



Newhall Primary Academy and Nursery

“Aiming high; Reaching higher”

English Policy

Audience:	Parents School staff Local Governing Bodies
Approved:	May 2018
Other related policies:	All policies
Policy owner:	Newhall Primary Academy
Policy model:	Newhall
Review:	Autumn 2020
Version number:	1

Honesty Respect Responsibility Resilience Aspiration Reflection



At Newhall Primary Academy we believe that language and literacy is fundamental to the overall development of the child and their access to the curriculum in all its aspects. We aim to deliver quality teaching of basic and higher order reading, writing, speaking and listening skills to enable children to become confident and successful in their literacy.

In Foundation and KS1 we follow the 'Read Write Inc' programme of synthetic phonics. In KS2 we follow the Read Write Inc 'Literacy and Language' and spelling programme. This is closely matched to the current primary National Curriculum to enable quality learning and teaching to take place.

We want all our pupils by the end of Year Six to be able to:

- read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding;
- be able to orchestrate a full range of reading cues (phonic, graphic, syntactic, contextual) to monitor their reading and correct their mistakes;
- understand the sound and spelling system and use this to read and spell accurately;
- have fluent and legible handwriting and to be developing their own style;
- have an interest in words and their meaning and a growing vocabulary;
- know, understand and be able to write in a range of genres in fiction and poetry, and understand and be familiar with some of the ways in which narratives are structures through basic literary ideas of setting, character and plot;
- understand, use and be able to write a range of non-fiction texts;
- plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing;
- have a suitable technical vocabulary through which to understand and discuss their reading and writing;
- be interested in books; read with enjoyment and evaluate and justify their preferences through reading and writing; develop their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.
- present their written work in a well ordered and clearly understood format across the school.

Structure

Foundation Stage

We believe that communication and language with opportunities to explore reading and writing underpins children's future learning.

The practice in Foundation Stage will follow the current EYFS curriculum guidance and will work towards the Early Learning Goals aiming to meet the statement of the goals by the end of Reception.

In nursery and reception the daily routine will include planned and spontaneous activities that include:

- an environment which promotes independent reading and writing;
- a wealth of opportunities to develop and experience speaking and listening;
- modelling different forms of writing to the children for practice during child initiated activities;
- story of the week around which many of the activities in the environment are based on;
- individual reading and guided reading within RWI.
- daily story sessions including oral and written storytelling
- focus activities that teach children early communication language and literacy skills.
- sharing and enjoying a range of rhymes, songs, stories and books including daily storytelling;
- immersion in a print rich environment with opportunities for oral language and written communication, e.g. differentiated phonic activities;
- experiences that develop gross and fine motor skills through play and handwriting activities.

KS1

At the beginning of Year 1, the assessments from the Foundation Stage will enable the planned work to follow a smooth transition.

The teaching of English in KS1 will include:

- explicitly taught and planned sessions following the guidance and objectives of the current primary National Curriculum;
- speaking and listening activities, e.g. role play, pair talk, drama, hot seating and public speaking to differing audiences in order to prepare pupils for the writing process;
- 1 hour per day of RWI covering the teaching of reading, writing, speaking and listening including word, sentence and text work;
- further opportunities to write within the topics being covered following the traditional genres from the literacy framework;
- letter formation and handwriting taught and modelled by the class teacher;
- immersion in a print rich environment that promotes a reading culture and develops children's oral and written communication.

English skills will not be taught in isolation and will be continually enhanced through quality cross curricular opportunities.

KS2

At the beginning of Year 3, the teacher assessments and statutory tests from KS1 will enable the planned work to follow a smooth transition.

The teaching of English in KS2 will include:

- explicitly taught and planned sessions following the guidance and objectives of the current primary National Curriculum;
- genre overviews to identify the success criteria of each unit of work and weekly plans tailored to the needs of our children;
- 1 hour 10 minutes per day of 'Language and Literacy' and 'Spelling' covering the teaching of reading, writing, speaking and listening including word, sentence and text work
- a range of text types, including cross-curricular writing, modelled to promote sustained composition;
- handwriting and agreed presentational skills taught and modelled by the class teacher;
- immersion in a print rich environment that promotes a reading culture and develops speaking and listening.

