

MOTTRAM ST. ANDREW PRIMARY ACADEMY



ENGLISH POLICY

English is a core subject in the primary school curriculum that teaches children how to understand and use language confidently. It includes learning to read, write, speak and listen. Through reading, children enjoy stories, poems, and information books, building their imagination, vocabulary, and understanding of the world. Writing lessons help children express their ideas clearly by learning how to form sentences, use punctuation, spell words and structure different types of texts. Spoken language activities encourage pupils to communicate their thoughts, listen respectfully to others, and take part in discussions, drama, and presentations.

Our English curriculum aims to give every child the skills needed to become effective communicators. It helps them develop a love of reading, the ability to write for different purposes, and the confidence to share their ideas. English also supports learning across all subjects, as strong language skills enable children to understand information, follow instructions and explain their thinking. Strong skills in English provide a foundation for future learning and success, both in school and beyond.

Aims

- Read fluently and with understanding, for both pleasure and information.
- Foster a lifelong love of reading by introducing children to a wide variety of high-quality literature, including stories, poetry and non-fiction texts.
- Write clearly, accurately and imaginatively for a variety of audiences and purposes, using appropriate grammar and punctuation.
- Teach accurate phonics, spelling and handwriting to support fluency in reading and writing.
- Encourage creativity and imagination through opportunities to write stories, poems, descriptions, and personal responses.
- Build strong spoken language skills, helping children to speak confidently, listen attentively, and communicate their ideas in discussions, presentations, and drama activities.
- Broaden vocabulary so pupils can understand and use language precisely and expressively across the curriculum.

Implementation: Reading

Reception and Year 1

Children in Reception and Year 1 are taught to read using the Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS) scheme. ELS is a synthetic phonics programme which teaches children how sounds are represented by written letters. Children are taught to read words by blending these sounds together to make words. ELS has a structure for teaching these sounds in a certain order to build up children's learning gradually and it is used every day during Reception and Year 1 through a daily phonics lesson. New sounds are taught each day, with some review days and weeks to help children practise what they have learnt. Children read words and sentences containing the sounds that they have learnt. Children also practise writing the letters that represent the sounds. Common exception words are taught as sight vocabulary. Alongside the daily phonics lesson, children have reading books matched to their developing phonic skills.

Year 2

Year 2 is a transition year moving towards the structure for the teaching of reading within Key Stage 2. Children have completed the Essential Letters and Sounds scheme, but children who did not pass the phonics screening check have phonics intervention to ensure they master any gaps in their phonic knowledge. Reading books are carefully banded to ensure that they match the children's ability. Whole class guided reading begins to be introduced.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage Two, we teach reading in whole class guided reading sessions three times a week. These sessions develop both fluency and comprehension. A typical week has one session based on the class novel, one linked to teaching in a foundation subject and the third is based on something of the teacher's choice.

Homework

Reading is a key part of the homework set for pupils across school. We emphasise to parents that reading is the most important part of homework and we encourage children to read every day at home.

Reading for Pleasure

We want reading to be an everyday part of the children's lives that they choose to do whatever their age, and we actively promote a love of reading.

Teachers are enthusiastic about children's literature and share a range of books with the children. As they move through school, children are encouraged to read a wide range of genres and different authors.

Quality story time is an integral part of the teaching day and is timetabled across all Key Stages. This is recognised as an important tool for building a love of reading for pleasure.

In Key Stage Two, each class has a class novel which is read by the teacher to the class for 15 minutes every day. Texts are carefully chosen to broaden children's access to a variety of literature.

Specific events are planned, including, World Book Day, our own book fair and author events to promote a culture of reading for pleasure.

Implementation: Writing

In Reception, early writing skills are taught using the Essential Letters and Sounds phonics programme, including segmenting words to spell and letter formation. This continues during Year 1 alongside their English lessons.

From Year 1 to Year 6, we follow a structured scheme, the Literacy Company's Pathways to Write, which ensures engaging and purposeful English lessons. Each unit is linked to a high-quality text, and provides clear, detailed lesson plans. Children are given carefully planned and varied opportunities for writing, and opportunities are given for broadening children's vocabulary.

