



English Policy

Amendments made since last review

Summer 2020 – Nelson Handwriting added, PUMA and PIRA change and non-negotiables for speaking and listening updated

Summer 2022 – changed O'track to 'school tracking system'

Spring 2024 – policy amended to include intent, implementation and impact

- Pathways to spell added, NTS assessment change and replacement of No Nonsense Spellings with Pathways to Spell

- inclusion of Pathways to Write

- clarification of links between shared and guided reading / addition of KS2 children taking home reading for pleasure books

- deletion of the use of bookmarks for self and peer assessment

- additional information on use of vocabulary lists across the curriculum

- additional information on how planning might be in the form of Smartnotebook or Powerpoint slides

September 2024 – Nelson replaced with Letterjoin

Summer 2026 – P4 added preferred tool of writing phrase / P.4 Reading passport removed / P.5 condensed planning paragraph / P6 removed half termly report cards

Policy agreed / reviewed 14th July 2026

Next review due Summer 2028

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body

Signed by headteacher

Intent:

All the skills of language are essential to participate fully as a member of society and children should be encouraged to be confident, enthusiastic, independent readers, spellers and writers. Children need to speak, read and write fluently and confidently. Pupils should be taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently, they should learn to justify ideas with reasons, ask questions to check understanding develop vocabulary and build knowledge, listen to and build on the ideas of others and communicate effectively. Reading is a habit that needs to be grounded in everything we do in school. Pupils should demonstrate an effective application of phonics knowledge and reading strategies to decode and support inference and deduction for comprehension, they should be able to read and write across a range of genre with understanding of vocabulary, structure and organisation. In their writing pupils should be able to apply a range of transcription skills including spelling and handwriting and show an awareness of purpose, audience, vocabulary and form. We aim to develop independent and accurate spellers who are confident to use adventurous vocabulary. Children should develop a flexible and legible handwriting style that empowers them to write with speed, confidence and pride.

The aims of teaching English are:

- To enable children to speak with clarity, confidence and expression, and to take account of their audience, purpose and differing situations.
- To encourage children to listen with concentration to others, to respond and build on their ideas and views and to identify features of language used for specific purposes.
- To show children how to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands;
- To teach children effective communication, both verbal and non-verbal, through a variety of drama activities.
- To use phonological awareness to decode and encode words.
- To enable children to apply phonics knowledge and reading strategies to decode whilst supporting inference and deduction for comprehension,
- To help children to be able to read with fluency, accuracy, understanding and enjoyment.
- To help them become confident, independent readers, through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text level knowledge;
- To develop enthusiastic and reflective readers, through contact with challenging and substantial texts and to help children to read and write across a range of genre with understanding of structure and organisation
- To help the children to develop an understanding that writing is both essential to thinking and learning and enjoyable in its own right.
- To enable children to learn to communicate meaning in narrative and non-fiction texts, spelling and punctuating accurately and for a range of purposes.
- To teach children to be independent and accurate spellers who are confident to use adventurous vocabulary.
- To enable the children to improve their planning, drafting and editing of their work.

Implementation:

Through our Pathways to Write English curriculum, we foster pupils' interest in reading and writing. We value the importance of reading to supplement writing, providing a purpose and a context to writing and have a rigorous and well organised English curriculum that is derived around a sequence of high-quality age-appropriate texts. We provide pupils with a reason for writing to demonstrate their flair and effective writing composition, leading to high quality outcomes. Children develop early reading through the use of the RWInc programme from Reception – Year 2. Each week, the children are taught to develop an understanding of the texts through whole class guided reading – exploring the key themes, events, and plot of the texts being studied alongside reading for pleasure activities. Writing is an integral part of our curriculum, the writing process is clearly taught in order to establish children as an author in their own right. Pupils are taken on a writing journey which builds their knowledge of writing for context and purpose, allows the opportunities for the children to explore a variety of genres and includes planning, drafting and redrafting their writing. All children are provided with many opportunities to develop and apply their writing skills across the curriculum. Pupils are taught grammar in line with the National Curriculum, this is linked by teachers to genres as part of the writing process. Children are supported in how to apply genre specific features and grammatical content through high quality modelled writing. Spelling and handwriting are taught as discrete lessons, school uses the Pathways to Spelling programme and Letterjoin Handwriting.

