

## English Department

### Vocabulary, Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar.

Studies (Beck & McKeown, 2002) prove that children who receive 'frequent, rich and extended' vocabulary instruction outperform students who do not receive instruction, in both vocabulary and comprehension measures. Teaching vocabulary effectively will impact student achievement across the curriculum, but just as importantly, beyond the school gates.

At Balshaw's we actively promote the development of vocabulary in the belief that 'the more words you know and the more you know about words, the better you become at spelling' (Alex Quigley 2018). Furthermore, The Matthew effect for reading (Stanovich, 1986) suggests that students who are lexically advantaged are stronger readers and therefore read more, whereas the lexically disadvantaged find reading harder and therefore read less.

At Balshaws Church of England High School, we employ a wide range of ways to improve students' vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and grammar. Through assessment, including NGRT, online platforms and our formative assessments, we aim to develop students' VSPG in a way which is most suited to them as individuals.

Students are taught vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and grammar in the following ways:

- Reading widely – in shared texts and independently- frequently and regularly.
- Explicit teaching – Key vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and grammar teaching is mapped out through the curriculum for progression and reinforcement.
- Teacher modelling – for example use of varied sentence structures, before students apply this to their own writing.
- Exploring examples of effective sentences in high quality literature and non-fiction writing.
- Using active reading strategies, including the identification word classes used in sections of text and their effectiveness.
- **The process of read-re-read and read again. (See below)**
- Use of the Frayer Model to develop vocabulary.
- The teaching of etymology and morphology.
- Formative assessment – in a range of ways so that teaching can be bespoke and directed appropriately.
- Our commitment to the online platform Bedrock Vocabulary which has adaptive, direct vocabulary instruction.
- Our use of the online platform Century Tech, which uses AI to deliver personalised, adaptive content in the form of micro lessons. Each micro-lesson contains a video, a slideshow and a range of formative assessment questions, allowing students to test their knowledge while they are learning.
- Our creation of our own low-stakes quizzes, through online platforms such as Blooket.
- Through starter recall activities including proofreading, improving and correcting examples.
- Students are given opportunities to investigate, correct and improve their own and examples of others' writing.

## **Read, re-read and read again.**

- ❖ The teacher reads the original text.
- ❖ Students give the correct definition of chosen words as we arrive at them in our reading.
- ❖ We re-read the small passage around the word or the sentence, seamlessly substituting the word for its definition, into the text.
- ❖ We read the original text again, to consolidate understanding.

## **Intervention:**

For students who are below the expected level or not making expected progress in VSPG, the first intervention is at teacher level. The class teacher is best placed to ensure that the intervention is tailored to the individual. This may be, for example, by re-teaching a small group of students or giving individual students direct instruction to work on in class or at home. Century Tech also allows teachers to direct students to specific micro lessons tailored to the individual.

Teachers use their formative assessment to adapt their teaching as needed.

We also understand that for some, these are not issues that can be corrected overnight and that our varied approach to teaching, including repetition where appropriate, will enable students to make the best progress.

We continue to discuss and develop and reflect on our methodology.