English skills will not be taught in isolation and will be continually enhanced through quality cross curricular opportunities.

Phonics

In KS1 and Foundation we use Read Write Inc (RWI), an inclusive programme to get children off to a flying start with their English. Reading opens the door to learning. The earlier we can teach children to read the earlier they will be able to tackle more challenging material that will help them to learn.

Using RWI the children learn to decode effortlessly so that they can put all their energy into comprehending what they read. It also allows them to spell effortlessly so that they can put all their energy into composing what they write.

The aim of the programme is to be off the programme!

It is taught from Nursery up to Year 2, with the aim of most children coming off the programme at the end of Year 1. In Year 2 most children will move onto the RWI Literacy and Language programme.

Spelling

Children's phonological awareness and spelling strategies are assessed and inform teaching. In Foundation and KS1 spelling is taught as part of the RWI programme. In KS2 dedicated time is allocated for teaching and investigating spelling using the RWI Spelling programme, as well as word level work linking to a related text in the main English session. Investigations are used alongside individual and whole class spelling logs. Children are encouraged to practise their spellings through investigation and homework. Word banks (given and created) along with dictionaries can be used to support children's spelling at the point of writing. Children also use the 'look, cover, write, check' method to learn their spellings. Children in KS2 are given weekly spelling tests to monitor their level of achievement.

Spellings should always be taught in context so that children comprehend the meanings and may subsequently use them in their own written work.

Sentence level work

This includes grammatical awareness, sentence construction, punctuation and the higher skills of grammar. This is taught directly through quality texts, modelled examples and investigation. In Foundation and KS1 the teaching of writing follows the teaching of reading using the RWI programme. A culture of success and achievement is developed. When children write their first sentences they already have the skills in place to achieve through the work they have done in reading. Children write using the graphemes they have learnt at their current stage of reading progress. As their reading progresses they are able to write using an increasing number of graphemes.

In KS2 the teaching of writing follows the teaching of reading using the RWI 'Language and Literacy' programme. Sentence level work is taught through the main English session and at other times where required. Teachers deliver discrete grammar lessons on a regular basis as well as teaching grammar and sentence structure through the use of quality texts.

Reading

We believe in developing a reading culture throughout the school by creating welcoming fiction book areas in classrooms, a school library, and raising the profile of reading through a print rich environment, attractive book displays and promoting the written word at all times. A book fair is held every year and activities planned to celebrate World Book Day.

High priority is given to reading in KS1. Children are placed in ability groups for RWI and read a wide range of reading books. Children will look at books every day as part of their English lesson. Initially children will be involved in 'word time' - learning to read individual words and then look at 'ditties' which are the bridge between reading words and reading complete sentences. Books with words are introduced in line with their progress in RWI. The first books children will take home will be 'wordless' books. Parents are encouraged to look at the books with their children and share the stories together. Children will not take home books with words until they are able to be successful. The books that children take home will match their ability in RWI. Home reading books will be changed no more than twice a week. Parents are made aware of their child's reading progress through formal parent's evenings and informal discussion. Parents are encouraged to make a comment in their child's home-school reading record. Learning to read and the further development of reading skills, is a partnership between school and parents and carers. Communication between school and home is vital and all staff strive to foster positive and supportive relationships. Parents are encouraged to be positive in their attitude to reading, to be proactive in developing their children's reading and to be seen by their children to enjoy reading.

Reading is taught through:

1. RWI from Foundation through to the end of KS1.

This involves the teaching of 'green' words which are phonetically decodable and are taught as part of the programme using 'Fred the Frog'. On top of this the children are also taught the red RWI keywords; these are equivalent to 'tricky' words. The children learn that red words have to be learnt as sight vocabulary as '...if it's red it's hard to Fred!'

