

# Bill Quay Primary School



Rights, Responsibilities and Resilience

Policy for  
Curriculum and Assessment

This policy has been devised to explain and detail our overarching curriculum strategy and the way we assess how much progress pupils have made. It should be read alongside our subject specific policies.

### **Curriculum Intent**

At Bill Quay Primary School, we aim to create a challenging and coherent curriculum for both progress and pleasure by equipping pupils with the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives and to take responsibility for their own learning.

These are our main aims upon which we have based our curriculum:

- To create a safe, happy and supportive environment;
- To provide a coherent, challenging and engaging curriculum which develops a love of learning for pupils and staff;
- To encourage pupils to take risks in their learning;
- To develop in our children a sense of awe, curiosity and wonder for the world around them;
- To shape rounded, determined young people who can face the challenges of the modern world with confidence.

At Bill Quay Primary School, we encourage our children to be creative, unique, open-minded and independent individuals, respectful of themselves and of others, in our local community and the wider world. The breadth and balance of our curriculum and ethos promotes life in modern Britain. We work hard to nurture our children so they grow into safe, caring, democratic, responsible and tolerant adults who make a positive difference to British society and the world.

Our values underpin our curriculum:

#### **Values**

- Resilience: We provide positive school experiences through a rich curriculum so that pupils have the opportunity to develop their strengths and interests. We value engagement, enjoyment and play, as well as supporting children in managing their emotions so that they can 'bounce back' from adverse experiences.
- Equality: We aim to develop an ethos that values and respects all people. Activities and resources within our curriculum celebrate similarities and differences between pupils and they learn that different things contribute to identity. Lessons promote diversity in the classroom, and in order for pupils to understand where important knowledge comes from, we make sure our materials derive from a range of cultures

and backgrounds. Our goal is to create an inclusive classroom environment with a shared sense of belonging in both the school and the community.

- Sincerity: Honesty helps promote trust between pupils. We encourage pupils to own up to their mistakes, show responsibility and hold themselves accountable for their behaviour.
- Potential: We support pupils in realising their potential and building aspirations. Our curriculum offer has the potential to exert a lasting and fundamental influence on the quality of learning and achievement of all children in the school.
- Empathy: Empathy is the heart of our classroom culture. Our curriculum supports the development of empathy and tolerance through, for example, assemblies, drama and our reading curriculum, as well as topics such as history, Religious Education (RE) and Personal Social Education (PSE) so that pupils build friendships based on positive relationships, helping them to develop their emotional intelligence.
- Community: Our curriculum helps pupils become active, responsible members of our school, the locality, the country and the world. It takes into account the context of the community that we serve. Pupils will learn about the rich history of our locality, the importance of the river on the community in the past and how the use of land has changed over time. They will also learn about the people who live here now and how they can contribute to a sense of community.
- Teamwork: Our character-led programme, *Commando Joe's*, allows pupils time to explore a range of activities with decision making, philosophical and moral dilemmas at the heart of what they are doing. The programme is designed around topic characters who display qualities such as communication, perseverance and teamwork. Pupils are encouraged to choose intelligently between alternatives and learn to think deeply about their actions.

We recognise that a proportion of our pupils have different life experiences than others on entry to Reception Class and that there are significant gaps in their vocabulary. Our curriculum therefore, has a strong focus on closing the gap between the 'word poor' and the 'word rich' by exposing our pupils to rich language and providing opportunities to develop talk. We pay close attention to speech and vocabulary acquisition, because it is fundamental to children's cognitive development:

- There is a focus on developing 'Tier 2' vocabulary through providing a rich reading curriculum both within English and across the wider subjects.
- The curriculum planning for each subject contains 'Tier 3' words or subject-specific vocabulary that is explicitly taught within each unit of learning through for example, exploring their etymological roots. In this way, pupils will 'grow' their vocabularies.
- Interventions such as the Nuffield Early Language intervention are used to support pupils on entry to Reception Class.

