both lower and upper case using the Nelson Handwriting Scheme). During this lesson, a book is introduced and read which uses this phoneme.

In the Foundation Stage, we follow a sequences progression grid created by *The Literary Curriculum*. This links phonics teaching with suitable texts.

Key Stages One and Two

We use many of the planning sequences taken from *The Literary Curriculum*. Planning sequences are adapted and personalised to ensure all access texts, arrangements can be made to support children with the requirements.

Baseline Expectations:

- to teach English lessons four times a week lasting approximately one hour each
- to ensure SPaG objectives are included in each of our daily English lessons
- to plan and teach English lessons from a carefully selected text or film
- to plan for opportunities for independent writing

Writing Curriculum Planning

We follow the Southwark 'Performance Indicators in Writing' objectives which are taken from the National Curriculum when planning for writing across the school. A medium-term plan (MTP) created by *The Literary Curriculum* for each text is used which includes grammar, spelling and punctuation objectives for that year group. This is a working document and teachers are encouraged to make changes as necessary in response to their teaching and the needs of the class. A notebook file / PowerPoint is created which builds on the MTP. The English Coordinator supports with planning as needed.

Approaches to support Writing

Spellings

In Year One, children take home five spelling words each week whilst the rest of the school take home ten to learn. Every child is tested on a Wednesday and taught the new spelling rule for the next set of spellings. A spelling task is set each week for that particular spelling pattern, which is completed at home as part of homework.

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG)

In order to meet the SPaG objectives of the 2014 National Curriculum, SPaG skills lessons are taught weekly in Years One – Six. We recognise the importance of children having the chance to apply these skills, so ensure that these objectives are also covered in all English lessons and that they have plenty of opportunities to apply these skills through a range of written genres and across all subjects.

Handwriting and Presentation

Please refer to the Handwriting and Presentation Policy for further information

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Reading Curriculum

At Boutcher C.E. Primary School, we believe that reading is an important life skill and we strive for all children to enjoy and value it. We recognise that enjoyment in reading arises from deriving meaning from text. It is our aim to develop and create passionate readers for life.

Aims

- to help children to become confident, independent readers, through an appropriate focus on the reading content domain
- to use phonological awareness to decode and encode words
- to help children to be able to read with fluency, accuracy, understanding and enjoyment
- to develop enthusiastic and reflective readers, through contact with challenging and substantial texts

Organisation, Planning and Delivery of Reading

High quality texts are at the core of our teaching of reading. Where possible, guided reading is taught using the same text as that used for the writing curriculum. We have developed a programme of texts across KS1 and KS2 which include fiction, non-fiction and poetry in all year groups. If we are able to, we make thematic links with other areas of the curriculum, however, our priority is always to use high-quality texts.

Early Years Foundation Stage and Year One

In Reception and Year One, children have the opportunity to hear and engage with a range of high-quality books. A programme of texts has been carefully developed and children listen to books being read daily, including traditional tales, author studies (for example, a collection of books by Oliver Jeffers) and non-fiction texts linked with a class topic. During shared reading lessons in Reception, children's responses are recorded in a whole-class book. In Year One, children have their own individual read and respond journal where they respond to texts with a follow-up task and begin to develop the comprehension skills of the Key Stage One content domain.

Year Two and Key Stage Two

We aim to instil a passion for reading in all our children and therefore Guided Reading is integral in our school curriculum. At Boutcher C.E. Primary School, we have adapted a reciprocal teaching approach to Guided Reading, which is taught as a whole class, with children partnered in near-ability pairings. One lesson each week uses a stand-alone text where children develop their reading comprehension skills independently.

This approach has been adapted in order to develop the children's comprehension skills and to develop their ability to question things themselves. It also gives them the opportunity to read aloud, develop decoding skills and intonation and expression as well as for child led dialogue, which is an important element of these lessons.

All children complete tasks in their read and respond journals in response to what they have read which further develops skills of the Key Stage One and Key Stage Two content domain. Each area has been reworded into child friendly language.

