

Butler's Hill Infant and Nursery School Writing Policy

Vision/Intent

At Butler's Hill Infant and Nursery School we are passionate about ensuring all children become confident and enthusiastic readers and writers. Our high-quality English curriculum underpins learning across all other subject areas and is the foundation for a life-long love of learning. We believe the English curriculum drives forward a strong motivation and desire for our pupils to have their voices heard and make a difference; our aim is to equip them with the necessary skills to do so effectively. We follow the Pathways to Write programme from F2 to Year 2 which is evidence based which we feel supports our children towards a mastery approach in writing.

Phonics (reading and spelling)

At Butler's Hill Infant and Nursery School we believe that all pupils can become fluent readers and writers. A love of reading is evident throughout our school and teachers continuously strive to promote this passion. This is why we teach early reading through Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS) which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Nursery/Reception and follow ELS which ensures pupils build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school. In year 2 children follow the familiar format of ELS through the Year 2 spelling programme which supports all aspects of the Year 2 curriculum. Children are familiar with this format which reduces their cognitive load and is simply an extension of our phonics teaching.

As a result, all of our pupils can tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. At Butler's Hill, we also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum. We have a strong focus on language development for our pupils because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

Writing

At Butler's Hill our writing curriculum is designed using a text-based approach to help pupils acquire the necessary knowledge of grammatical structures and text types in an engaging and accessible way. This also helps to provide pupils with the desire to write and apply their knowledge and skills. The texts are carefully selected on the basis of their literary merit and to ensure an appropriate level of challenge. They also relate to our school values and the wider curriculum for each year group.

We aim to develop pupils into confident, positive and enthusiastic writers, with the intention that they will be able to write independently with resilience. It is our ambition that pupils will be able to edit and evaluate their own writing to make it the best work it can be, applying a wide range of sophisticated vocabulary, spelling and grammar skills to do this effectively. It is important that our pupils develop an awareness of the audience, purpose and context, which will prepare them for their future. There is a clear ethos of quality over quantity for our writers and establishing a mastery approach early on and forming these building blocks will support our learner as they progress through the educational phase and beyond.

Handwriting

At Butler's Hill we understand the importance handwriting has on our children becoming confident learner across all curriculum areas and for future success. Alongside spelling, handwriting supports fluency and reduces our children's cognitive load in order to fully focus on composition and content. We have chosen to follow the Excellence in Handwriting programme. When followed systematically, letters will become well formed, joined and the correct size. We understand the need for a consistent vocabulary and excellent teacher modelling across the whole school starting with our Foundation Stage. The programme provides the children with familiar letter families that are used consistently referred to when writing in handwriting, phonics, English and other areas of the curriculum. Our paper has been carefully selected to support the programme using solid and broken lines to aid sizing for our early writers.

Reading

At Butler's Hill our reading curriculum is designed to equip pupils onwards with key skills to move them through the reading process towards becoming competent and fluent readers. Pupils take part in whole class reading sessions in Year 2 (with focussed guided reading session in Year 1) through following the Pathways to Read. We want pupils at Butler's Hill to leave with a love of reading and books which will enrich their lives enabling them to become lifelong readers.

Inclusion / Adaption

At Butler's Hill we recognise that not all children progress at the same rate and many children have additional needs, which makes the writing progress an exceptionally complex.. The many challenges often include cognitive load as well as fine motor skills, this means our children must have their learning and approach adapted. In conjunction with support from our SENDCO, teachers understand the importance of breaking down what is being taught which requires task adaption, additional scaffolding and more adult lead support, whilst always being mindful of the learning objectives of each lesson.