Since the majority of our pupils come from a white British background, we have identified the need to expose them to rich and diverse cultural experiences. This is reflected in our resources, such as reading materials, in the visits out and the visitors into school, and in assemblies. It is also reflected in our curriculum content. For example, when choosing a location for pupils in KS1 to study in geography, we have chosen Kenya so that the cultural as well as locational contrast to our locality can be studied. We know that our families and the community can provide a wealth of knowledge about themselves and so actively seek their involvement. The more our pupils are exposed to diverse people and groups, the more prepared they will be for life beyond the classroom.

Our planned curriculum therefore is:

- **A progression model.** Our curriculum describes the journey and models the progress that we hope our pupils will take during their time at our school. At specific points in this journey, there are 'checkpoints' which assess whether pupils are meeting curriculum related expectations.
- **Coherent.** We have paid attention to the 'big ideas or concepts' that underpin each curriculum area. By identifying these first, we are then able to link the content of each unit of learning to these concepts. We want our pupils to know more and have a deep knowledge of what they have learnt. This means being able to see the links between what they know and how new learning connects to prior learning. We have paid careful attention to the underlying knowledge that is needed in order to access subjects in later years. Our curriculum is therefore sequenced carefully so that key ideas and concepts are continuously revisited, remembered and built upon.
- **Organised into clearly defined subject disciplines.** We continue to focus on developing staff subject knowledge, drawing on the National Curriculum purpose and study aims, as well as utilising subject associations to support our understanding of each subject area. By teaching and organising our curriculum into specific subjects in KS2, we have been able to ensure that lessons in a unit of learning are carefully sequenced and lead to an end goal.
- **Informed by cognitive science** about how children learn best and remember. We know that long-term memory is enhanced when time is devoted to retrieving information that is to be remembered in the future and spaced at appropriate intervals. Lessons are planned to begin with a recap on previous knowledge that is essential to build on and promote long-term retention of new knowledge.
- **Ambitious for all.** We ensure that pupils with lower starting points are not offered a diminished diet, but are supported through scaffolding and support. High quality talk underpins reading and writing, and lessons are characterized by high challenge but low threat.
- **Knowledge-rich.** While we acknowledge the importance of developing skills, we also understand the importance of a curriculum that is centred round the acquisition of knowledge. By sharing knowledge with pupils, we are giving them the opportunity to

make sense of, improve and develop the knowledge necessary to prosper in the world we live in. Precise knowledge, including specific vocabulary, to be taught and learnt for each unit, is clearly set out in our planning as well as pupil knowledge organisers.

- **Reading-rich.** Our school environment celebrates reading for pleasure as a valued and purposeful part of the curriculum. We use whole class, guided and independent reading strategies to teach decoding and language comprehension. We know that our brains favour stories and learning will be deeper if we incorporate reading material into our schemes. Pupils, therefore, have opportunities to read and listen to a wide variety of stories and non-fiction texts that are linked to units of work being studied.
- **Broad and balanced.** We promote a varied and rich curriculum that builds upon pupils' existing cultural capital and taps into the moral, social, spiritual and cultural elements which help prepare our pupils for the next stage in their education. Our curriculum is built around an extensive series of visits and visitors which allows our children to learn through rich first- hand experiences. We ensure that there are visits to museums, places of worship, after-school clubs and close links with the community, as well as utilising expertise from numerous coaches and teachers. Drop down weeks focus on current themes and allow links across the curriculum subjects.

### **Curriculum Implementation**

Our pupils have a right to an education that is well-taught and well-resourced. In implementing our curriculum, we aim to translate our intent into exemplary practise, using materials that are fit for purpose and promote thinking.

All children are provided with knowledge organisers when they begin a new unit in history, geography, RE or science. The knowledge organiser is a document which shows what the learning will be for that unit and outlines the key facts, knowledge, skills and subject specific vocabulary that children will learn. It gives both teachers and children the 'bigger picture' of a topic. Over time, students will build up a core bank of facts and vocabulary that will help them excel in their achievements and understand the world around them. The revision and learning of the knowledge organisers will also help students embed their knowledge and support them as they access more complicated content in later years. Teachers will use these in the following ways:

- To help children understand how learning connects. By referring to what the children already know, teachers can make explicit how the new knowledge links and connects to the facts already learnt. Making links helps information move into our long-term memory.
- To learn and spell subject specific vocabulary.
- As a recap to previous lessons.

