



Kilburn Junior School

English Policy



Summer 2023



English Curriculum Statement

At Kilburn Junior School, we aim to provide our children with an English Curriculum that is fun, motivating, interesting and most importantly purposeful. We strive to develop high standards of literacy through a stimulating and inspirational English Curriculum, where every child fosters a passion for English, has the opportunity to shine and reaches their full potential.

As English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society, it is at the heart of all learning at Kilburn. We recognise that a good grasp of English allows children to access the whole curriculum. Therefore, the overarching aim of the English Curriculum is to equip children with a strong command of the written and spoken word, and develop a love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

National Curriculum 2014

The National Curriculum (2014) clearly states that teaching the English language is an essential role of a Primary School.

The English Programme of Study is based on four areas;

- Spoken language
- Reading
- Writing
- Spelling, grammar and punctuation

The National Curriculum is divided into 3 Key stages; Key Stage 1, Lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4) and Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 and 6). By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the conventions, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study.

At Kilburn Junior School the focus is on the Lower Key Stage 2 and Upper Key Stage 2 sections, however, we appreciate that children do learn at different rates and therefore teachers have a working understanding of the whole curriculum not just that of the phase in which they teach. Curriculum 2014, gives detailed guidance of what should be taught at each Key stage under the following headings:

- Spoken language
- Reading - Word reading, Comprehension
- Writing – Transcription, Spelling, Handwriting and presentation, Composition, Grammar and punctuation

Our School Vision for English

Here at Kilburn, our broad and rich English curriculum aims to ensure that all our children:

- 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
- Appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- Use discussion in order to learn; explain clearly their understanding and ideas – to be competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

Spoken Language

Developing strong speaking and listening skills is fundamental to the teaching of English at Kilburn Junior School. Teachers and Teaching and Learning Assistants place a high emphasis on spoken language and plan for the discreet teaching of skills as well as incidental learning opportunities.

Our approach is firmly based on teaching how language changes in different contexts. We believe children need to develop strong oracy skills to enable them to internalise language patterns and understand how language changes in different situations. This enables our children to understand and manipulate language for different purposes and audiences. To do this, teachers provide authentic contexts, giving children opportunities to use a range of spoken language. Teachers provide a range of purposeful opportunities through role play, drama, discussions and debates in the classroom as well as within Trailblazer sessions. Teachers model the use of Standard English, increasing children's repertoire of vocabulary and sophistication of spoken English.

The focus on the spoken word gives children the ability to cope with written language by discovering:

- How it works
- That meanings are shaped by lexical and syntactical choices
- That language changes in different contexts
- That there are differences between written and spoken English and standard and nonstandard
- Rules of spoken language
- Creative thinking and self-expression

Reading

At Kilburn, we understand that learning to read is the foundation for future educational success. Being able to read is the most important skill children will learn during their early schooling and has far-reaching implications for lifelong confidence and well-being. The teaching of reading at Kilburn consists of two dimensions: Word reading and Comprehension. Reading focuses on developing children's competence in both dimensions; different kinds of teaching are needed for each.

Phonics

It is expected that most children will be competent readers by the end of KS1 and daily phonics sessions are not the norm at KS2. For those children who have not reached expected standards, close monitoring and assessment will inform interventions, highlighting gaps early on ensuring children make accelerated progress. We use a range of tried and tested phonics interventions that are selected to fit with a child's needs. These include: Lexia, TRUGS, Precision Teaching and Phonological Awareness Training.

Synthetic phonics teaching is used in catch-up programmes so that all children can learn to read quickly and skilfully. Children are taught the correspondences between letters (graphemes) and sounds (phonemes). They identify and blend different letter sounds and letter combinations together ('synthesise' them) to make a word – for example, pronouncing each phoneme in shop /sh/-/o/-/p/ and then blending those phonemes to produce the word. Through this, children take important steps in learning to read. They can also use this knowledge to begin to spell new words they hear.

