

# Literacy at Bishop Tufnell Infant School

## Our Vision

Our aim at Bishop Tufnell Infant School is to provide all pupils with opportunities to enable them to leave our school as confident, competent readers and writers. We also believe that our pupils should be provided with numerous and varying opportunities to support the development of their speaking and listening skills. Therefore, the children at our school will be equipped with the key skills that enable them to reflect and respond verbally to the subjects that they are learning about. Whilst ensuring that we can achieve our aim, the most important aspect for us as Teachers is that we develop a love and enjoyment of reading and writing in all of our pupils that they can take forward with them in their lives as they grow.



## Writing

In Key Stage One we begin each day by practising key spellings that we change weekly. The children are tested on these spellings each Friday and if they achieve all spellings accurately, then they are rewarded with a special spelling certificate to take home.

We teach five Literacy lessons a week that focus on a variety of key skills to develop and progress the children's writing. The children will experience a range of lessons across the week that can include text based work, talk for writing, drama, SPAG, (Spelling, punctuation and grammar) and sentence based work as well as opportunities for sustained writing. In addition to five taught lessons, we also champion the importance of independent writing as we believe that it is important to let the children express themselves creatively as well as enabling them to demonstrate the application of newly taught skills.

At Bishop Tufnell we believe in the importance of providing children with firsthand experiences to ensure that they are inspired to write about different topics that perhaps they do not have experience of. We have recently begun to create interactive scenes that the children can interact with to launch our topics in exciting and engaging ways. Writing is often supported by the use of dramatic techniques such as hot seating



and freeze frames. These practical activities enable the children to take on the role of characters and understand stories in greater depth. To further this, writing is also supported by the use of our role play areas, which are interactive and creative and can be found in each classroom throughout the school.

We recognise the importance of teaching quality Phonics lessons frequently to ensure that the children are equipped to achieve their highest potential in all aspects of reading, spelling and writing. Therefore, additionally, we develop both reading and writing skills through five half an hour Phonics lessons each week. We are constantly developing and reviewing our teaching of phonics to ensure that the lessons that we provide the children with are creative, practical and engaging.

## Reading

We develop reading skills through one-to-one reading, whole group Guided Reading and opportunities for independent reading. As early readers it is important to develop the children's basic word reading skills. We develop this through focusing on a number of techniques, such as:

- **Decoding:** the use of known sounds to read unfamiliar words
- **Segmenting:** breaking down words into smaller chunks
- **Blending:** blending broken down sounds into words.

As the children develop in their basic word reading skills, the focus of reading is more about the understanding of the text, which we call comprehension. The children not only need to be able to read the words in texts but to also understand what the words mean and what has happened in the story.

In 2014-15, we renewed and rejuvenated our whole school reading scheme, introducing a greater variety of texts and genres in both fiction and non-fiction texts. We continue to work on expanding the texts that we have available to the children as we know the importance of exposing children to a variety of quality texts and authors. The children are able to choose from these books and take them home to read and share as well as sharing these books with their Class Teacher and Teaching Assistant.



The children visit the Library at a minimum of once a week to select a book of their choice to take home. Furthermore, they will also participate in focused Library sessions that will develop their knowledge of the Library as well as specific Library skills.

We have recently launched a new reading initiative called D.E.A.R. which stands for **Drop Everything and Read**. This takes place every day at 1pm for 15 minutes. This time dedicated to independent reading each day demonstrates to the children the importance of reading. Pupils are encouraged to read a book of their choice; whether it is a book from our school reading scheme, the book corner, the Library or home. This variety and choice enables the children to be exposed to a number of texts throughout the week as well as promoting and encouraging children's enjoyment and love of reading.

Finally

Finally, fantastic ideas, pieces of work or progress in any aspect of Literacy are celebrated regularly and can be rewarded by the children receiving a special Head Teacher's certificate that is presented at our weekly Celebration Assembly.