

English at Bodsham School

English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society. (The National Curriculum)

Our English curriculum is designed to meet the specific needs of our children and aims to develop skills of self-expression, resilience, creativity, communication and individuality.

Reading

Our aim is for our pupils to develop as confident and enthusiastic lifelong readers.

We use the Letters and Sounds programme to teach phonics. Letters and Sounds is a quality first phonics programme published by the Department for Education and Skills. It aims to build children's speaking and listening skills in their own right as well as to prepare children for learning to read by developing their phonic knowledge and skills. It sets out a detailed and systematic programme for teaching phonic skills for children starting by the age of five, with the aim of them becoming fluent readers by age seven.

There are six overlapping phases which the table below summarises. For more detailed information, visit the Letters and Sounds website.

Phase	Phonic Knowledge and Skills
<i>Phase One</i> (Nursery/Reception)	Activities are divided into seven aspects, including environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body sounds, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds and finally oral blending and segmenting.
<i>Phase Two</i> (Reception) up to 6 weeks	Learning 19 letters of the alphabet and one sound for each. Blending sounds together to make words. Segmenting words into their separate sounds. Beginning to read simple captions.
<i>Phase Three</i> (Reception) up to 12 weeks	The remaining 7 letters of the alphabet, one sound for each. Graphemes such as ch, oo, th representing the remaining phonemes not covered by single letters. Reading captions, sentences and questions. On completion of this phase, children will have learnt the "simple code", i.e. one grapheme for each phoneme in the English language.
<i>Phase Four</i> (Reception) 4 to 6 weeks	No new grapheme-phoneme correspondences are taught in this phase. Children learn to blend and segment longer words with adjacent consonants, e.g. swim, clap, jump
<i>Phase Five</i> (Throughout Year 1)	Now we move on to the "complex code". Children learn more graphemes for the phonemes which they already know, plus different ways of pronouncing these graphemes.
<i>Phase Six</i> (Throughout Year 2 and beyond)	Working on spelling, including prefixes and suffixes, doubling and dropping letters etc.

Pupils are heard read through one-to-one reading sessions with teachers, adults and reading volunteers. Guided reading allows us to develop a wide range and depth of essential comprehension skills. Parents are encouraged to hear children read on frequent basis at home and work closely in partnership with the school. Communication about progress is maintained through a reading log and discussions with parents.

The school uses a range of reading schemes to provide a range of high quality books with clear steps of progression from EYFS into KS2. This ensures a broad range of reading experiences. Pupils have access to a wide variety of reading materials and genres across the curriculum in class reading corners, the school library, the school reading schemes, the guided reading schemes, carefully selected core texts used in our teaching of English, visiting authors and book sales. Book Week is a highlight of our school calendar with many exciting activities planned.

Pupil progress is closely tracked on a termly basis and interventions are put in place for any pupils identified as needing additional support. Pupils are closely supported in knowing and achieving their next steps.

Reading competitions, challenges, and displays are all used regularly to promote the love of reading.

Writing

Our aim is for pupils to develop as confident and enthusiastic writers. A wide range of writing opportunities are carefully planned to enthuse, inspire and ensure progression of skills. Class teachers and teaching assistants work with groups during guided writing and creative writing opportunities. Our pupils write frequently across the curriculum, applying their skills throughout.

Writing is taught through discrete phonics sessions, spelling lessons, shared writing and guided writing. A high focus is placed on grammar, punctuation and spelling (GPS); they are taught both discretely as well as being integral to English lessons and the wider curriculum.

Talk for Writing is integrated into our teaching, which enables children to imitate the language they need for a particular topic orally before reading and analyzing it and then writing their own version.

Spelling is taught throughout the school, covering the National Curriculum spelling objectives from year 1 onwards. This supports pupils to become confident spellers by teaching the strategies, rules and conventions systematically and explicitly, and helping pupils recognise which strategies they can use to improve their own spelling. Spelling strategies are taught explicitly and applied to high-frequency words, cross-curricular words and individual pupils' words.

The cursive handwriting script is taught in all classes and becomes joined from year 2.

Phonics and spelling homework is sent home to support learning.

Year 6 are taught by a specialist literacy teacher in split classes every day.

Marking identifies strengths and also provides scaffolded support for the next stages of development. Assessment for Learning is used throughout the school. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own learning, and the learning of their peers, and to edit and improve their writing as a result.

Pupil progress is closely tracked on a termly basis and interventions are put in place for pupils identified as needing additional support. Pupils are closely supported in knowing and achieving their next steps.

Writing is frequently celebrated in Gold Book assemblies.