Teaching and Learning in Reading

Baseline Expectations:

- Children in Reception and Year One read with an adult at least twice a week
- Every child from Year Two – Year Six reads with an adult at least once a week

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- The lowest 20% of readers across the school read daily with an adult
- Shared reading takes place four times a week in Reception and Year One
- Guided Reading takes place four times a week in Years Two – Six
- Each class has a weekly visit to the school library. For more information, refer to the *Reading for Pleasure* statement
- All children across all year groups hear adults read aloud to them regularly

Reading Curriculum Planning

We follow the KS1 and KS2 Content Domain and Sowerth 'Performance Indicators in Reading' objectives when planning reading across the school. Teachers plan for Guided Reading, where appropriate, using the same book studied during English lessons. This allows for a deep discussion of the texts and for every child to access suitably challenging reads. KS1 and KS2 planning templates focus heavily on each area of the Content Domain areas and encourage teachers to plan questions which provide broad coverage of each objective within it. Included within our subscription to The Literary Curriculum are 'Literary Leaves' which also form part of our planning. The English Coordinator works alongside the teachers to plan for good coverage of both non-fiction, fiction and poetry throughout the year. We also try to select books where possible that support their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

Approaches to support Reading

As well as guided reading lessons, we have the following approaches to teach and develop reading skills:

Phonics

We begin the process of learning to read in the Foundation Stage, where we believe that the systematic teaching of phonics is the fastest and most effective way of getting young children to start reading. For information on how phonics is implemented and taught in the Foundation Stage, in Key Stage One and Key Stage Two (for those that require it) please refer to the *Phonics policy*.

The School Library

All children are provided with the opportunity to borrow one book each week from the library. Children are encouraged to choose books which they are interested in and this helps to promote a reading for pleasure ethos. This book does not have to be one that they can read independently and may be more challenging so to encourage sharing a book with parents / carers. A library club is run each morning for children in Key Stage Two and the school librarian is there to support children with their reading comprehension.

Reading Ambassadors

Each year, children in Key Stage One and Two are given the opportunity to apply for the role of Reading Ambassador. They work alongside the school librarian to develop a love of reading and meet regularly to discuss and action how this can be done school-wide. They are involved in learning walks, leading assemblies and general care of the school library and their own class book corners.

Class Libraries

Each class has a dedicated reading area which offers a space that is inviting and engaging into a world of interesting pictures, stories, books and other reading material. For teachers, a reading corner in the classroom gives a platform where they can support and facilitate children to make meaning while reading.

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Reading at home

There is an expectation that children read regularly and this is monitored by class teachers and support staff. Each child has a reading record which is completed by parents, carers, children and staff to record updates on their reading. The books in the Key Stage Two book corners are all given a colour which represents a level. Children select a book from the colour at which they have been assessed as reading at. Teachers assess this regularly and move children through the colours when they are ready.

Spoken Language

Throughout the school we aim to:

- provide a range of situations, audiences and activities which encourage children to develop confidence and competence in the spoken language
- develop children's awareness that different situations require different forms of oral expression
- develop the mechanical skills required for effective oral communication, e.g. voice projection, tone, clarity, pace of speech
- recite and perform a range of age appropriate poetry
- sing songs

Teachers attend training sessions and work alongside specialised practitioners to lead the children in developing their spoken language skills. Children also have the chance to attend theatre productions and see performances linked with the text they are following and/or their theme.

Children in Years Five and Six are part in Topical Talk, which is run by the Economist Educational Foundation. Through this, children develop their critical thinking and literacy skills through open discussions about current affairs. The four skills embedded across all content and activities are listening, speaking, reasoning, and open-mindedness and serve as important and necessary life skills.

The Literary Curriculum encourages teachers to give children rich experiences linked to the text and regular opportunities to discuss and act out topics covered. We believe that the Literary Curriculum helps children to develop a rich vocabulary through choices of quality text, immersion in the language of the text, discussion and drama activities.

Teaching strategies which have been developed from the Literary Curriculum include:

- role on the wall
- freeze-framing
- conscience alley
- hot seating
- role playing
- drama

Children are also expected to be involved in services and class assemblies from the Foundation Stage and are taught to be confident when performing to an audience. They also enjoy weekly drama lessons with a specialist drama teacher.

Working and Vocab Walls

Each class has a working wall and/or vocab wall where vocabulary is displayed for children to access and to support language and spelling. The vocab wall is split into two criteria: Tier Two – these

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words are sophisticated words, more commonly found in written text and move the speech and writing from more social, conventional language to a more formal, sophisticated language which can be fundamental to academic success and Tier Three – these words are specific to topics and have a limited use outside of the context that they are used in. Every week, a new Tier Two word is introduced to each class and short activities and games are led around this to develop their knowledge and understanding of language.

Marking and Feedback in English

Marking is key to producing independent learners in English and helps to raise attainment by celebrating the successful aspects of a child's work and also reminding them of the next step. Feedback and marking in English aims to challenge the children, make them question and to give them the skills needed to refine or correct their work.