Using a systematic synthetic phonics approach, almost all children quickly become confident and independent readers. They soon move away from the mechanics of identifying and blending letter sounds (or 'decoding' words) and start reading fluently, even when they come across words they have never heard or seen before. Once the process of reading becomes automatic and easy, they can devote all their attention to understanding the meaning of what they have read.

At Kilburn Junior School, we follow the 'Twinkl Phonics' programme during our phonics intervention groups, which run for at least 20 minutes each day. We assess each child and begin the scheme at the phase appropriate to their knowledge. Children who are in a phonics intervention group will sit a phonics screening check at the end of each term to assess whether they still need this intervention, whether they need to

progress onto a different type of intervention and where their gaps still exist. Children will also be given a staged 'Twinkl Phonics' reading book which matches the stage they are working on, in order to practise recently learned phonemes. Each stage is broken down into termly sub-stages to ensure children are only exposed to phonemes that they have been taught. Children are encouraged to read their book more than once to build up fluency and expression when reading.

Comprehension

Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills are developed through children's experience of regular expert Guided Reading sessions with the teacher, as well as from shared reading of high-quality texts.

All children are encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, and to establish an appreciation and love of reading. Reading widely and often increases children's understanding and vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. It also opens up a treasure house of wonder and joy for curious young minds. At Kilburn we believe it is essential that, by the end of their time here, all our children are able to read fluently, and with confidence. Reading for pleasure is a whole-school priority here at Kilburn and we are committed to building a whole school community that loves reading.

To promote a love of reading, we:

- Read aloud to children up to and including Year 6, to introduce them to new authors and styles of writing
- Share high quality texts
- Encourage and model reading for pleasure and establish an appreciation and love of reading
- Establish and develop a varied range of texts in the classroom to appeal to individuals and groups
- Promote reading challenges and celebrate reading success
- Focus on book corners, displays and the library
- Celebrate World Book Day and/or Book Week across the school
- Encourage children to use and enjoy our school library
- Recommend books to children and encourage them to recommend books to each other
- Welcome parents to come into school to read with their children
- Provide a wide range of genres and authors in our Free Read boxes.

Guided reading

Guided reading is focused on covering the Assessment Foci that stem from the National Curriculum 2014, ensuring word decoding and word comprehension are covered for the appropriate year group using the yearly overview. Our guided reading sessions are mostly conducted in a whole class setting and aim to provide the children with a range of opportunities to discuss and understand the books they are reading. Teachers and children model how to read aloud fluently, how to use reading skills to read an unfamiliar word or comprehend a part of the text and ask questions about the text whilst reading.

Our guided reading sessions may include:

- Discussions with groups, partners and / or teachers
- Producing art work relating to their text
- Answering and asking verbal or written comprehension questions
- Drawing inferences and making predictions
- Comparing books to those they have read before
- Recommending texts to others and providing opinions

Big Read

Big Read sessions are held one morning a week. The Big Read sessions invite children and parents or carers to attend school from 8:40 – 9:00 to take part in extra reading and reading activities. Children attending alone can either pair up with each other or attend an extra guided reading session with the class teacher or teaching assistant. Parents and carers are also welcome to join this and are provided with examples or the types of questions which promote good reading comprehension knowledge.

Reading Scheme

Children have access to a range of texts and genre primarily through Oxford University Press. These include:

- Oxford Reading Tree (Stages 4 -11)
- Project X
- Treetops (Time Chronicles, Stage 11-13)
- Treetops (Fiction and Nonfiction, Stages 9 - 16)
- Treetops (Classics, Stages 15- 17)
- Treetops (True Stories/Great stories Stages 14-20)
- Treetops (Myths and Legends Stages 10-17)
- Treetops (Chucklers, Stages 9-20)
- Treetops Graphic novels (Stage 16-20)
- Treetops (In fact, Stages 11-20)

In addition, some children will have access to KS1 resources:

- Twinkl Phonics reading books (Phases 1 to 6)

Children across the school are allocated individual reading books based on accurate up to date assessments. These include those from:

- Salford Reading tests whereby children are given a reading age and comprehension age in Autumn (Repeated in Spring and Summer where interventions have been in place)
- NFER tests
- itrack tracking data
- Guided Reading records
- Information from Home-School Planners and class reading records
- Evidence from Intervention programmes such as TRUGS, Lexia, Ticking Texts, PAT and Phonics

Fluidity across levels is made in conjunction with the teachers' professional judgement.