2. Shared and guided reading that immerses children in the pattern of story and features of text types, as well as targeting their reading skills.

This happens in class story times in Foundation and KS1 and in English sessions in KS2 when introducing text and prior to writing. The teacher models as an expert reader and draws out the key elements of the content. Shared and guided reading is usually delivered at a whole-class and partner-work level throughout the school. In KS1 this is done as part of the RWI programme and in KS2 this is delivered either as part of the RWI Language and Literacy programme.

Writing

We believe that writing should be a creative and developmental process both at a functional and an imaginative level. All attempts at writing are valued and we know that all children have potential to be successful writers. The compositional and transcriptional skills are taught alongside the creative aspects. Immersion in reading, talk and preparation for writing is essential to the writing development process. In Foundation and KS1 the teaching of writing follows the teaching of reading using RWI.

3. Independent reading in school and at home.

In Foundation and KS1 the books that children take home are determined by their class teacher. Class teachers have a chart correlating home-reading books with the RWI books they use during lessons. Parents communicate using their child's reading journal. Books are changed a maximum of twice per week. In Year 2 the children change their books independently once the book has been completed with an adult. The ability banded books have a controlled vocabulary and therefore children are moved through the stages as they are able to read the key words.

In lower KS2, children may choose their own ability banded book until they are assessed to be a 'free reader' by their class teacher. Parents should continue to hear their children read on a regular basis. Children change their book on completion and only if the teacher or a parent has signed the reading journal. Where necessary, following assessment, children below the age expected reading level will be placed within a RWI group.

In upper KS2 children are given more independence in their reading. It is not appropriate for parents to always hear their child read, although parents are encouraged to discuss their children's books with them. Books can be shared; parent and child may want to alternate the reading of chapters. This promotes a positive attitude to reading and allows informal comprehension and discussion to take place. Where necessary, following assessment, children significantly below the age expected reading level will be placed within a RWI group. These children may be identified for reading intervention.

Each day there is a Drop Everything And Read (DEAR) session in the school. This is an opportunity for all children and adults across the school to read on their own or in pairs. Each session lasts 15 minutes, followed by a short time afterwards for children to reflect on their reading in their reading journals, once they are able to.

4. The reading environment.

The print rich environment encourages children to interact with displays, to follow instructions and signs, promoting functional language. Within the classroom the reading area is attractive and inviting. Themed displays are encouraged along with opportunities to write book reviews and show homemade books. Books are also displayed and promoted around the classroom and the whole learning environment of the school. Book and audio tapes along with story props and puppets enhance the reading environment and process.

5. The school library.

The library provides reference and reading materials for children and teachers. The school encourages all children to join and use their local library.

Writing is taught through:

1. Shared writing that is modelled by the teacher as the expert writer with contributions from the children.

This is teacher-led writing with children watching and contributing ideas. Shared writing is not exclusive to English sessions and can be taught within Foundation subjects. The emphasis may be on the generation of ideas, grammatical awareness, spelling and phonics, compositional, transcriptional, presentational and text level skills or other key strategies needed in writing. Not all of these can be modelled in one session, but the teacher as the expert writer leads the cumulative writing process. In Reception different forms of writing are modelled to the children for practice during child initiated activities.

2. Guided writing that targets children at the point of writing.

Guided writing takes place in small groups with a teaching focus using targets and writing already modelled. The main part of the session is spent by the child writing with the adult intervening as appropriate. In Reception and KS1 the children are all ability grouped as part of RWI. Writing is modelled, shared and guided before the children write independently.

3. Opportunities for developmental writing.

In addition to the discrete teaching of writing through RWI in Foundation and KS1, opportunities for developmental writing should be available through all areas of learning and throughout the learning environment. Children's own attempts at early writing should be celebrated and promoted, alongside the direct teaching of the key skills that will enable the children to progress through the stages of writing development. In Foundation stage and KS1, children's writing that needs interpretation must be scribed by a teacher or adult working with the group. Ideally this is during the literacy session.

