BEECHWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL
STATEMENT OF INTENT FOR ENGLISH

Summary Statement

At Beechwood, the English curriculum is rooted in the school's underlying aims, ethos and values. It is carefully designed to equip our pupils with the knowledge, skills and understanding and attitudes that will both prepare them for the next stage in their education and enable them to live successful lives in the future.

Aims

Our aims in teaching English are that all children will:

- develop the necessary skills to use the English language confidently, appropriately and accurately in a range of situations;
- be able to read a range of materials fluently and with understanding for enjoyment and for information;
- be able to speak clearly, fluently and with an expanding vocabulary;
- be able to listen to the spoken word attentively, with understanding, pleasure and empathy;
- understand and use the grammatical and linguistic conventions of standard English;
- develop an appreciation of our rich and varied literary heritage;
- be able to write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences, using spelling, punctuation and grammar accurately and confidently.

Key concepts and ideas

Key concepts and ideas that are revisited throughout school are:

Language and Context: that spoken and written language use varies according to to the context, the purpose, the user and the audience;
Vocabulary and Grammar: that a set of grammatical and linguistic conventions form the basis of standard English;
Fluency in Reading: that fluent, efficient reading requires the employment of a variety of strategies at phonemic, morphemic, syntactic and contextual level;
Purpose of Writing: that familiarity with different writing genres supports successful writing for different purposes and audiences.

Rationale for the order of teaching

The English curriculum at Beechwood Primary School follows the order of progression of knowledge, understanding and skills for reading, writing and vocabulary, grammar and punctuation set out in the National Curriculum for English. Early Years Long Term Plans in Nursery and Reception are drawn from the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (using Birth to 5 Matters guidance).

Reading

The teaching of reading is informed by the **Beechwood Primary School Progression of Skills in Reading**, which is drawn from the National Curriculum.

Phonics

Systematic phonic teaching begins as soon as pupils demonstrate a sufficient level of basic phonological awareness, and this awareness is assessed and developed from the earliest stages of entry to the school. Children in nursery will be exposed to a range of Phase 1 teaching from Letters and Sounds. Following the development of letter- sound correspondence in Nursery, phonic teaching in Reception and Year 1 takes place on a daily basis. Children who are identified as still requiring phonics teaching in Year 2 and KS2 also take part in daily sessions. Phoneme recognition and graphemic representation are taught concurrently,

within streamed small group teaching followed by reinforcement of skills through application at group and individual level. There is the expectation that all pupils, apart from those with the most pronounced special educational needs in relation to speech and language acquisition, will reach the nationally expected level by the end of Year 1, as indicated by the statutory phonic screening check.

Sight Vocabulary
We aim to systematically develop pupils' ability to read an increasing range of words on sight, and use a progressive series of high frequency word lists as a basis for building a core sight vocabulary throughout school (**see BPS word lists**).

Experience of Texts
From the earliest stages, we expose pupils to a range of quality texts beyond those which they can read independently, in order to establish that comprehension and response to text is the purpose of reading. In Early Years Foundation Stage and KS1, this typically takes place in timetabled 'Favourite 5' and 'Talk Through Stories' story time sessions, where carefully considered stories from a variety of genres and cultures are shared and enjoyed. Within English lessons, texts are selected on the basis that they will engage and interest pupils, but also in how they might advance pupils' knowledge of English language and understanding of literature. Careful consideration has also been taken when selecting books linked to the Thematic Study Units as well as allowing all children to be seen and see others through the 'Windows and Mirrors' approach.

Reading Units
Core teaching units form the basis for the explicit teaching of **comprehension** in the daily English lesson at Beechwood Primary School from Year 1 to Year 6. The teaching of reading is given roughly equal time weighting as the teaching of writing across the unit, delivered in sequential teaching sequences (e.g. two weeks of reading, followed by two weeks of writing). The units incorporate all of the National Curriculum objectives for comprehension drawn from the respective programmes of study for reading and there are separate plans for the study of **non-fiction** and **narrative. Key objectives** have been identified by the school according to two underlying criteria. Firstly, they are objectives which we consider to be fundamental to our pupils' developing competence in comprehension and so require repeated reinforcement in a variety of textual contexts throughout the year. Secondly, they are objectives which need direct teaching, as distinct from 'cumulative' objectives, which are realised as a result of exposure over time to high-quality teaching and texts or the co-ordinated application of multiple skill sets. The school has further broken down the key objectives into a series of **termly objectives,** which ensure progressive development of understanding of key objectives within specific teaching units.