In the Foundation Stage (Reception) children are given opportunities to:

- speak and listen and represent ideas in their activities;
- use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum;
- become immersed in an environment rich in print and opportunities to communicate.

At Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2) children learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They learn to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They learn to use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds. Children are given opportunities to speak and listen throughout all subject areas.

At Key Stage Two (Years 3-6) children learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works.

Subject Organisation

Foundation Stage

In Foundation stage children have daily discrete phonics lessons using the Read, Write Inc programme. Children have opportunities to develop their communication, language and literacy skills on a daily basis in both adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1 daily discrete phonics lessons (Read, Write Inc) are continued as appropriate to the child's stage of development. The children are taught in ability groups with a real focus upon developing accuracy, speed and understanding. In addition to the daily RWI phonics lesson the children also have daily English lessons with an emphasis on real texts. Children take part in shared, guided and individual reading sessions and have regular story times to develop a love of reading. Literacy skills are developed across the curriculum. Provision is made for children who require extra support through carefully targeted intervention programmes, differentiated class teaching as well as extended RWI one to one sessions.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2 children have daily English lessons using a text led planning approach to teaching and learning. Lessons use high quality and age-appropriate texts. All are produced using units from Pathways to Write programme. Additional sessions also include guided reading, handwriting and spelling. Literacy skills are developed across the curriculum. Provision is made for children who require extra support through intervention programmes and differentiated class teaching. In Key Stage 2 children are also taught spelling strategies and rules through Pathways to Spell programme.

Approaches to Speaking and Listening

The Four Strands of Speaking and Listening: Speaking; Listening; Group Discussion and Interaction, and Drama permeate the whole curriculum. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise standards in reading and writing.

Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life. We encourage children to speak clearly and confidently and articulate their views and opinions.

We teach the children how to express themselves orally in an appropriate way, matching their style and response to audience and purpose. Activities such as talk partners, talk time at home, class debates, school plays, school council, book time sessions, drama, role play and circle time are also used to support development in this area. Children who require extra support in speaking and listening benefit from working closely alongside the speech and language services who provide carefully targeted intervention programmes. We recognise the need for all pupils to speak, read and write Standard English fluently and accurately, whilst also acknowledging that a pupil's own dialect, or other language is of prime importance. It is our school policy to model our own language to the children which encourages Standard English both in speaking and writing.

Assessment and Evaluation of Speaking and Listening

Speaking and Listening skills are assessed formally using our school non-negotiables: a list of objectives that each child in each year group should cover and achieve during the year.

Progression in Speaking and Listening is tracked using school tracking systems

Approaches to Reading

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose and be encouraged to read for pleasure. Reading is singled out as of extreme importance since through it 'pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually' (p13) Reading allows pupils to 'acquire knowledge' and to 'build on what they already know' (p13).

The 2014 Curriculum divides reading skills into two dimensions: Word reading/ decoding and Comprehension

We recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods. We recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, writing, grammar and vocabulary. We also understand that reading is a developmental process and part of life-long learning and we encourage and praise children at every stage of it.

Much of the Programme of Study will be taught through English lessons. Additional time is provided on a regular basis for reading at other times. Pupils are encouraged to read widely, through our use of differing class texts, library visits, visiting authors and poets throughout the year (whole school focus). Home readers and high quality, attractive books are displayed in all classrooms. Each class has an attractive, stimulating space for reading and sharing books together

Pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure using reading partners, quiet reading time as well as listening to an adult read during story time at the end of the day which exposes children to high quality children's literature, authors and themes.

Shared and Guided Reading, Reading Comprehension:

Our discrete reading lessons in school incorporate a balance of shared and guided reading. In shared reading the teacher models the reading process to the whole class as an expert reader providing a high level of support. Teaching objectives for shared and guided reading are pre-planned and sessions are characterised by explicit teaching of specific reading strategies, oral response and collaboration. Texts are rich and challenging, to engage all members of the class. In guided reading children are taught to develop an understanding of the texts by developing reading comprehension skills – exploring the key themes, events, and plot of the texts being studied. Texts are chosen carefully match the ability of the children whilst still providing an element of challenge and have been the focus of shared reading to familiarise children with the content. Guided reading provides a forum for pupils to demonstrate what they have learned about reading; the focus for the reading is concerned with extending strategies/objectives taught in shared reading whilst developing the understanding and application of new and unfamiliar words. Comprehension is assessed informally during reading lessons and in a formal way at three key assessment points throughout the year using the NTS Reading tests. These tests ensure gaps are addressed early as well as providing targeted feedback to children to help them improve.

