

Hunton & Arrathorne Community

Primary School English Policy



Date: April 2022	Headteacher: Mr S Donaldson
Review Date: April 2024	Chair of Governors: Mr P Barber

Aims

The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate

As the subject of English is such a vast area of the curriculum, the following policy has been divided into separate domains:

- Writing
- Spelling
- Reading Comprehension



Writing

At Hunton and Arrathorne, we intend for our children to be enthusiastic, articulate and imaginative communicators, proficient in expressing themselves in various forms and for different purposes by the time they reach the end of Year 6.

We see it as imperative for children to reach their full potential in writing, a life-skill that will serve them throughout any future career they may seek or any path they may choose to follow in life; their ability to achieve this rests on their skills and understanding in transcription, composition, oracy and grammar, punctuation and spelling. It is essential that our teaching and curriculum develops pupils' competence in these areas by providing children with the opportunity to write for a range of purposes, forms and audiences and across the curriculum to help ensure their writing is relevant and purposeful.

Organisation

Writing sessions are planned, delivered and assessed by the class teacher responsible for that class. They take place daily in Key Stage 2 and four times per week in Key Stage 1. Children have their own English books where their work is produced but they also have dictionaries and magpie books to support them with their learning and autonomy.

Planning Structure

Through careful planning, we seek to provide the children with a platform to take ownership of their writing, completing an enjoyable and interesting process which provides them with the opportunities to explore existing texts; share their ideas through speaking and listening activities; plan for structure, content and vocabulary; work collaboratively with peers and adults to develop their writing; and work independently to produce a piece of writing in which they can see a clear and meaningful purpose.

Each year group follow a two-week writing journey where they will focus on one genre of writing at a time, culminating in a sustained piece of writing which they have the opportunity to assess, edit and improve. There is an emphasis on vocabulary throughout the journey and children are provided with example texts to explore as well as the time to plan their own vocabulary to aid them in their writing. Through shared writing, teachers model their own writing processes and work alongside the children to edit and improve their work. Children receive feedback from their teacher



and a 'next step' to improve their writing at least once per week following shared and sustained pieces of writing.

In Key Stage 1, the writing journey should follow this sequence of lessons over a two week period:

Lesson 1: Introduction of a new genre, example texts explored and identification of the purpose, form and audience.

Lessons 2 and 3: Discrete skills lessons as appropriately identified by teacher as being relevant to current genre.

Lesson 4: Identify features of text to create a 'My Writing Could Include' list and shared writing (must involve some teacher modelling).

Lesson 5: Introduce the stimuli for writing and plan for vocabulary.

Lesson 6: Plan the structure/content of writing.

Lesson 7: Sustained writing.

Lesson 8: Assessment, edit and improve writing (individual and whole class feedback).

In Key Stage 2, the following journey should be used, also over a two week period:

Lesson 1: Introduction of a new genre, example texts explored and identification of the purpose, form and audience.

Lessons 2 and 3: Discrete skills lessons as appropriately identified by teacher as being relevant to current genre.

Lesson 4: Identify features of the example text(s) and create a 'My Writing Could Include' list.

Lesson 5: Shared writing (must include some teacher modelling).

Lesson 6: Introduce stimuli for writing and plan vocabulary.

Lesson 7: Plan structure/content of writing.

Lesson 8: Sustained writing

Lesson 9: Continue sustained writing with peer/self-assessment.



Lesson 10: Edit/improve and next step tasks (individual and whole class feedback given).

Lesson Structure

Each lesson within the journey should involve an element of speaking and listening, vocabulary work and a recap/introduction of new spelling, punctuation and grammar rules. Each lesson should be evident in English books, with photographs/comments from the children used where no written work is evident in order to demonstrate the consistent journey of lessons being followed.

Learning Environments

Learning Walls should be relevant to the current genre being taught and should serve as a tool to support children in their work. As a school, the following elements should be included on the learning wall to demonstrate the journey being followed:

- Purpose, Form and Audience of the text being worked on
- Example text(s) to refer to
- My writing 'Could Include' guides for vocabulary and structure/skills
- Shared Writing

In addition to this, there is a Writers' Gallery in a shared area of the school to demonstrate progress from Reception through to Year 6. This should be updated regularly with examples of sustained writing from the children being displayed.

Handwriting and presentation

Children producing their best handwriting and ensuring their presentation is to their highest standard is a big emphasis, not only in English but across the curriculum. We adopted the Letterjoin Handwriting scheme in January 2022, which allows us to have a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting across the school, resulting in a neat and cursive style. Each class should have at least two handwriting sessions per week, which should involve some teacher modelling/demonstrations from the Letterjoin scheme as well as the opportunity for children to practice on sheets or in their books.

