

## **The National Curriculum at Beechcroft Infants School**

(The National Curriculum and Early Years statutory frameworks are currently undergoing phased updates following national policy changes announced in late 2025. While the core content of this document remains accurate for present practice, the school is preparing for the revised national curriculum (due for publication in 2027 and first teaching from 2028) and the strengthened EYFS safeguarding requirements that became statutory from September 2025. Throughout this document, additional update notes have been included where national changes affect future planning.)

At Beechcroft Infants School we believe in providing children with a broad, balanced curriculum which provides first hand experiences, builds on children's prior knowledge and promotes British values as directed under Ofsted guidance, September 2014:

*'ensure that they and the school promote tolerance of and respect for people of all faiths (or those of no faith), cultures and lifestyles; and support and help through their words, actions and influence within the school and more widely in the community, to prepare children and young people positively for life in modern Britain'.*

The curriculum is all the planned activities that we organise in order to promote learning and personal growth and development. It includes not only the formal requirements of the National Curriculum, but also the range of extra-curricular activities that the school organises in order to enrich the experience of the children. It also includes the "hidden curriculum" or what the children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave. We aim to teach children how to grow into positive, responsible people, who can work and co-operate with others while developing knowledge and skills, so that they achieve their true potential and are prepared for modern day life in Britain.

The curriculum at Beechcroft Infants School has been designed to ensure that children receive their curricular entitlement in a way which is meaningful to their:

- context
- stage of learning
- capabilities
- interests

## **The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum**

The curriculum in Nursery and Reception is based on the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). This provides a framework for realistic and challenging experiences that meet the different needs of all our children.

The Foundation Stage Curriculum is made up of 3 prime areas of learning:

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development:** This area develops social skills, attitude to learning, self-confidence, self-awareness and supports them in managing feelings and behaviour.
- **Communication and Language:** This area develops skills such as listening and attention, understanding and communicating with others.
- **Physical Development:** This area teaches children about their bodies, how to be healthy and develop skills such as control, movement, strength and using equipment safely.

There are also 4 specific areas:

- **English:** This area develops skills in reading and writing, through the teaching of phonics and supporting children to apply these skills in all areas of their learning.
- **Mathematics:** This area develops skills such as counting, addition, subtraction, problem solving, understanding shape and measuring.
- **Understanding the World:** This area develops a child's understanding of the environment and their community, the world and technology around them.
- **Expressive Arts and Design:** This area develops their imagination and the skills of singing, drama, making, painting and using different resources.

Cross-curricular links are made through carefully planned topics. Learning is achieved through practical and enquiry based activities, as well as whole and small group teaching sessions. They also focus on the characteristics of effective learning:

- **Playing and Exploring:** Children investigating different experiences
- **Active Learning:** Concentration and perseverance
- **Creating and thinking critically:** Developing ideas, making links in learning and developing their own strategies

To find out more about the EYFS please click on the following link [EYFS Framework](#)

From September 2025, the EYFS statutory framework introduced strengthened safeguarding and welfare requirements across all early-years settings. These updates include:

- enhanced safer-recruitment expectations
- mandatory two-yearly safeguarding training
- follow-up procedures for prolonged child absence
- updates to safer-eating and device-use policies
- clarification of expectations around children's privacy during toileting and nappy changing

These changes do not alter the Areas of Learning or the Characteristics of Effective Learning; however, they underpin our safeguarding procedures and were fully embedded at Beechcroft from 2025/26.

## **School Curriculum for Key Stage 1**

From September 2014 the curriculum for our Year 1 and 2 children will be the National Curriculum.. The national curriculum sets out the most important knowledge, skills and understanding that every child has a right to learn. It is a framework given to teachers by the government, so that all school children are taught in a way that is balanced and manageable, but hard enough to challenge them.

In Key Stage 1 each year group has curriculum guidelines which set out in detail the content for each subject based on the [National Curriculum](#). The subjects include English, mathematics, art, music, design technology, physical education, computing, history and geography, science and design technology. In addition, every school must provide Religious Education and a daily act of collective worship.

Alongside the National Curriculum the school provides a wide range of visits and extra-curricular opportunities plus additional activities which include choir and sport.

In English children are taught speaking and listening, reading and writing skills. We use a wide range of methods and materials for teaching reading including synthetic phonics and other excellent strategies.