- To use as a regular retrieval too. We set low stakes quizzes in order to test pupils' learning of facts so that we are strengthening their memory.
- A week before the start of a topic, knowledge organisers are sent home for pupils to learn facts and carry out independent learning. This ensures that pupils have a baseline of prior knowledge that the new knowledge can attach itself to.

We recognise the importance of developing subject knowledge for all staff so that they can present subject matter clearly and promote appropriate discussion about the subject matter being taught. The role of the subject co-ordinator is vital in the successful implementation of our curriculum. We aim for all subject co-ordinators to have the knowledge and expertise to lead their subjects effectively. This has implications for staff professional development and there is an ongoing focus to improve staff subject knowledge, utilising advice from external advisors and relevant national subject associations.

In lessons, teachers check pupils' understanding systematically, identify misconceptions and provide clear feedback. They respond and adapt their teaching as necessary. We have incorporated Rosenshine's ten research-based principles of instruction into our teaching and learning. These are:

1. Daily review to strengthen previous learning and lead to fluent recall.
2. Presenting material in small steps to avoid overloading the working memory.
3. Asking lots of questions to help pupils make links to previous learning.
4. Providing pupils with models and worked examples.
5. Spending more time guiding pupil practice.
6. Frequently checking pupils' understanding.
7. Achieving a high success rate in lessons. Pupils will master new learning before moving onto further learning.
8. Providing temporary scaffolds to support them initially.
9. Giving pupils sufficient time for independent practice.
10. Conducting frequent reviews.

Within these ten steps, we will also use the 'gradual release of responsibility' model, or 'I do, we do, you do'. This is a structured teaching method which is particularly useful when introducing pupils to new learning. It helps to scaffold the learning process, avoiding overloading the working memory.

### **'I do' stage**

In this stage, the teacher models new learning through guided instruction, often using worked examples. The teacher will give a step-by-step demonstration of each stage whilst giving pupils the opportunity to discuss what they notice and ask lots of questions.

## **'We do' stage**

At this point, pupils will have 'a go' with scaffolding and guidance of a couple of examples. There may be an element of peer support involving pupils checking each other's work. Teachers will check each child's understanding, provide more modelling as necessary and give plenty of feedback. They may also use examples of correct and incorrect answers to discuss with pupils, or model an example with a deliberate common error for pupils to spot.

## **'You do' stage**

Once pupils are consistent with the steps required, they will move onto the independent 'you do' stage. This may be at different points for different pupils and it is important that the teacher continues to scaffold support for those pupils who still need it. Independent practice is broken down into chunks so that pupils are not practicing mistakes for too long that can then become embedded. Teachers therefore may stop pupils every 3-5 questions so that they can provide feedback.

## **Assessment**

Assessment is viewed as a set of tools, each with a different purpose and not an end in itself. It is the process of doing something in order to find something out and then doing something with the new information.

### **Formative Assessment**

Our assessment practice focuses primarily on formative assessment, in particular, diagnostic assessment or assessment for teaching. It is based on the ten principles outlined above and allows teachers to understand pupil progress on a continuing basis and guide further learning. It is used 'in the moment' in each lesson to adjust teaching in response to pupils' performance. Frequent reviews or 'checkpoints' during and between lessons also enable teachers to identify when pupils are struggling, when they have consolidated learning and when they are ready to progress. These checkpoints answer the questions: 'Have pupils learned what they have been taught? How do we know?' In this way, diagnostic assessment supports staff to provide appropriate support or extension as necessary. It also enables teachers to evaluate their own teaching of particular topics or concepts and to plan future lessons accordingly.

Assessment opportunities during lessons involve:

- **The active involvement of children in their own learning.** Children participate in learning conversations, which gives them opportunities to formulate answers and share strategies/ ideas with partners. Teachers listen to these conversations as they can provide invaluable insights into children's (mis)understanding. They continue these conversations throughout the lesson – regular dialogue with children will further inform the teacher's understanding of where the children are and where they need to go next, allowing them to move the learning on at a suitable pace.

