



BENSHAM MANOR *School*

Literacy Policy

Last reviewed: March 2023



Mission statement

Our mission is to provide a creative and stimulating curriculum, in a safe, structured and welcoming environment where every child matters. We aim to make learning an enjoyable experience and we provide opportunities for achievement and we celebrate success. We value the diversity of our school community and we encourage participation from all abilities.

We strive to prepare our pupils to leave Bensham Manor as confident, independent young adults.

Aims

At Bensham Manor, we aim to develop pupil's abilities within an integrated programme of Speaking and Listening, Reading and Writing. Pupils will be given daily opportunities to interrelate the requirements of English within a broad and balanced approach to the teaching of English across an enriched and robust curriculum. We strive to make Literacy an enjoyable and rewarding experience for pupils at Bensham Manor, supporting and stretching all needs.

At the end of Key Stage 4, we aim for pupils to:

- Have an interest in books and read for enjoyment.
- Understand a range of text types and genres.
- Be able to write in a variety of styles and forms in various contexts.
- Have an increasing vocabulary.
- Develop the ability to express ideas verbally, in written form and using computing technology.
- Have gained a sense of the English literary heritage and engaged with relevant texts which support this.
- Explore how ideas, experiences and values are portrayed differently in texts from a range of cultures and traditions.
- Be able to relate their culture and traditions to the curriculum.

Implementation at whole-school level

Roles and Responsibilities:

Senior Leadership Team: to take an active role in supporting the vision and overall aims in literacy.

Head of English:

Championing the study of literacy across the school; lead and give a high profile to literacy; liaise with heads of other subject departments to promote the teaching of literacy across the school; to support the literacy coordinator.

Literacy Coordinator:

To work closely under the Head of English to support and implement the delivery of literacy; adapt and introduce new strategies to enhance the teaching of literacy; communicate regularly with the specialist literacy team and English teachers.

English Department:

To provide pupils with knowledge, skills and understanding in order to read, write and speak and listen effectively.

Speech & Language Therapy team:

To provide staff with the knowledge, skills and understanding in order to identify and support verbal and written language difficulties in the pupil. To provide specialist assessment & intervention when needed to treat language and literacy difficulties. To disseminate information regarding the science of reading and writing.

Teachers across the curriculum:

To promote and contribute to all aspects of literacy in their subject.

Parents:

To encourage their children to use the range of strategies they have learnt to improve their levels of literacy when supporting their home learning.

Pupils:

To take pride in their strengths in literacy as well as recognising making improvements (through the use of self and peer assessments) is a supportive learning process that encourages success.

Governors:

To report progress and issues to the governing body and to parents in the governors' annual report.

All teaching staff and TA's have a vital role to play in enabling all pupils to develop and extend their literacy skills.

Literacy is embedded across the school by the following:

- All subjects adhere to the marking policy with regards to written tasks, to promote consistency across the board.
- Specific literacy examples given to support all teachers and TA's in promoting literacy across the curriculum.
- Phonics 'sound of the week' is delivered through each subject.
- All staff are offered regular training with regards to the teaching of phonics to support reading.
- Reading takes place for 15 mins. every lesson 5.
- Every student accesses the Accelerated Reader programme, from year 7 up to post 16.
- Competitions across the school; author visits, collaborative author visits with other departments, AR competition - most words read in each class/year group; author of the month.

Cultural Development in Literacy

At Bensham Manor, we take pride in recognising and embracing diversity, amongst all of our pupils. We aim to empower young minds by emphasising the importance of educating pupils about different cultures, by exposing our pupils to the world.

This is embedded through our schemes of work in each year group, as well as offering a great selection of books in our library by authors from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Furthermore, we strongly value that language is central to a pupil's sense of identity, belonging and development. Pupils are encouraged to develop the ability to share their experiences of their cultural background in the classroom, through all aspects of literacy.

This equips our pupils with the skills to appreciate different cultures and empathise. We aim to promote a positive atmosphere where everyone feels valued and respected and

that we can all learn from each other. A rich diversity is a positive asset.

Theatre trips and visits from published authors give all students the opportunity to access cultural activity alongside the viewing of DVDs of plays in performance, which otherwise some students may not have the opportunity to experience. This enables plenty of opportunities for pupils to express themselves creatively, within and beyond lessons across literacy.

Reading

Aims and intentions

Bensham Manor School understands the importance of reading in the process of developing vocabulary, language and understanding and creating independent learners.

Reading (including pre reading skills) is central to our ability to understand, interpret and communicate with one another. Furthermore, pupils who read, are read to, or engage with texts on a regular basis, in school and at home, have a higher chance of fulfilling their potential.