For further details on marking and feedback in Reading and Writing lessons please see our Marking and Feedback Policy.

Progress and Assessment

Assessment is a continuous process which both reinforces teacher/child planning and provides clear information for others. Assessment is monitored by the English co-ordinator and regularly by SLT through 'book looks'.

Moderation is a necessary process in order to ensure consistency when making judgements on progress and attainment. It also highlights gaps in learning and next steps in teaching. Moderation takes place both in school between staff, at meetings held between local schools and through the attendance of moderation sessions led by Southwark.

Observations and Modelled Lessons

The English coordinator observes the teaching of reading and writing in each class from time to time. The observations are written up and given to the teacher concerned as well as being shared with SLT. Observations may be of a full lesson or through a learning walk. Observations are to assess the teaching of English and should be viewed as supportive for developmental purposes.

The English coordinator will model the teaching of English for colleagues, particularly for new teachers, when requested by teachers or where there is a training need.

Monitoring by the Governors

The governors take part in learning walks with a reading or writing focus on a rotational basis. They visit each class and observe lessons across the school. The coordinator will meet with the governing body to discuss these observations and go through the standard and teaching of English across the school.

Cross-Curricular Skills and Links

The learning of reading, speaking and writing skills is imperative and we expect teachers to have the same high expectations in all areas of the curriculum that children demonstrate in English lessons. We have carefully chosen texts and the time to teach them based on each year group curriculum. We do not compromise on high-quality texts to 'fit' the curriculum. Children will naturally use their English skills in all curriculum areas and we encourage them to use their skills in a meaningful and purposeful way.

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Role and Responsibility of the Coordinator

The English coordinator is actively involved in aiming to raise standards of teaching in the subject. They run planning meetings, staff INSET (where required) and distribute new ideas and resources among the teaching staff. The coordinator should keep colleagues aware of recent research and policy changes through staff meetings, where possible.

The coordinator monitors the standard of work across the school through 'book looks', termly data submission, meetings with the governors after learning walks and observations.

The coordinator is responsible for planning World Book Day and should support staff members in the delivery of a fun and engaging day. They work closely with the school librarian to ensure that reading is an enjoyable and exciting subject for all classes.

Plan for Unforeseen School Closure

Should there be an entire school closure we will continue to teach children in accordance with the English curriculum overview. We will continue to plan a variety of activities and provide children with opportunities to continue with their learning at home with lessons being tailored and adapted to suit home learning.

We will use online platforms to teach and deliver homework. Please see the Remote Learning Policy for more information.

Promoting Diversity in English

At Boutcher, we have always been committed to providing all children with an equal entitlement to activities and opportunities regardless of race, gender, culture or class.

We want all children to feel they are positively represented and have opportunities to find out and explore the lives of significant individuals that have made an impact in the world we live in. For BAME children, this may be learning about prominent figures and their influence from people from a range of countries and places. We want children to see themselves as the future and be equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge from the wider world. If children have the self-belief and determination, they will achieve greatness.

In terms of English, we want all children to feel valued and positively represented. In English lessons children are regularly reminded that we respect all people, beliefs and cultures and that disrespect and derogatory views are not tolerated. If children share views that cause concern, these should be written on the appropriate forms and handed to the Headteacher. If teacher's feel uncomfortable in discussions or when planning lessons, they should speak to the English coordinator for support.

For the teaching of the reading and writing curriculum, we select books to be studied where children can see a reflection of themselves and feel represented and valued. Through our book choices, we represent not only the modern Britain that we live in but are proactive in selecting books to reflect our diverse school community too.

We want children to enjoy stories which mirror their own culture and in turn, help build identity. Equally, it is important that children encounter books that offer a view into someone else's experiences.

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We select books where the achievements of BAME are celebrated as well as books where history is represented too. An example from this year is the study of *Hidden Figures*, which celebrates the achievements of the four black women who worked for NASA during the Space Race whilst overcoming gender and racial barriers.

The English coordinator keeps up to date on new book releases and as more books are purchased for our class reading corners and school library, we continue to build on our repertoire of books to reflect diversity, inclusion and equality in the characters and authors.

Outside Agencies

The school has links with a number of outside agencies and specialist teachers to promote and enhance the delivery of English, namely:

- The Literary Curriculum
- Topical Talk
- The Unicorn Theatre
- CLPE
- The National Theatre
- The Old Vic