Pathways to Write is designed to equip children with key skills to move them through the writing process towards their final outcome. Each unit of work follows a mastery approach, where there is a clear progression of skills. These are built up through repetition within the units, and children apply these skills in the writing activities provided. Each unit covers a range of areas in the National Curriculum, including:

- Mastery of vocabulary, grammar and punctuation skills
- Writing a range of genres across a year
- Vocabulary development
- Spoken language activities including drama and presentations
- Opportunities for practising previously taught genres
- Extended, independent pieces of writing.

In Year 6, some alternatives to Pathways to Write units are used, where teacher judgement determines they are better placed to provide independent pieces of writing to inform teacher assessment.

Additional grammar and punctuation lessons are included to support the coverage in Pathways to Write.

Essential Spelling is used for the teaching of spelling from Year 2.

Pupils learn to join their handwriting in Year 2 and nearly all pupils are expected to join their writing, in all written work, by the start of Year 3.

Implementation: Spoken Language

The teaching of spoken language is a central element of the curriculum, and we provide rich and varied opportunities for children to develop confidence, clarity and accuracy in their spoken communication. All staff play an active role in modelling high-quality language and ensuring that classroom interactions promote thoughtful discussion and effective listening.

Specific activities include:

- Use of talk partners
- Class discussions and debates
- Retelling stories
- Performing poetry
- Role play and drama (for example, conscience alley and hot seating)
- Listening to a range of texts read aloud
- Listening and responding to the contributions of others
- Expressing ideas in a range of contexts
- Collaborative group tasks
- School performances

These activities are designed to help pupils articulate ideas, build vocabulary and respond appropriately to others.

Teachers will explicitly teach and reinforce key speaking and listening skills, including turn-taking, questioning, reasoning and the use of Standard English when appropriate.

Teachers consistently model effective speaking and listening skills, fostering a respectful and inclusive environment.

We recognise that spoken language development is essential for literacy, social interaction, and emotional well-being. Therefore, we ensure that all pupils, including those with speech, language, and communication needs, receive appropriate support and targeted intervention. Staff will work closely with families and relevant professionals to identify needs early and provide tailored provision.

Role of the Subject Leader

The English Subject Leaders have the responsibility of overseeing English within the school together with the Senior Leadership Team, including:

- Leading the writing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policy and the curriculum.
- Monitoring the overall structure of the English curriculum.
- Ensuring appropriate resources are available and updating them within the limits of the budget and according to needs.
- Keeping up to date with developments in the subject and disseminating information to staff.
- Providing support and guidance to staff as needed.
- Attending courses relevant to professional development within their role as subject leader.

Monitoring

Monitoring the overall structure of the English curriculum is the responsibility of the subject leader together with the Senior Leadership Team. The quality of teaching, provision and outcomes will be monitored through the school's usual processes, including lesson observation, book looks and pupil voice.

Assessment and Reporting

In Reception and Year 1, Essential Letters and Sounds includes regular, end of unit assessments.

From Year 1 to Year 6, teachers use Balance assessment to support the ongoing formative assessments of pupils' achievement. This enables teachers to regularly record achievement of objectives within the curriculum and builds a formative picture of a pupil's current attainment.

Twice a year, teachers produce a summative assessment of each pupil's attainment in Reading and Writing. This assesses whether each pupil is:

- Working at Greater Depth
- Working at the Expected Level
- Working towards the Expected Level
- Working below the Expected Level

NFER tests, in reading, are used in Year 1 (from Summer Term) to Year 5 to inform the summative teacher assessment. NFER tests are also used in Year 3 to Year 6 in Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling.

For Writing, termly summative assessments use Balance assessments to reach an overall summative assessment across a number of pieces of completed writing. Pathways exemplification material, for each unit of writing, is used to support teachers' judgements.

The mid-year summative assessments are shared with parents at the spring term parents' evenings and they receive a written record of them. In the summer, parents receive them on their child's report along with a written summary of achievement.

Professional development and responsibilities

Each class teacher is responsible for the delivery of the English curriculum and overseeing the pupils' progress. In line with school priorities, teachers are provided with opportunities for development and training in connection with this subject area, as appropriate.