The aims of this reading section is:

- To instil a passion for reading in pupils, which they will carry on into subsequent education and their later life.
- To set out the school's intentions and approach to reading, in order to enrich and support the curriculum.
- To develop skills at an individual level to help pupils make sense of their environment.

Strategies used to teach reading, guided reading and phonics across the school.

Phonics / whole word reading

Reading is understood here as a combination of word reading (decoding the sounds in individual words, sentences and paragraphs) and comprehension (understanding the meaning of words, sentences and paragraphs). Strategies used to teach reading, as listed below, form the foundations for teaching pupils how to spell. Teachers are expected to differentiate learning that is tailored to the specific needs of individual learners. Strategies for differentiation should take into account the cognitive and chronological age of the learner.

Comprehensive reading instruction will follow the following 4 strands:

- Phonological Awareness
- Synthetic Phonics
- Fluency
- Vocabulary

These combined support the reading comprehension of students.

Strategies for teaching decoding:

- Synthetic Phonics
- Explicit teaching
- Phonics 'sound of the week' focusing on a specific sound per week
- Increasing vocabulary and exposure and explicit teaching of tier 2 vocabulary words
- Accelerated reader
- Rhyming
- Phonological awareness
- Phonological discrimination
- Using explicit phonic games
- Direct Instruction
- Precision Teaching
- SPELL intervention

Strategies for teaching reading comprehension:

- Colourful semantics
- Direct Instruction
- All pupils are exposed to books that will stretch and challenge in order to promote reading for pleasure.
- Structured reading times across the whole school – 15 minutes afternoon reading session four afternoons each week.
- Teaching specific reading comprehension strategies, e.g. inference, prediction, sequencing, summarising, making connections to text, retrieval, visualisation and text structure analysis.
- Reading is cross curricular - embedded across the whole curriculum.
- Linking it to a wider context.
- Multi-sensory resources to suit all learners.
- Use of Makaton/sign language/communication in print to reinforce understanding
- Accelerated reading programme – use of quizzes to assess and track comprehension

How reading is planned

Reading is planned around the pupil's individual levels and is differentiated accordingly.

This would be taught as discreet lessons as well as embedded within daily routines.

Reading is planned using the four strands:

- 1) Phonics – including the pathway to phonics
- 2) Reading comprehension
- 3) Reading for pleasure
- 4) Functional reading skills

How teachers assess reading ability

Formal	Informal
● Accelerated Star reader baseline tests - 3 times a year (differentiated for less able pupils). ● Phonics at the beginning of Year 7 ● Year 11 accreditations; GCSE English Language / Pathways, Entry Levels, Functional Skills. ● Moderation.	● Engagement – independently reading- use of library- home reading- student responses- engaging attitude ● 15 minutes of reading every lesson 5. ● Reading Comprehension- regular quizzes on Accelerated Reader.

NB: Some students may need to use assistive and augmentative communication (AAC) to enable them to access the above methods.

How pupils with complex needs receive extra support

We aim to provide opportunities for our learners to experience a rich variety of texts and language, poetry, fiction and nonfiction. All books are accessible and adapted for all learners through the use of communication in print, audible narration, Makaton signs, film, photos and symbols. We have a culture of high expectation regardless of needs or ability. We will enable learners to develop shared attention, anticipation, responsiveness and initiation skills. This will be achieved through a high level of staffing to include:

- One to one support.
- Reading volunteers.
- Use of TAs to help enrich the learners reading skills and experience
- Full staff understanding of ethos and importance of ‘reading’ and all that it

encompasses.

- Regular training to all staff to aid teaching.

Resources need to reflect the complexity of the learners and their needs. These will include:

- Visits from authors
- Activities linked to World Book Day/Poetry Day etc.
- Year group immersive days
- Trip related activities
- Intensive intervention
- Corrective Reading Intervention

It is important to involve, where possible, the parents and guardians in sharing reading experiences within the home. This will be achieved through:

- Parents and guardians being provided with support and training.

Writing

Aims and intentions

At Bensham Manor, we recognise the importance of writing as an essential life skill, which sets the foundation for our curriculum. We aim to provide our pupils with the fundamental skills of writing in everyday life, enabling pupils to communicate their knowledge and ideas effectively.

Pupils are provided with the opportunity to develop and enhance their skills in all aspects of writing; from writing for different purposes for a desired effect in various contexts, to writing for functional purposes using Standard English incorporating grammar, punctuation and spelling accurately.