In the Foundation Stage reading books are taken home to read, the number of times per week is directed by the teacher in line with the child's needs using a variety of reading schemes such as Songbirds, Dandelion Launchers, Big Cat Collins and Read, Write Inc. Staff and parents write on a regular basis in every child's planner in order to communicate the progress each child is making and their next steps for development. Targeted groups of words are also sent home as appropriate to each child's stage of development. These include RWI word time words, common exception words and words linked to a current topic/ theme

In KS1 and KS2 children take home a levelled book according to their ability. Each child has a reading folder and a planner that teachers and parents use to share information about a child's reading. Parents are encouraged to read with their child on a daily basis. More proficient readers in KS2 are able to select a book from the class library or the 'free reading' section of the school

library and their progress is carefully monitored. All children are encouraged to read a variety of authors, text types and genres in order to a real love and appreciation of literature.

In addition to their home reading book all children take home a 'Reading for Pleasure' book some of which are selected from Pie Corbett's literature spine alongside other high-quality texts. This allows all children access to high quality children's literature at home..

Assessment and Recording of Reading

Teachers aim to assess each child at least once a week through guided and individual reading. Formal guided reading is introduced in Foundation Stage, as appropriate during the Spring Term. In addition, reading skills are assessed formally using: Our school tracking systems, Guided reading planning, NTS tests, PM Benchmarks.

Approaches to Writing

We aim to develop the children's ability to produce well structured, detailed writing in which the meaning is made clear and which engages the interest of the reader. Attention is paid throughout the school to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling. To support our teaching of writing we use our own non-negotiables for writing to track children's progress. Teachers model writing strategies and the use of phonics and spelling strategies in shared writing sessions. Guided writing sessions are used to target specific needs of both groups and individuals, whilst children have opportunities to write at length during extended, independent writing throughout each unit.

The children are given frequent opportunities in school to write in different contexts using quality texts as a model and for a variety of purposes and audiences. The children are given a wide variety of meaningful writing opportunities, to write on their own or as part of a group. The children are also given the opportunity to use ICT to develop their writing.

- We teach grammar as a discrete lesson where necessary
- We correct grammatical error orally/ written work (where appropriate)
- We use a systematic approach, we revisit key learning and build upon it in all areas from phonics, through to grammar and spelling
- We use high quality texts, modelling and shared/collaborative writing to demonstrate good practice
- We encourage and promote 'talk for writing'
- We provide writing frames to support the least confident
- We provide time for planning, editing and revising work on a regular basis
- We mark extended pieces of work in-depth and set targets with the pupil
- We encourage fluent handwriting to support spelling, speed and fluency
- We use drama and hot-seating to help pupils to think about another point of view
- Support for pupils with learning and motor difficulties
- Meetings with parents to help them support their child

Spelling

In Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 teachers use the Read, Write Inc phonics programme to teach the spelling routines. Fred fingers are used to spell green words in both the Speed Sounds Lessons and Get Writing Books. The children say the sounds as they press them onto their fingers. From the Spring term of year 1 onwards teachers use multi-sensory materials based on the 'Pathways to Spell' scheme as a basis for their planning for the teaching of spelling. Learning takes place in a variety of situations for example, these could include working independently to practise tricky words, possibly using ICT; working collaboratively on a group spelling investigation and participating in short, focused whole class activities. Children are expected to spell high frequency words correctly and the word lists for their particular year group.

Handwriting

It is paramount that children are rigorously taught correct letter formation from the very beginning of their time in school. As soon as the children are ready, they should be taught to sit properly in order to have the correct posture for writing, hold a pencil in the correct tripod grip and develop a legible and joined handwriting style. We use Letterjoin in school to help children develop fluent, clear and legible joined up writing. Handwriting takes place daily in KS1. Children work hard to choose their preferred tool for writing, this encourages them to take great care and pride in their work.