All work in English should be presented with the full date and the learning objective. This may be stuck in for younger children but by Key Stage 2, children should be expected to write this independently.



Peer and Self-Assessment

Children should be encouraged to continuously assess and edit their work, building their autonomy in identifying and correcting any mistakes. Peer and self-assessment should be encouraged following sustained writing at the end of each writing journey in order for children to reflect on their work, celebrate what they have achieved and reflect on what could be improved.

Marking & Feedback

All work in English books should be marked in accordance with the Feedback Policy. This includes using the colour-co-ordinated use of highlighters: green indicating the objective has been met, yellow indicating partially met and pink indicating it has not been met. Children should be given the opportunities to edit and improve their work using purple pens and should be given a 'next step challenge' once per week, preferably following shared or sustained writing.

Assessment & Impact

The effectiveness of our Writing curriculum is measured by the extent in which our children are able to write confidently and accurately across a wide range of genres and for various purposes and audiences. Children should leave Year 6 with an enthusiasm for writing and equipped with all of the essential skills and techniques to flourish in writing for the remainder of their education and beyond. The impact of our curriculum is assessed robustly on a day-to-day basis to ensure it is providing children with the best possible foundations in which to succeed in writing. Our writing is celebrated and assessed in a variety of ways:

1. Assessing sustained pieces of writing against the relevant writing objectives using insight tracker.
2. Termly GAPS assessments to assess attainment and progress in grammar, punctuation and spelling.
3. Whole school writing gallery showcasing the progression in writing from EYFS to Year 6.
4. Regular book looks, learning walks and pupil voice to identify good practice and areas for development conducted by the English lead alongside the Headteacher and the link governor for English.



5. Weekly awards for achievements in writing.
6. Daily spelling and handwriting activities focussing on skills required for accurate and well-presented writing.

Spelling

We understand the children's spelling is closely linked to their understanding of phonics, which is why we place a huge understanding on Phonics within Early Years and throughout the school. For more information about how phonics is taught in school, please refer to the Early Reading and Phonics Policy and progression document.

From Year 2 to Year 6, children who have secure phonic knowlegde are taught discrete spelling lessons three times per week. We follow the 'No Nonsense Spelling' scheme for these sessions and they are in addition to phonics sessions for pupils who still need phonics. The programme has been designed to meet the needs of the 2014 national curriculum and it does that in a very manageable and flexible way, explaining comprehensively how to effectively teach spelling. We have chosen this spelling programme as it closely builds on the phonological understanding children have developed and allows for careful progression.

As well as the discrete spelling sessions, it is our aim for children to develop spelling strategies which will help them for life. We identify common spelling errors within work and encourage children to use dictionaries and personal dictionaries to support them in correction. Some pupils have more additional bespoke support, from classroom resources or specific spelling intervention programmes to help them 'keep up' not 'catch up'.

The impact of our spelling curriculum is measured through summative and formative data. Teachers assess how well pupils apply spelling rules within independent writing; the way they take autonomy for their own spelling and how well this transfers to them making progress within their 'Spelling Age'; and as part of the termly GAPS assessments.

Handwriting

Handwriting is taught discretely at least two times per week throughout the school. In Reception, pupils are taught simple letter formation. As they progress into Year 1 and



have more finely developed motor-skills, pupils are taught to write in a cursive script. This is supported through the Letterjoin Handwriting Scheme.

We believe it is important that all staff in school model the correct handwriting, but also that pupils are exposed to a variety of fonts, styles and text types through things they read and see on display around school.

Pupils are encouraged to write neatly in pencil. In Upper Key Stage 2, all children are given a biro pen for writing activities. The style of pen is a deliberate choice which reflects the most common writing implement they will use in adult life. They are encouraged to use this for all writing-based tasks.

Reading

At Hunton and Arrathorne, reading is at the heart of all we do – a key curriculum driver within our school vision is ‘We Are Lifelong Readers’. In addition to this, one of our ‘Hunton and Arrathorne 21 aims’ is for all children to meet an author in person before they leave year 6. The importance of reading is recognised and celebrated and, as the key to unlocking the rest of the academic curriculum, underpins much of what we do in school. Developing a culture where reading is at the forefront of our day-to-day teaching is established in Reception and consistently developed through to year six with opportunities for children to ‘read for pleasure’, both individually and with others, provided regularly. As reading engagement is strongly correlated with reading performance in an academic sense, we strive to make reading as enjoyable and purposeful as possible to ensure no child is left ‘disengaged’ with reading; our children’s passion for reading is evident in school and is something we intend to build upon. Verbal discussions based around a text are recognised as key to unlocking understanding and engagement and this is a key factor in our approach to teaching comprehension skills. Once a text has been digested and understood, with the children provided with the opportunity to question and share their thoughts, then written comprehension skills can be developed. By the end of Year 6, we intend for our children to be fluent and passionate readers, whilst also being equipped with the skills to apply this passion to enhance their understanding across the curriculum.