If children progress through the reading stages of their year quickly, they are encouraged to take a 'Free Reader' book. All 'Free Read' books have been staged to year groups using the Lexile Framework for Reading tool to ensure that children are still reading a book which is appropriately challenging for their reading journey. Each classroom's 'Free Reader' box aims to provide a range of authors and genres.

OXFORD READING TREE EXPECTED STAGES

As a school, we follow the Oxford Reading Tree scheme of books. Below is list of stages that a child reading at their expected reading level should be reading throughout their school year. Once a child has reached the top stage for their year group, they will be placed onto 'free readers'. Each year group will have their own set of free read books to ensure they are suitable for their reading level and are designed to offer a variety of genres and topics to the children.

		WHEN TO USE THE FREE READERS
Year 3	Stage 12	(year group appropriate free reads) Free reads are to be alternated with stage books.
	Stage 13	
Year 4	Stage 14	Year 3 – stage 14 / free read
	Stage 15	Year 4 – Stage 16 / free read
Year 5	Stage 16	Year 5 – Stage 18 / free read
	Stage 17	Year 6 – Stage 19 + 20 / free read
Year 6	Stage 18	
	Stage 19	
	Stage 20	

Home-school Planners

Children's planners are a powerful communication tool between home and school as teachers comment on children's reading within the journal and parents do the same. There is a high expectation that children read to an adult at home, 4x per week.

When a child struggles to read at home, this should be monitored and followed up initially by the class teacher and/or the head teacher. These children may need additional support and practice in school.

Writing

The National Curriculum states that children should:

- develop the stamina and skills to write at length
- use accurate spelling and punctuation
- be grammatically correct

We aim to develop children's ability to independently produce well structured, detailed writing in which the meaning is made clear and which engages the interest of the reader. Attention is paid throughout the school to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling. Teachers model writing strategies and the use of phonics and spelling strategies in shared writing sessions.

Within each year group, the children are taught to write for a wide range of purposes through fiction and non-fiction text types. The children are taught to recognise the purpose, audience, text structures and language features of each text type.

In composition, children are taught how to contextualise, plan, draft, proofread, edit, redraft, publish and evaluate their writing during the writing sequence for each unit to gain competence in structuring their work effectively. Each stage of the writing process is important in the production of a finished piece of writing. Effective teaching often focuses on particular aspects of this process, e.g. planning a story, an explanation, an argument, or revising a draft to change or improve it. By structuring and restructuring

ideas in writing, children extend their powers of imagination, learn to express increasingly complex, abstract and logical relationships, develop skills of reasoning and critical evaluation. This, in turn, feeds back into their competence as thinkers and speakers. Each term, all children at Kilburn have experience of developing at least one piece of writing through the whole writing sequence. Their final written work is added to their Published Pieces books.

The teaching of writing at Kilburn centres on an approach which meets class, group and individual needs. Children are supported in learning how they can develop their writing, which may be presented through personalised 'Next Steps' targets, text appropriate success criteria and verbal feedback. Targets are worked upon during guided sessions with the teacher, as well as in shared and modelled writing as a class. Independent writing is assessed in line with the school marking policy and children are provided with achievable steps to progress and extend their writing capabilities quickly. There are many opportunities for children to improve their writing inspired by personal experiences, drama techniques and film clips. They may be asked to produce their writing on their own or as part of group.