It is expected that all members of staff, class teachers and teaching assistants, model the school handwriting style at all times i.e. when writing on the board or in children's books. By the end of key stage 2, all children should be displaying an efficient, quick, neat and legible handwriting style that is effective in recording their ideas.

Vocabulary Development:

The National Curriculum makes clear that learning vocabulary is key to 'learning and progress across the whole curriculum' (p11) since it allows pupils to access a wider range of words when writing and for them to understand and comprehend texts efficiently.

Vocabulary teaching needs to be:

- Active
- Progressive/ systematic
- Making links from known words
- Develop understanding of shades of meaning
- Include 'instruction verbs' used in examinations
- Subject specific- accurate mathematical and scientific words

Current practice at Longton Lane Primary

We encourage our pupils to have a wide and growing vocabulary in a number of ways, these include:

- 'Pathways to Spell' Spelling logs
- Display of key words linked to topics and subjects
- Using the correct vocabulary orally
- Dedicated vocabulary lists for each curriculum area, referred to and re-visited regularly
- In-depth word-based lessons looking at patterns
- Using dictionaries, thesauruses and similar programmes
- Using descriptosaurus / other texts to explore vocabulary choices and the effect they have upon the reader
- Carrying out systematic testing and providing feedback to pupils
- Targeted one to one/ small group support, where appropriate

Planning:

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use this, the new curriculum (2014) and RWI programme as a basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme for study for English

Teachers follow the Pathways to write planning scheme which is aligned with the National Curriculum. Units are prepared and adapted according to the needs of the cohort.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

We teach English in our Reception class as an integral part of the school's work. As the Reception class is part of the Foundation stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the English aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals, which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. We give all children the opportunity to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully and to practice and extend their vocabulary and communication skills across all areas of learning. The Read, Write Inc programme of daily systematic phonics teaching is used to support children's reading and gives children opportunity to read accurately and fluently with good comprehension. Simple and enjoyable mnemonics help all children to grasp the letter-sound correspondences quickly. Lively phonic books are closely matched to children's increasing knowledge of phonics and tricky words so that, early on they experience plenty of success.

Assessment:

Staff assess pupils learning during and as part of every session. Marking and feedback booklets are used daily as a form of ongoing formative assessment. This ensures that teachers adapt their practice accordingly.

Independent writing tasks are levelled at three key assessment points throughout the year and progress is tracked accordingly

Formal assessments of Reading Comprehension ability are carried out, tracked and monitored accordingly

Writing levels are assessed using via school non-negotiables, specific criteria as agreed by school, on the school tracking system and teacher assessment to create a best fit

Staff attend regular writing moderation sessions within the local cluster group and within and across school key stages
End of Key Stage Assessments are analysed by the English lead, Head teacher and Deputy Head teacher and feed into the school SEF, development plan and performance management

Inclusion:

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. We identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take the necessary steps to improve their attainment. Gifted children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

Specific Groups:

Analysis of English achievement is carried out at key assessment points throughout the school year, pupils who are slow moving or making little or no progress are discussed and plans made.

Pupils entitled to pupil premium are given additional English support as appropriate and this is monitored for effectiveness termly.

Pupils with EAL are given additional support in all aspects of English.

Pupils who are gifted and talented receive additional support, a differentiated curriculum focused on exploring greater depth in reading and writing

Pupils with SEN will have English based targets on their IEP. These are reviewed termly.

Parental Involvement:

We aim to involve parents directly in the whole of school life, and thus in the development of children's skills, knowledge and understanding in English. Parents are encouraged to read with their child at home and to discuss books with them through our reading for pleasure book scheme. We hold regular parents' workshops exploring how we teach the many different aspects of our RWI phonics programme. There are opportunities each term when parents can discuss their children's progress with their teacher. A detailed annual report provide parents important information about their child's progress in English.

Impact

Our children's attainment is in line or exceeds their potential when we consider the varied starting points of all our children. We measure this using a range of materials, whilst always considering the expectations for each year group. Our English curriculum ensures pupils are academically prepared for their educational journey and life beyond primary school. Our text-led approach helps pupils foster a love for reading and an interest in reading for pleasure. At Longton Lane we have a community of enthusiastic speakers, readers and writers who enjoy showcasing their developing literacy knowledge and skills. They are confident to take risks in their reading and writing, and love to discuss and share their ideas.