### ABC that response...

**Agree:** I agree with \_\_\_\_\_... That answer makes sense because... I have the same result as \_\_\_\_\_...

**Build upon:** I believe this because... The evidence suggests that... The method I used was...

**Challenge:** I disagree with \_\_\_\_\_ because... I would like to challenge that point of view because ... A question I would like to pose is... Have you thought about...?

- We use **Kagan principles** as a primary method for assessment for learning. Kagan structures ensure that a representative sample of pupils are continually assessed and because the adult is actively monitoring discussions between pupils, they are able to gain a more accurate assessment of the whole class's understanding. Teachers can then adapt their teaching during the lesson.
- **Wherever possible, the provision of immediate and effective feedback.** We strive to give our pupils high quality feedback that they can act on. This will depend on the subject of the lesson and on the task, but will mostly take the form of whole class feedback. Feedback delivered closest to the point of action is most effective, and as such feedback delivered in lessons is more effective than comments provided at a later date. Immediate feedback will, in most cases, be given verbally by the class teacher or teaching assistant to pupils. Pupils will respond to this feedback using green pen. Through questioning, teachers will identify strengths and misconceptions that they can build upon and address immediately (see below for further information about feedback and marking). If immediate feedback cannot be given, the class teacher will complete a quick check of pupil workbooks at the end of the lesson and begin the next lesson by highlighting successful pieces of work, and addressing mistakes and misconceptions.
- **Low stakes testing** such as quizzes and end of unit tests are sometimes used to provide teachers with information about what has been learned and what needs to be revisited.
- Wherever possible, and if appropriate, teachers will plan a **final piece of work or activity** in each unit that is evidence of the cumulative understanding of the pupils.

Formative assessment will also be used to support pupils in their understanding of how to improve. Peer and self-assessment is modelled and scaffolded as appropriate to allow all children to reflect meaningfully on their learning, empowering each pupil to realise their own learning needs. They will also be taught strategies for checking their own work. For

example, reading back through a piece of writing, using inverse operations in maths or checking against a set of criteria.

### **Summative Assessment (Reading, Writing and Maths)**

At Bill Quay, we use summative assessments to evaluate each child's learning in reading, writing and maths at the end of each term. We use summative assessment in order to:

- Provide a 'snapshot' of what each child has learned relative to the objectives they have been taught that term.
- Support teachers in making a judgment at the end of each term about whether each child is on track to meet the end of year objectives for that particular subject.
- Support teachers and leaders in identifying those pupils who need extra support.
- Support teachers in identifying previous learning that needs to be revisited, thus guiding future planning.
- Communicate pupil progress with parents and carers.

Pupil progress is tracked using SIMS. This allows us to track the progress of each pupil over time alongside attendance information. It allows leaders to monitor specific cohorts, evaluate the impact of any programmes or teaching, and identify pupils who have 'fallen behind'. It also supports subject leads in evaluating strengths and weaknesses in their subject across different year groups.

Statutory testing that takes place:

- Year 1: Phonics Screening Check (June) – to include Year 2 pupils who did not meet the standard in Year 1.
- Year 4: Multiplication Check.
- End of KS2 SATs tests in reading, SPAG and maths.

### **Assessment of other subject areas**

Ongoing formative assessment (as detailed above) will be the primary method for assessing subjects other than reading, writing and maths. This may take a number of forms depending on the subject:

- Low stakes tests or recaps at the beginning of a lesson.
- Observations
- Verbal feedback
- Journals such as art sketchbooks
- End of unit tasks that answer the overall topic question.

At the end of every unit, teachers will use the assessment information described above to make a judgement against a clear set of objectives about whether pupils know more, remember more and understand more. These 'checkpoints' will be used to inform class teachers and subject leads about future teaching. Subject leads for example, may then build in further opportunities to revisit the objectives in a another unit.

Each subject policy will detail further how end of unit assessments are carried out.

Teachers will use the results of the summative assessments outlined above, alongside formative assessment information, to make an overall judgement about each child's progress at the end of the academic year.