We aim to offer an enriched curriculum that caters for all types of writers of varied abilities, which aims for every pupil to:

- Be provided with scaffolded support by teaching staff and teaching assistants, in addition to other creative resources to utilise and inspire their thoughts when writing.
- Develop writing stamina.
- Be exposed to various types of language used for different purposes and use models of good writing to develop their own skills.
- Write for a variety of purposes and audiences, using a range of genres and standard formats in poetry, fiction and non-fiction texts.

- To understand their writing targets displayed in their English folders/exercise books.
- Know and use SPAG (spelling, punctuation and grammar) effectively.
- Have negotiable topics to choose from to allow pupils to take ownership of their writing, promoting a pleasure and enjoyment for writing.
- To communicate and explore their rights, reminding them that we are a Rights Respecting school, enabling them to play a full part in society.

Exposure to non-literary and literary texts to scaffold writing:

Pupils are exposed to a variety of text types in order to scaffold their learning when writing for a range of purposes. Pupils are encouraged to unpick the language features, structure, vocabulary and content, not only to develop their understanding and appreciation of different text types, but also to enable them to increase their confidence in a range of writing styles.

1) Non-fiction and non-literary texts

Non-fiction texts will particularly enable our pupils to be taught the skills to acquire knowledge and understanding of our world, broadening our pupils' understanding of our world's history, culture and numerous visions.

Pupils will be taught the following through the exposure of non-literary texts:

- Identify and use specialist keyword vocabulary.
- Recognise phrases and sentences that convey a formal or personal tone.
- Understand the structural and organisational features of different types of text (e.g. paragraphing, subheadings).
- Evaluate different formats, layouts and presentational devices (e.g. bullet points, icons, tables).
- Understand the purpose for writing - to entertain, persuade, advise, describe, inform, and explain (newspapers, magazines, articles, leaflets, brochures, advertisements).

The range of non-literary texts could include news articles, leaflets, brochures, advertisements, magazines, reviews and aim for our pupils to acquire knowledge and understanding of our world, broadening our pupils' understanding of world history, culture and the future.

2) Literature

Our pupils will be provided with regular opportunities to explore a variety of different genres of high quality texts, providing a model for pupils to aspire to. This aims to develop our pupil's imagination, creativity, independence, skills of inquiry and level of confidence. Pupils will be taught the following through the exposure of literary texts:

- Learning new words/subject specific vocabulary
- Identifying sentence patterns
- Ability to analyse and evaluate the language used (Point, Evidence, and Explain).
- Story structures
- Recognise the choice, use and effect of figurative language, vocabulary and patterns of language.
- Consider poetic forms and their effects.
- Unpicking the language techniques that are used to create a desired effect on the reader.

The range of literacy texts should include; a range of modern fiction; long-established children's fiction; a range of good quality modern poetry, classic poetry; texts drawn from a variety of cultures and traditions; myths; legends and traditional stories and play scripts.

Composition

Pupils should be taught to:

- Use adventurous and wide-ranging vocabulary based on the National Curriculum word lists and topic/subject specific vocabulary.
- Sequence events and recount them in appropriate detail.
- Put their ideas into sentences.
- Use a clear structure to organise their writing.
- Vary their writing to suit the purpose and reader.
- Begin to use the texts they read as models for their own writing.

Planning and drafting

Working with the teacher and with others, in order to develop their writing, pupils should be taught to:

- Write familiar words and attempt unfamiliar ones.

- Assemble and develop ideas on paper and on screen.
- Plan and review their writing, discussing the quality of what is written.
- Write extended texts, with support and independently.
- Plan, note and develop initial ideas using a range of templates i.e mindmaps.
- Draft and develop ideas from the plan into structured written text.
- Revise - change and improve the draft.
- Proofread - check the draft for spelling and punctuation errors, omissions and repetitions.
- Present - prepare a neat, correct and clear final copy.
- Discuss and evaluate their own and others' writing through the use of peer and self-assessments.

Punctuation

Pupils should be taught to:

- Understand how punctuation helps a reader understand what is written.
- The connections between punctuation and sentence structure, intonation and emphasis.
- To use capital letters, full stops, question marks and begin to use commas.
- To use more complex punctuation to challenge the more able such as semicolons, ellipses, inverted commas, exclamation marks etc. in order to create a desired effect on the reader.

Spelling strategies

Pupils should be taught to:

- Write each letter of the alphabet using upper and lower case letters.
- Use their knowledge of phonological awareness to aid spelling (e.g. consonant clusters and vowel phonemes)
- Recognise and use simple spelling patterns.
- Write common letter strings.
- Spell high frequency words.
- Spell words with common prefixes and inflectional endings.
- To apply knowledge of spelling conventions.