4. Independent writing.

Throughout the school children need opportunities to develop their confidence and practise their writing skills. All writing activities should have a purpose and quality should be promoted through book marking, publication or presentation to another audience. Writing is modelled and supported from immersion to quality writing. Independent writing is supported through the use of dictionaries, word banks, writing scaffolds and plans. All KS1 and KS2 children write six pieces of work annually in their 'Writing Journal', a special book that tracks writing development from Reception to Year 6. Foundation children write their first piece in this book during the summer term before their transition to KS1.

The children are encouraged to self-assess their writing focussing on their individual writing targets. Children are taught to edit and improve their writing.

5. Writing environment.

The school environment celebrates quality writing through displays of work in both handwritten and typed form as well as signs and labels. All classrooms should have attractive and well-equipped resources for writing that children can access through a writing area or table. Opportunities for writing are planned for and accessible throughout the learning environment and school day. Functional and creative writing are demonstrated and promoted by staff and visitors. English displays within every classroom should be teaching and learning resources as well as showcasing excellent work.

Handwriting

In Foundation and KS1 RWI handwriting font is taught as part of the programme. On completion of the RWI programme, Cripps handwriting and letter formation is explicitly taught throughout the school. The school uses the Nelson handwriting CDs. The correct way of forming letters with joining flicks is modelled by the teacher and patterns of letters are taught where appropriate in KS2. Teachers may choose whether to use a separate handwriting book or to teach handwriting in the children's literacy book. In KS1 and lower KS2 there is at least one session a week dedicated to demonstrating and practising handwriting. In upper KS2 the class teachers use their discretion and teach handwriting skills as necessary. By the time children are in Year 6 they are encouraged to be developing their own fluent, joined and cursive style. Children need to have adult interventions when handwriting to ensure incorrect formation is not practised. Good presentation is emphasised at all times and through all forms of writing. Support is given to those with poor pencil grip through triangular pencils and pencil grips. Left-handed writers should be sat on the left hand side of the table. In KS2 writing is on lined paper or with line guides and black ink handwriting pens are introduced from Year 3, once children's writing is fluent and consistent.

Speaking and listening

We believe that speaking and listening is fundamental to children's development and that confidence in this area is essential to be successful in all areas of English. The four strands to speaking and listening are:

1. speaking
2. listening and responding
3. group discussion and interaction
4. drama

These oral skills are directly taught, modelled and sensitively encouraged in whole class and small group settings. Opportunities across the whole curriculum are planned for and developed. Children play an active part in presentations, topic talks, group discussions, debates and drama activities on a weekly basis. We follow the guidance and ideas from the current primary National Curriculum to support the teaching and learning of speaking and listening. There is progression in the skills taught and assessment of significant achievements in speaking and listening. Digital videos, tapes and photos are a means of capturing progress and keeping records.

English Working Wall

It is expected that all classrooms will have an English Working Wall. This is an interactive display board to show the process of English and the learning journey within the current unit of work. This board is regularly changed to reflect the teaching and learning activities happening in the classroom. This display should include dated materials to support children (e.g. models and success criteria) when accessing their independent tasks. English working walls are clearly visible and provide the children with key vocabulary and models of the sequence of writing.

Leadership and Management of English

The English Coordinator works in conjunction with the S.L.T. The role of the subject leader involves:

- modelling good practice;
- being responsible for the upgrading and ordering of resources and arranging for their storage;
- keeping informed about developments and new initiatives to support the teaching of English and ensure staff are informed;
- auditing needs and organise staff training;
- training staff in teaching and learning of English;
- monitoring progress on a regular basis and feeding back to the head teacher;
- supporting teachers in planning and using resources;
- updating the school policy when necessary.
- ensuring Year 6 children are fully prepared for their national end of year assessments.
- liaising closely with the assessment leader.