We recognise that writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription, that is, on spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the morphological (word structure) and orthographic (spelling structure) patterns of words. Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting. Effective composition involves articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Therefore, we incorporate a skills based approach to writing, which explicitly teaches Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling and Handwriting systematically within English lessons. Where appropriate, this may also be in additional regular short sessions to those within English lessons.

Grammar and Punctuation

The grammar of our first language is learnt naturally and implicitly, through interactions with other speakers and from reading. We recognise, however, that explicit knowledge of grammar is very important, as it gives us more conscious control and choice in our language. Building this knowledge is best achieved through a focus on grammar and punctuation within the teaching of reading, writing and speaking. Some would argue that the study of grammar is worth teaching in its own right because it is intrinsically interesting – and so it is. This is not the primary aim at Kilburn; our aim is to improve children's writing.

Grammar is fundamental to this, as a means to an end, but a means that involves investigation, problem solving, language play and a growing awareness of (and interest in) how language works. It should be clear from this that the purpose of teaching grammar is not simply the naming of parts of speech, nor is it to provide arbitrary rules for 'correct' English. It is about making children aware of key grammatical principles and their effects, to increase the range of choices open to them when they write. We understand that the study of grammar all by itself will not necessarily make a child a better writer. But we feel that, by gaining a clearer understanding of how our language works, children should also gain greater control over the way they shape words into sentences and sentences into paragraphs. In short, we believe that the teaching of grammar helps our children to become more *effective* writers.

The growth of competence in grammar also contributes importantly to the broader development of children's thinking. The more context-free and explicit nature of writing helps children become increasingly reflective about language.

Spelling

At Kilburn we want our children to become fluent and effective writers; accurate spelling is a means to that end. Competent spellers need to spend less time and energy in thinking about spelling to enable them to channel their time and energy into the skills of composition, sentence structure and precise word choice.

The two factors that make English such a rich language also define its complexity: the alphabetic system and the history of the language. The alphabetic system is efficient, 26 letters creating 44 phonemes in 144

combinations to form about half a million words in current use. The English alphabet includes 21 consonants; spoken English uses 24 consonant sounds, so the match between how we say a consonant and how we write it is generally predictable. The rich array of vowels poses particular problems: there are 20 spoken vowel sounds but only five vowel letters. The long **a** sound, for example, is represented in a range of ways: e.g. **ai, a-e, ea, ay, eigh**.

The other factor influencing our spelling is history. There are three main historical sources for English spelling patterns:

- **Germanic** – From the Anglo Saxons. Over half our words fall into this category;
- **Romance** – French and, in the 16th century, Spanish and Portuguese;
- **Classical** – Greek and Latin, from which we often derive the language of areas of knowledge.

The English language has absorbed thousands of words from all over the world, through trade and commerce. These words and phrases continue to enrich the language and give us a great wealth of expression. The implications of this, for teaching spelling, may seem daunting but 85% of the English spelling system is predictable.

At Kilburn, the key to supporting our pupils to become confident spellers lie in teaching the strategies, rules and conventions systematically and explicitly, and helping pupils recognise which strategies they can use to improve their own spelling. Our balanced spelling programme includes five main components:

- understanding the principles underpinning word construction (phonemic, morphemic and etymological)
- recognising how (and how far) these principles apply to each word, in order to learn to spell words
- practising and assessing spelling
- applying spelling strategies and proofreading
- building children's self-images as spellers

Our spelling programme, adapted from the 2014 'Shakespeare and More Spelling' scheme, gradually builds pupils' spelling vocabulary by introducing patterns or conventions and continually practising those already introduced. Experience has confirmed that short, lively, focused sessions are more enjoyable and effective than an occasional skills session. Spelling strategies are taught explicitly and applied to high-frequency words, cross curricular words and individual pupils' words. Proofreading is taught during shared and guided writing sessions and links are made to the teaching of handwriting. Access to ICT resources such as Spellzone, support home-school learning in this area.