There is systematic study of different text genres, with the genres we consider to be most useful to pupils (*e.g. report writing)* regularly re-visited across the year groups (**see BPS long term plan for genre study**). Genres are sufficiently broad to give pupils a wide experience of different types of text, but sufficiently limited to ensure that pupils are given the opportunity to experience and understand texts in depth and become familiar with specific genre features which are revisited regularly throughout their primary experience at levels of progressive complexity.

In EYFS, children are immersed in tales and stories through the vehicle of 'Drawing Club', Talk for Writing and story time. Through the use of a book, traditional tale or animation, children learn new and interesting vocabulary and are encouraged to reflect on what they hear and see, enriching their language skills.

Guided Reading
In Year 2, with core phonic skills embedded, the sessions are comprehension based. Texts that pupils are able to decode independently are chosen, in order that their skills of comprehension can be systematically developed and applied alongside their accurate reading of the text. This supports pupils in becoming independent decoders and comprehenders of age-appropriate texts by the end of Key Stage 1.

In Key Stage 2 the model of guided reading evolves further, in order to equip pupils with a range of higher order comprehension skills. Weekly teaching units focus on the explicit identification and development of specific comprehension skills drawn from the '**Leicestershire Inference Programme'**; which identifies the key strategies employed by competent readers from extensive cognitive research.

Writing

The teaching of writing is informed by the **Beechwood Primary School Progression of Skills in Writing**, which is drawn from the National Curriculum. In EYFS, writing objectives from the Statutory Framework are taught using the Drawing Club approach, Talk for Writing and literacy lessons alongside bringing writing to life through provision.

Writing Units

Core genre-based teaching units form the basis for the explicit teaching of **composition** in the daily English lesson at Beechwood Primary School from Year 1 to Year 6. The teaching of writing objectives follows the same rationale as the teaching of reading; with the identification of key objectives which we consider to be fundamental to our pupils' developing competence in composition and so requiring repeated reinforcement in a variety of textual contexts throughout the year. Linked to the teaching of reading, there is systematic study of different text genres based on the genres we consider to be most useful to pupils. Selected genres are revisited regularly throughout pupils' primary experience at levels of progressive complexity.

Handwriting

Handwriting is taught from Reception to Year 6 alongside fine motor and gross motor skills in Early Years and Year 1. We teach handwriting using the Kinetic Letters Programme from reception to Year 6 to develop children's legible and fluent handwriting style alongside explicit fine and gross motor skills within this.

Relevance to school curriculum aims

High-quality daily teaching of the core skills of English

We view the development of competence in English as a fundamental entitlement for all pupils. This subject is a basic life skill upon which access to the rest of the curriculum is predicated. English is taught in both subject specific and cross curricular contexts. There is a guarantee of personalised intervention programmes at group or individual level for all pupils falling below nationally expected levels in reading and writing.

A key role for research and enquiry

The English curriculum is designed with specific cross curricular links to the school's Thematic Study Units, to enable children to develop the skills to pursue lines of research into areas of personal interest. This research directly feeds into the non-fiction writing units, providing children with reason to produce purposeful writing.

Learning that is meaningful, relevant and enjoyable

Learning is embedded in contexts which are engaging and relevant to pupils; both real life or imaginary, in order to stimulate personal engagement and the motivation to explore further. Both narrative and non-fiction English units of work are closely linked to units of cross-curricular study to provide a coherence to the investigation of themes and subjects and an opportunity for deeper immersion in knowledge and ideas.

An extended concept of curriculum provision

Pupils learn in a variety of different places and with a variety of different teachers. Off-site delivery, visiting experts, day and residential visits and use of the outside classroom and local environment are common features of provision, to both ensure that children are exposed to the very best practitioners and educators and to reinforce a concept of learning that transcends the boundaries of the classroom and the school. Within English, these opportunities allow children to be immersed in a text through drama and role play as well as providing a stimulus for their writing.