

Our English curriculum strives to give children the necessary skills to be able to communicate effectively and creatively through spoken and written language, create avid readers and equip our children with the skills to become lifelong learners.

Reading

We aim to nurture and promote a love of reading which will stay with children for life. Reading is embedded into our curriculum and is taught through English, following our long-term plan which is based around sequences of learning delivered through a range of high-quality texts. The text is used as both the driver for developing wider subject knowledge and vocabulary as well as a vehicle for writing. Specific reading skills are explicitly taught and practised within English units alongside KS1 daily guided reading sessions and whole class reading sessions in KS2.

Each year group has a non-negotiable book list that is shared with the class through story/class novel time. This literature has been carefully chosen to incorporate links to British values, cultural and social diversity and SEMH. The list also contains a range of shared non-fiction texts. Being immersed in good quality literature develops pupils' acquisition of a wide vocabulary and allows our pupils to explore and appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage.

Early Reading and Phonics

Our pupils learn to read and write quickly using the 'Read Write Inc' Phonics programme. This approach to teaching early reading centres around synthetic phonics. It is delivered in a systematic programme. All staff (teachers and teaching assistants) are trained to deliver this programme by a RWI consultant. Regular coaching takes place to ensure practice is of a consistent high quality and the school's phonics leader works regularly with a RWI consultant to quality assure teaching and learning and track progress.

The children have a discreet phonics session each day, which includes reading and writing. The children are grouped, according to their reading level using on-going formative assessment. This impacts on progress; the learning is carefully matched to the pupils' needs.

In RWI sessions, pupils are taught to:

- Decode letter-sound correspondences quickly and effortlessly, using their phonic knowledge and skills
- Read common exception words on sight
- Understand what they read
- Read aloud with fluency and expression
- Spell quickly and easily by segmenting the sounds in words
- Acquire good handwriting.

In addition, we teach pupils to work effectively with a partner to explain and consolidate what they are learning. This provides the teacher with opportunities to assess learning and to pick up on difficulties, such as pupils' poor articulation, or problems with blending or alphabetic code knowledge.

We provide opportunities for pupils to read books, both in school and at home, that are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and the common exception words. This is so that, early on, they experience success and gain confidence that they are readers. Re-reading and discussing these books with the teacher supports their increasingly fluent decoding. Alongside this, the teachers read a wide range of stories, poetry and non-fiction to pupils; they are soon able to read these texts for themselves.

Embedding the alphabetic code early on means that pupils quickly learn to write simple words and sentences. We encourage them to compose each sentence aloud until they are confident to write independently. Opportunities to focus on these basic writing skills is incorporated into the children's daily phonics sessions.

In addition to the daily reading which takes place in the phonics session, daily guided group reading sessions take place in Years 1 and 2. Priority readers are heard read more often.

Fresh Start Phonics

Children in KS2 who are not secure in their phonological knowledge, decoding and blending skills receive daily phonics intervention. This robust intervention is delivered using the RWI Phonics and Fresh Start Phonics programmes. Daily small group phonic sessions take place and learning is carefully matched to the needs of the learners. Assessment information is used to ensure fluidity between the groups and that gaps are closing between all groups. Close tracking of progress allows any additional needs to be identified and any alternative provision to be put into place.

Phonics home/school reading books

Pupils take home a version of the decodable text that they have read in their phonics session. Pupils also have access to the RWI online library of phonetically decodable texts and texts are carefully allocated to match pupils' reading ability. We invite parents/carers to attend early reading workshops to show how they can support their children with reading at home.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

The school's shared vision is that every pupil learns to read quickly and continues to read – widely and often. The leadership team work with all staff to ensure that this happens. In particular, working closely with the Phonics leader and English leader to monitor the quality of teaching and to provide coaching for staff (teachers and teaching assistants). The Phonics and English leaders work closely together to ensure that:

- our teaching of reading is of the highest quality and that all our pupils make good progress
- the lower attainment group are making good progress and one-to-one tutoring is delivered for the pupils who need extra support
- groups are homogeneous, i.e. at the same reading level
- any further training (through masterclasses, coaching/observation and face-to-face feedback) is delivered

Professional development

A key element of *Read Write Inc.* is consistent whole-school practice, underpinned by appropriate professional development. All staff have attended RWI Phonics training and we hold at least three development days every year with a RWI consultant to ensure we are aware of up-to-date practice.