Handwriting

Here at Kilburn, it is our aim that all pupils should develop a fluent and legible style of handwriting. Handwriting is a movement skill and one that is best taught directly by demonstration, explanation and practice. The principal aim is that handwriting becomes an automatic process, which frees pupils to focus on the content of the writing. The correct formation of all letters needs to become automatic and may require a lot of practice, particularly in the early years and Key Stage One. In order for this to occur, a Joint Handwriting Policy now exists with our feeder school, Kilburn Infant and Nursery School.

The expectation is that handwriting will be taught and practised in short sessions, where appropriate, in ways that develop accuracy, enhance fluency and legibility.

Extra Curricular Activities

In addition to the above, extra-curricular activities play an important role in our rich and diverse English Curriculum. Regular trips to places such as Derby theatre and our visiting Drama groups make English learning come alive for our children. Other exciting English based activities include: visiting book clubs, book fairs, World Book Day celebrations, poetry competitions and the 500 Words competition. Through all of these enriching experiences, we aim to inspire our children to, not only achieve highly, but to enjoy English.

Through being taught to write and speak fluently, our children learn to communicate their ideas and emotions to others; through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, spiritually and socially. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society. And at Kilburn we are strongly committed to ensuring all our children enter society with the English skills that will equip them to succeed in life.

Role of Subject leader

The Subject Leader is responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through:

- Monitoring and evaluating English:-
 - ✓ pupil progress and analysis of data three times per year
 - ✓ provision of English, ensuring the breadth and balance of the curriculum
 - ✓ English across the curriculum
 - ✓ the quality of the Learning Environment
- taking the lead in policy development
- auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD
- purchasing and organising resources
- reporting to governors and SLT
- guidance support and training for parents and carers
- keeping up to date with recent English developments.

At Kilburn Junior School, we have multiple subject leaders for English who work in collaboration.

- Reading Subject Lead: Miss H Richardson
- Writing Subject Lead: Miss E Jennings
- Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling Lead: Miss E Jennings.

Expectation of all teachers:

- A yearly overview is used to create a termly medium term plan
- Planning covers all English objectives throughout the year
- Weekly plans are based on medium term planning and success criteria based on the most recent assessments
- A4 English books are used for writing in literacy and writing is also evident in topic and science books
- Skills taught in English are reinforced and embedded throughout all other areas of learning; this is evidenced in all work
- Topics offer children the opportunity to contextualise and apply discrete literacy learning for a wide range of purposes
- A high level of presentation is expected across **all** subjects
- Guided group work is planned for and delivered
- Writing is edited and published at least once every half-term
- Learning Objectives and Success Criteria are displayed in all lessons and are evident in books
- Marking is directly linked to the Learning objective and Success Criteria in all lessons. (See feedback and Marking policy)

- Success criteria are generated prior to the lesson (detailed on lesson planning) and with the children.
- Assessment for Learning is used in classrooms.
- The attainment and progress of pupils is tracked using iTrack
- High quality displays are used to support teaching and celebrate the achievements of pupils

Expectation of all teaching and learning assistants:

- Staff will support and challenge identified groups and individuals across all year groups
- Staff will feedback to teachers and pupils as necessary and in line with marking and feedback policy
- Staff will model high standards of the spoken and written curriculum and share a love of reading with pupils

Time allocations for English

- ✓ English to be taught every day for 1 hour
- ✓ Daily reading sessions
- ✓ Reading comprehension is taught at least one lesson per week
- ✓ Handwriting taught sessions twice a week 15 minutes, as required
- ✓ Handwriting practice within phonics/spelling teaching
- ✓ Extended writing taught across the curriculum
- ✓ Punctuation and grammar should be embedded in all English teaching and should be evident within planning
- ✓ Weekly spelling focus lessons, with additional support sessions for identified groups
- ✓ Phonics interventions or whole class focus, where needed