Governing body

Each term, the governing body is informed of the achievements and progress in English throughout the school. The English Subject leader is responsible for keeping the governing body up to date with new initiatives and developments.

Assessment

In Foundation and KS1 regular formative and summative assessment is an integral part of RWI. Children are regular assessed and placed in appropriate ability groups. These groups are reviewed every half term, or sooner if the RWI teacher has a concern about any of the children within their group. Year 1 children undertake the phonics screening test; Year 2 children undertake national end of year assessments. Teachers are required to pass teacher assessment levels in reading and writing to the assessment manager on a termly basis.

In KS2 informal assessment takes place on an everyday basis through marking, feedback and discussions with the children. Teachers annotate their plans and use this AfL to inform planning and to target teaching to the needs of the children as well as to track progress.

Formal assessments across the school are monitored regularly by the Assessment Leader to check assessment is happening and to record results for tracking. The English Coordinator monitors this English assessment data, to check assessments are meaningful, relevant, and show progress. Assessment information and data is used to inform planning and for the evaluation of learning and teaching, both on an individual and whole school level.

Daily marking of children's writing is also completed by the teacher providing a positive comment that is specifically linked to the learning objective, and a target, where necessary, in order to move children on in their writing. Not all work will require in depth marking but teachers should aim to mark one piece of written work in detail every week.

In Year 2 children take their national end of year assessments in the summer term and are tested in grammar, punctuation, spelling and reading. They are given teacher-assessment levels and end of year assessment. The majority of children are expected to reach the Year 2 assessment level of 'expected' in each subject. Most children take the test with the exception of those children falling far below their expected attainment.

All children in KS1 and KS2 complete one piece of formally assessed writing in each half term. Children undertake a reading progress assessment test (PIRA) in each half term, which contribute towards their end of year assessment for reading. Other optional end of year assessments are taken in Years 1, 3, 4 and 5 and are used inform teacher assessment and are passed onto the next teacher.

Year 6 children sit the national end of year assessments in May. Externally marked tests are conducted in reading and 'spelling, punctuation and grammar.' Writing is assessed by the Year 6 teachers and is based on the children's writing progress during the year.

Special Educational Needs

Children with identified needs in English are provided with support corresponding to their level of need and the level of time allocated. LSAs work with named children on a 1:1 or small group basis as directed by SEN status. The class teacher will differentiate the work appropriately in this situation to allow the child to participate and make progress to their full potential.

Children in Years 5 and 6 requiring additional support with English are identified to be part of the 'Fresh Start' intervention scheme. Children are identified for 1 to 1 tutoring in the spring term of Year 5.

Depending on the level of each individual child's need, the teacher and LSA will help the child access the task being taught to the whole class or will deliver a modified activity that is relevant to the child and their specific needs. LSAs will work in conjunction with the class teacher in order to plan, deliver and evaluate the individual child's learning. Individual needs are regularly reviewed, modified and updated.

More confident children are identified and work designed to develop a 'depth' of understanding is planned and delivered.

English Volunteers

Whenever possible the school makes use of 'English volunteers' and parents and carers. They fulfil a vital role in hearing children read on a 1:1 basis, especially in KS1 and lower KS2. Volunteers are never turned down, pending appropriate safeguarding checks, and are always made to feel welcome.

Friends Association

The Friends Association make regular and significant contributions to the improvement and development of English within school. This takes many forms, including initiatives to refresh and add stock to the school library. The 'Friends' are involved in the organisation and running of book fairs. Their support is greatly appreciated by all staff, parents, carers and children within our school community.

World Book Day

World Book Day is celebrated every year when we organise events to promote reading and writing. Children write book reviews, stories, poetry and other artistic activities. A book fair is held which is very popular with children, parents and staff.

Budget

Money is allocated every year from the school budget to ensure the maintenance and improvement of stock. Extra money is made available to direct to specific School Improvement Plan initiatives relating to English.