Assessing and tracking progress in Phonics

Pupils are assessed half termly using the RWI assessment toolkit. The assessments show the graphemes children know and how competent they are at reading these in words. They also assess fluency. This information is then used to form the homogeneous groups. In some early groups, assessments take place more frequently in order to move children on more rapidly. The phonics leader uses the data to ensure gaps are closing between all groups – in particular those eligible for the pupil premium and the lowest 20%. 1:1 tuition and additional reading is put in place for any pupil who needs additional support.

KS2 whole class reading

Each Key Stage Two class has a dedicated time for the teaching of reading, three times a week. This allocated time continues to focus on developing children's fluency skills alongside a strong emphasis on comprehension and reading skills. Sessions are based on texts from 'The Story Project' programme and are supplemented with high-level non-fiction and poetry texts. Learning sequences are carefully planned to meet the needs of learners, ensuring all children can access the same text. These robust whole-class reading sessions use a talk-based approach to develop a deeper understanding of texts and to support an in-depth and consistent focus on comprehension. Children have the opportunity to read a wide range of high-interest, engaging texts and complete activities and tasks which centre around rich and meaningful discussion; supporting children in mastering fluency and deepening their comprehension skills. Additionally, opportunities to address any gaps or misconceptions in children's reading skills are also maximised within our morning key skill sessions.

Comprehension Skills

Knowledge in reading refers to the understanding and application of effective reading strategies. When these reading strategies are secure and reading is fluent and accurate, children are able to interpret and evaluate a range of literature. To support with developing children's comprehension skills, we have our very own reading superhero characters to represent each of the National Curriculum (2014) reading domains. These child-friendly characters are integrated across the curriculum to support children in recognising the skills they need to apply to answer

comprehension style questions. Children are taught to use and apply their comprehension and higher-order reading skills across the wider curriculum; opportunities are maximised for children to read aloud, discover quality texts and explore subject-specific vocabulary.

Library and Home Reading Books

Children have the opportunity to visit the library on a weekly basis in small groups with a member of staff. They are taught how to choose a reading for pleasure book matched to their reading ability and time is allocated to reading this text. Children who have completed RWI Phonics also take home a book from our home/school reading spine to enjoy. This spine offers children a wide range of carefully selected, age-appropriate texts; further developing both their fluency and their understanding and use of rich vocabulary and language structures. Children accessing RWI Phonics/Fresh Start Phonics continue to take home a decodable text, in line with their phonics teaching sequence.

Progression and Assessment in Reading

Assessment in reading takes place daily through live marking and verbal feedback given where possible. PiRA reading assessments aid teachers to assess children at the three formal assessment points throughout the year. This assessment information, alongside on-going teacher assessment, is used when reviewing children's reading progress to inform the planning and teaching of reading. Each class has a priority readers list which is updated regularly to ensure that any child who needs further support in reading is quickly identified and receives additional reading intervention.

Writing rationale

Writing

Through our English curriculum, we aim to provide children with the confidence and competence to produce high quality writing that they are proud of. We recognise the importance of nurturing a culture where children write clearly and accurately whilst selecting and adapting their language and style to suit a range of contexts, purposes and audiences. Our children are encouraged to become immersed in writing from a very early age and within Early Years there are many opportunities both indoors and outdoors for children to mark make and begin their writing experience.

Our English long-term plan, which is based around sequences of learning delivered through a range of carefully chosen high-quality texts, covers a wide range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry genres. Through following this long-term plan, we strive to intrinsically integrate the teaching of reading and writing with teachers planning engaging units of work in order to enthuse, inspire and motivate our children. Where meaningful connections between subjects can be made, cross curricular links have been incorporated to enable pupils to develop creativity across the curriculum. Writing is carefully planned so that children can follow the process through incorporating modelling, scaffolding, independence, re-drafting and producing a final draft. We recognise the importance of grammar, punctuation, spelling and handwriting in the acquisition of children's writing skills and key focuses are integrated in the English LTP; creating meaningful links within each teaching unit. Our English lessons allow children to continuously practise and apply newly acquired skills in handwriting, composition, vocabulary, grammar and punctuation.