### Pupil Progress meetings

Pupil progress meetings will take place every term between the class teacher and the maths and Literacy subject leads. During these meetings, teachers will discuss the progress their pupils have made in relation to the knowledge, skills and concepts taught (in other words, how much of the curriculum the child has learned). Teachers will use their pre and post assessment information, pupil jotters and any of the above test materials to support them to discuss the progress made by their pupils. These meetings will determine the next steps in the class teacher's planning and which pupils may need extra support via interventions. Whole class targets will be set to address any identified gaps or consolidation needed.

### Marking and Feedback

We ensure that marking is manageable, meaningful and motivating. We do this by:

- Recognising that marking will vary by age group and subject, and must take into account the child's needs.
- Ensuring its core purpose is to advance pupil progress and outcomes. The whole point of feedback is actually to 'feed forwards' and ensure the pupil knows what to do next time.
- Recognising that written marking should not be the only form of feedback, but peer and self- assessment and verbal feedback are equally effective.
- Ensuring that marking is proportionate and not a burden on teacher workload.

### Procedure for marking English when feedback cannot be done within the lesson

1. After a lesson, the class teacher looks through the class's work and notes down any common mistakes or misunderstandings.
2. At the start of the next lesson, the teacher shows an example of a piece of good work completed by a pupil using the visualiser or IWB.
3. The class teacher will highlight the good aspects of the work to the whole class - for example, descriptive language or perfect punctuation
4. The class teacher may also choose to show a piece of work that needs some improvement, or a piece written by the teacher themselves. For younger pupils, this may have only one type of mistake in it, such as missing full stops.
5. The teacher corrects the mistakes and models making changes in front of the class.
6. The class then spends 10 minutes working individually or in pairs to proofread their work and make edits as necessary. The class teacher will spend this time supporting key pupils, or may work with a group to edit and improve a typed-up piece of work.
7. In their jotters, the class teacher may use a prompt for some pupils, such as highlighting a specific section of their writing that needs editing, or using comments

such as 'punctuation' and 'missing words' to help them find an error. They may also use the marking codes.

8. Pupils may then be asked to redraft their work, or publish it for a specific purpose.
9. For KS2 pupils, longer, final pieces of writing, completed at the end of a unit, will be marked in more depth using the marking codes (Appendix 1) and used as a summative assessment to update the Gateshead 'GAP' sheets that track pupil progress.

#### Procedure for marking maths.

Pupils will be supported by the class teacher to check their work using mini-style plenaries. The teacher may use a visualiser or the IWB/ easel to model different methods and address misconceptions. This ensures that the class teacher doesn't need to take books home and pupils don't have to wait until the next lesson to find out they have misunderstood a concept since the class teacher will be able to target pupils for further support and consolidation.

### **Curriculum Impact**

The impact of our curriculum is measured by:

1. Evaluating the effectiveness of our curriculum design. This is a cyclical process: once it has been evaluated, we redesign it if necessary to ensure that it answers the following:
  - Does it address typical gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills?
  - Does it reflect our school's local context?
  - Does it respond to pupils' life experiences?
  - Is it sufficiently broad and balanced?
  - Are we clear what the end points in each subject are?
  - Have we achieved curriculum continuity so that transitions between year groups are smooth?
  - Are there high academic ambitions for all pupils?
2. Evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and learning:
  - Do teachers have expert knowledge of the subjects they teach?
  - Do teachers enable pupils to understand key concepts?
  - Do teachers ensure pupils embed key concepts in their long- term memory?
  - Do assessments have a clear purpose?
  - How prepared are our pupils for the next steps in their education?



Subject co-ordinators will monitor the impact of our curriculum design to move practice forward by:

- Scrutinising pupil jotters
- Observing lessons
- Discussions with staff and governors

- Pupil interviews
- Supporting planning and resourcing of their subject.

Ultimately, our pupils will, by the end of their time at Bill Quay Primary School, have learnt more, remembered more and be able to do more. They will have grown, spiritually, socially and emotionally, thus enabling them to be ready for the next stage in their education. They will leave our school as confident, kind and caring individuals with aspirations to be the best that they can be.

### Appendix 1

Annotation	Meaning
	Green to be seen-what you are doing well.
	Pink to make you think- a mistake or error
sp	Spelling to correct
P	Punctuation to correct
^	Missing word
?	Check for sense.