Organisation

From Year 2 onwards, reading comprehension lessons should be taught between 9:00 and 9:30 each morning (with the exception of Wednesday). Children have their own Reading Journal in which to record their comprehension work.



For more information about reading and phonics in our school, please refer to the separate policy for Early Years and Phonics.

Planning Structure

We use Reading VIPERS in conjunction with the content domains for reading to ensure wide coverage of question types and forms. Following research into the most heavily weighted domains in the end of Key Stage 2 assessments, the following structure of lessons has been planned to be implemented from Year 2 – Year 6:

Monday: A new text will be introduced. Challenging vocabulary will be taught prior to children reading the text to ensure understanding. Children will then read the text independently, in pairs or as a whole class, with an emphasis on reading prosody.

Verbal discussion around the text will proceed any written comprehension questions.

Tuesday: The focus of this lesson will be vocabulary based questions. Teachers should model and discuss questions with children before they are given independent work to complete.

Thursday: Children will develop their retrieval skills, again with teachers modelling key strategies to support.

Friday: Inference skills will be the focus, with children developing their explanations and use of evidence to support.

Throughout the week, opportunities to re-read the text, further increasing their prosody and fluency, should be built in. Remaining question types (e.g. sequencing) should be taught through discussions during class text, throughout the curriculum and alongside this reading structure depending on their relevance to the genre being covered. Vocabulary, retrieval and inference skills should be taught each week but the remaining skills must also be taught in conjunction with these.

Lesson Structure

Each lesson should involve some reading of the text to increase prosody, discussions around challenging vocabulary and some teacher modelling to support children in developing their comprehension skills.

Learning Environments

Learning walls should include Reading VIPERS posted which are to be referred to during the teaching of reading comprehension to support children's understanding of what each domain requires them to do. Classrooms should also include a reading



corner which provides children with a selection of books to choose from for reading for pleasure.

Presentation

Children should begin a new genre by writing the long date and naming the genre/text being taught (e.g. Classic Fiction Text: *The Wind in the Willows*). Each subsequent day should use the short date to indicate where one lesson ends and where the next begins as well as naming the focus for that lesson (e.g. L.O. – Vocabulary). A new page should be started to indicate the beginning of a new week/text.

Texts

It is important that children are exposed to a range of texts in different forms and genres throughout our reading comprehension lessons. Lessons may incorporate the use of a class text to help develop children's understanding of this but should not use it exclusively, ensuring that each half-term we cover texts from:

- Fiction (including classical fiction)
- Non-fiction
- Poetry

Marking & Feedback

Each lesson should provide an opportunity to discuss answers to any independent tasks to ensure children have a clear understanding of how well they are doing in reading comprehensions. Children mark their own work using blue pen and use purple pen to improve/correct their answers following shared discussions.

Assessment & Impact

The effectiveness of our Reading curriculum is measured by the extent in which children are competent readers who can recommend books to their peers, have a thirst for reading a range of genres, and participate in discussions about books. They can also read books to enhance their knowledge and understanding of all subjects on the curriculum, and communicate their research to a wider audience. They should be component in answering a wide range of questions, both verbally and in writing,



from various domains within the curriculum. Primarily, they develop a love of reading and establish themselves as ‘Lifelong Readers’.

Our reading is celebrated and assessed in a variety of ways:

1. Formative assessments are carried out daily through listening to children reading, discussions based around texts and written responses in comprehension lessons.
2. Summative assessments are carried out termly using PIRA assessments to help gauge attainment in reading comprehension which is used to help inform teacher assessments
3. Reading at home is monitored through the use of reading diaries with incentives for reading five times per week.
4. Regular book looks, learning walks and pupil voice to identify good practice and areas for development conducted by the English lead alongside the Headteacher.

Related Policies:

- Early Reading and Phonics Policy
- Progression in Phonics
- Teaching & Learning Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Feedback Policy
- Progression in Reading
- Progression in Writing
- Progression in Spelling