Progression

Writing skills are progressively sequenced; drawing and building upon prior knowledge from Early Years through to Year 6. Children incrementally develop their writing of different genres year on year, building on and deepening their writing skills. Teachers plan units of work ensuring a model of progression is maintained throughout school and use their subject knowledge of the end of year expectations for their year group, alongside our genre progression maps, to ensure pitch is high. Model texts (WAGOLLS) used as part of the writing learning journey are always aspirational; exposing children to the high level of writing, vocabulary and linguistic features that is expected from our children.

Assessment

Tracking children's progression in writing is vital in order to measure their acquisition of their writing skills, identify next steps and to feed into the planning and teaching cycle. A wide range of formative assessment strategies are continually used in our writing lessons to monitor and track children's progress including: immediate teacher feedback, live marking, self, peer, group and whole class assessment and written feedback. This formative assessment constantly feeds into the planning and teaching cycle; ensuring learning is matched to pupil's individual abilities and needs. Through independent writing, children have the opportunity to demonstrate connected knowledge held in their long-term memory.

Teachers regularly monitor and track children's writing progress towards achieving the curriculum statements for writing. To support teacher's judgement, ensure accurate assessment and identify next steps in writing, termly writing diagnostic meetings take place. During these year group sessions, a range of children's writing is moderated and gaps in learning and key next steps are identified for individual children as well as each year group. Following these meetings, planning is tailored to address these identified gaps and next steps and secure progress in writing. Year 2 and 6 teachers also engage in writing moderation network sessions within the Trust.

Spelling

Children in Years 2-6 are taught spelling through the 'Read Write Inc. Spelling' scheme. It is a robust, fast-paced, systematic spelling programme which reflects the objectives and requirements from the National Curriculum (2014) for each year group. Although the scheme underpins the teaching of phoneme-grapheme correspondence, it also develops children's knowledge of word families, how suffixes impact upon root words and provides mnemonics to remember the trickiest spellings.

Spelling is taught daily in Year 2 and three times a week in Key Stage Two. The teaching revolves around instruction (with the help of online alien characters), partner and group practice, and competitive group challenges that help

children commit new words to memory. As part of their phonics and spelling sessions, children also learn to read and spell the high frequency words relevant for their phase.

Assessment

Assessment plays an integral role in our spelling sessions. All of the activities include formative assessment to monitor and track children's progress including: self, peer, group and whole-class assessment. This formative assessment constantly feeds into the planning and teaching cycle; ensuring learning is matched to pupil's individual abilities and needs. As part of the sessions, children have their own spelling log books which they use to record any spellings they are finding difficult learning. The log books also provide valuable opportunities for ongoing self-assessment. Swift intervention is put into place to support any children identified as falling behind to support them in addressing and overcoming any barriers to learning. On a half termly basis, children are tested on their reading and spelling of the common exception words for their phase.

Handwriting

Children in Early Years and Key Stage One are taught handwriting daily following the 'Read, Write, Inc' handwriting scheme. These sessions focus on mastering the important skills of pencil grip, posture position, 'ready to write' routines and letter formation whilst continuing to develop children's dexterity and fine motor skills. Print is mastered before joining is introduced within the Summer term in Year 2.

Progressing into KS2, children are taught handwriting following the 'PenPals for Handwriting' scheme which reflects the objectives and requirements from the National Curriculum (2014) for each year group. The whole-class sessions are planned around the clear progression of five developmental stages: physical preparation for handwriting; securing correct letter formation; beginning to join; securing joins and practicing speed and fluency leading to children developing their own personal style. The whole-class sessions use digital resources to enable modelling and interactive learning, along with practice books and workbooks to support independent practice.

To celebrate legible, well-presented and fluent handwriting, children work towards achieving a pen license in KS2.

Formative assessment is imperative in all our handwriting sessions with teachers providing on-going, immediate verbal feedback to children. Swift intervention is put into place to support any children identified as falling behind to support them in addressing and overcoming any barriers to learning. Children's handwriting is regularly assessed against the end of year curriculum statements for each year group and this judgement is moderated during our termly writing diagnostic meetings.