

St Bees Village School English Curriculum



We have a topic-based, cross curricular approach to the curriculum, where quality books are used to give a meaningful basis for learning across subjects. Reading is taught both in English lessons, and at other times during the day, such as in our Guided Reading sessions or through our dedicated phonics/spelling time. In the Infants a discreet Phonics session is taught in a daily using the Read, Write, Inc. Programme. In the Juniors a daily Guided Reading session supports children's comprehension skills and provides activities to promote a love of reading.

Children learn to read at a variety of paces, and we try to cater for all of the children in our school. Our books are banded into colour groups, and children read within a band until they are ready to move to the next one. Children are also encouraged to look at and read other non-banded books. Reading should be seen as a pleasure, not as a race or competition; we want children to choose to read.

Through our reading sessions, we support children to develop wider reading skills, and importantly a love of reading. They will be encouraged to discuss the book and the story, and talk about things they liked or disliked when they heard or read the book. They will take part in drama activities to bring their reading to life and become fully immersed in the world of the book they are reading.

Writing is linked to our books and children are involved in discussion, drama and other activities to stimulate ideas and vocabulary for a wide range of writing, e.g. letters, stories, persuasive leaflets and letters. Talk for Writing provides children with the opportunity to verbally practise what they are going to write about before planning and then moving onto writing their final piece.

This process is extremely valuable to our children, and helps them to become confident and accomplished writers. Possibly the most important aspect of any learning, is developing the children's speaking and listening abilities, as these impact on all areas of the curriculum. We support children to listen when appropriate, and to contribute confidently to conversations. We help them to develop their skills in presenting work to the rest of the class, or simply explaining next steps to a friend.

Children are given targets in English to help them to know what they need to do to improve, and these vary according to age and ability.

If we are ever concerned about a child's progress in reading or writing, we provide 1:1 and/or small group intervention to address this and accelerate their progress. These sessions are delivered by highly skilled support staff who have received specific intervention training.

Further developments in our English Curriculum

We place significant emphasis upon the development of basic skills and we aim for every child to be reading fluently and with high levels of understanding by the age of 7. In order to ensure we achieve this at our school we introduced the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme in March 2017. This is a complete literacy programme for 5 to 7 year olds that are learning to read and write. The programme

uses synthetic phonics to teach reading and it covers all of the National Curriculum requirements for literacy and language.

This approach:

- **Gets children decoding and comprehending quickly.** The special 'three reads' approach ensures that all children gain accuracy, fluency and a good understanding of the text.
- **Ensures children read storybooks and non-fiction books matched to their growing phonic knowledge.**
- **Leaves no child behind.** Initial and on-going assessment to track every child's progress.
- **Prevents downtime.** Direct teaching followed by partner practice means that every child participates in the whole lesson.

Their progress will be assessed at the end of every half term and children grouped according to the level they are working at. This will ensure that teaching is always focused precisely on what pupils need and that the pace of learning is fast.

In addition, we have introduced the Babcock Spelling Programme and Assertive Mentoring Grammar Programme in Key Stage 2 to ensure high quality teaching, learning and assessment of Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling. These are used alongside Power of Reading and Talk for Writing which focus on immersing children into texts in order to provide them with the experience and knowledge needed to achieve the end of year expectations for their age. These resources cover all of the National Curriculum requirements for Reading, Writing and Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling at Key Stage 2.