### **We use Unlocking Letters and Sounds to teach Phonics which was validated by the DfE in December 2021.**

We begin teaching phonics in the first few weeks of term 1 in Reception and children make rapid progress in their reading journey. Children begin to learn the main sounds heard in the English Language and how they can be, as well as learning 'Common Exception' words for Phases 2, 3 and 4. They use these sounds to read and write simple words, captions and sentences. Children leave Reception being able to apply the phonemes taught within Phase 2, 3 and 4.

### **Please see Actions, Images and Handwriting document**

In Year 1 through Phase 5a, b and c, they learn any alternative spellings and pronunciations for the graphemes and additional Common Exception Words. By the end of Year 1 children will have mastered using phonics to decode and blend when reading and segment when spelling. In Year 1 all children are screened using the national Phonics Screening Check.

In Year 2, phonics continues to be revisited to ensure mastery of the phonetic code and any child who does not meet age related expectations will continue to receive support to close identified gaps.

For further details please see the Unlocking Letters and Sounds progression:

### **Please see Summary Progression document**

To ensure no child is left behind at any point in the progression, children are regularly assessed and supported to keep up through bespoke 1-1 interventions. These include GPC recognition and blending and segmenting interventions. The lowest attaining 20% of pupils are closely monitored to ensure these interventions have an impact.

### Reading Scheme

At Beechcroft Infant School we promote a 'phonics first' approach and in both our guided reading sessions at school and in the books children take home, texts are very closely matched to a child's current phonics knowledge so that every child can experience real success in their reading.

In these crucial early stages of reading we primarily use books from [Ransom Reading Stars Phonics](#) and [Big Cat Letters and Sounds](#), to ensure complete fidelity to the Unlocking Letters and Sounds progression we follow. Once children progress beyond decodable texts, they move onto our book scheme so that they can continue to progress in their decoding, fluency and comprehension skills to become avid, expert readers.

We use lots of the [Talk for Writing](#) approach within our English lessons.

Our Maths curriculum coverage and progression align with the National Curriculum, with Ready-to-Progress statements thoughtfully prioritised to secure strong foundational understanding. Children are provided with structured opportunities to deepen their mathematical thinking in line with the Mastery approach. Teachers draw on a carefully sequenced blend of resources from Oak National Academy, [NCETM Mastering Number](#) and selected materials from [White Rose](#) to support high-quality, adaptive teaching.

We follow the expectations for Science from the National Curriculum and supplement this with the introduction of a variety of scientists.

For all other areas of the curriculum we follow the National Curriculum guidance and supplement these with specific resources.

Religious Education - we follow the Locally Agreed Syllabus concentrating on Christianity and Judaism.

Music – we use [Charanga](#) for planning and weekly lessons.

Physical Education – we use the guidelines in the National Curriculum and support this by using FUNdamentals and have benefitted from having accredited coaches to work alongside teachers, paid for from the Sports Premium Grant. For many years we have added additional outdoor PE sessions each week for all the children in KS1. PE is also supported by [Go Noodle](#), [Dough Disco](#), [Squiggle whilst you wiggle](#) and Wake and Shake.

For Art and design, Geography and History we have devised our own curriculum that is relevant to our children whilst ensuring that all the necessary skills are taught. For Design and Technology we follow [Kapow](#) to develop the children's knowledge and skills. In Computing we use [Purple Mash](#) as our main package to support the curriculum.

Through the curriculum pupils learn the basic skills necessary to succeed in each subject and we use the curriculum to help them develop their personal and social skills.

The Department for Education is currently revising the National Curriculum following the Curriculum and Assessment Review published in late 2025.

Key points include:

- revised programmes of study for all subjects will be published in 2027
- schools will begin teaching the new curriculum from September 2028
- expectations in core areas (reading, writing, maths and oracy) will be strengthened
- primary computing and citizenship will include updated, clearer content
- sequencing and progression will be clarified to support stronger foundational knowledge

No immediate changes are required in 2026, and Beechcroft Infants School will update its curriculum documentation in line with the phased national release.

We encourage children to be keen, enthusiastic, independent learners and we give them lots of opportunities to develop their inter-personal skills by working and co- operating with others. Through the curriculum we build their self-esteem and self- confidence.

If you would like further information about how our school is inclusive for all children please read our Equality Plan in the SEND Information section.