- To use knowledge of common letter strings, visual patterns and analogies.
- To check their spelling using word banks dictionaries and spell checkers.
- Identify reasons for misspellings.
- Use their knowledge of word families and other words.

Handwriting

- Pupils are taught how to hold a pencil/pen using the correct grip.
- How to write from left to right and top to bottom of a page.
- To start and finish letters correctly.
- To form letters of regular size and shape.
- To put regular spaces between letters and words.
- How to form lower and upper case letters.
- How to join letters.

Presentation

- Pupils are taught the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate their meaning effectively, in a way that the reader understands.

Standard English

- Pupils are taught the grammatical features of written Standard English.

Language structure

When composing their own texts, pupils should be taught to consider:

- How word choice and order are crucial to meaning.
- The nature and use of nouns, verbs and pronouns.
- How ideas may be linked in sentences and how sequences of sentences fit together.

How teachers assess writing ability

Formal	Informal
● Baseline tests at the beginning of	● Peer and Self-assessments.

the year. • End of term topic assessments/evaluations. • Year 11 accreditations; GCSE English Language / Pathways, Entry Levels, Functional Skills. • Moderation.	• Effective feedback given to pupil's writing, verbally and written. • Shared writing and guided reading activities.
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How pupils with complex needs receive extra support with their reading and writing abilities:

- Literacy team (English and SaLT) to monitor referrals received and identify appropriate intervention based on individual needs.
- SPELL, Speech and Language Therapy, Direct Instruction intervention groups.
- Handwriting sessions with the Occupational Therapist (focused solely on letter formation, pencil grip and presentation).
- Speech and Language Therapy Team and English teaching assistants provide one to one support/smaller groups to offer more targeted learning.
- Differentiated writing templates to structure writing and scaffold learning into manageable chunks.
- Speech and Language therapists run intervention groups to support sentence structure with regards to verbal and written comprehension, using resources such as The Shape Coding™ system.

Speaking and Listening

At Bensham Manor, our curriculum reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development through a holistic approach; socially, cognitively and linguistically. Spoken language promotes the development of reading and writing, thus pupils are

exposed to a variety of language in various contexts, considering the language that pupils hear and speak are fundamental for developing their vocabulary, grammar and their understanding for reading and writing.

Speaking:

To speak with a growing confidence in a range of contexts, adapting their speech for a range of purposes and audiences, our pupils are taught to:

- Use vocabulary (from Tier 2) that enables them to communicate more complex meanings (key words).
- Have experience in gaining and maintaining the interest and response of different audiences (e.g. by exaggeration, humour, varying pace and using persuasive language to achieve particular effects).
- Choose material that is relevant to the topic and to the listeners.
- Show clear shape and organisation with an introduction and ending.
- Speak audibly and clearly, using spoken Standard English in formal contexts.

Listening:

To listen, understand and respond appropriately to others, pupils are taught to:

- Identify the gist of an account or key points in a discussion.
- Ask relevant questions to clarify, extend and follow up ideas.
- Recall and re-present important features of an argument, talk, reading, radio or television programme, film.
- Identify features of language used for a specific purpose (e.g. to persuade, instruct or entertain).
- Respond to others appropriately, taking into account what they say.

Group discussion and interaction

To talk effectively as members of a group, pupils are taught to:

- Make contributions relevant to the topic and take turns in discussion.
- Vary contributions to suit the activity and purpose, qualify or justify what they think after listening to others' questions or accounts.
- Deal sensitively and with growing maturity with opposing points of view and enable discussion to move on.

- Use different ways to help the group move forward, including summarising the main points, reviewing what has been said, clarifying, drawing others in, and reaching agreement, considering alternatives and anticipating consequences.

Standard English

Giving pupils opportunities to talk in Standard English.

How teachers assess speaking and listening ability

Formal	Informal
● Baseline assessment at the beginning of the year. ● Assessment data entered three times a year. ● Year 11 accreditations; GCSE, Entry Levels, Functional Skills, Pathways and Gateway.	● Verbal peer and self-assessments. ● Effective feedback given to pupil's speaking and listening on a lesson by lesson basis. ● Verbal contributions in various settings; whole class, small group, partners or 1:1.

Staff are trained through ELKLAN - Supporting Verbal Pupils with ASD. This course looks at how to support and scaffold the comprehension, speaking and pragmatic skills of pupils with ASD- but is also relatable and relevant to all pupils with special educational needs. This equips the staff to be able to support the speaking and listening of pupils across the curriculum and school day, constantly providing opportunities to develop their language.