

# English Curriculum Policy

## Harehills Primary School



This policy has been approved and adopted by the Governing body.

This policy was written by the Harehills Reading and Writing Teams:

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At Harehills Primary School we offer an engaging, relevant, broad and balanced curriculum that:

- Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of children
- Prepares children for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences for later life

At Harehills Primary School we believe that Reading and Writing are vital skills that are explicitly linked together to support the teaching and learning of our Curriculum Themes and key skills. We have created a whole school Reading and Writing Journey that exemplifies how each of the subjects works together to support the teaching of the English Curriculum. We provide children with a literacy-rich environment, high quality texts and inspiring learning opportunities, which will help them to:

- Develop vocabulary and spoken language so it can be used to inform their reading and writing skills
- Become confident lifelong readers who have a passion and enjoyment of reading a range of books and texts;
- Read accurately, fluently and with understanding;
- Use their knowledge and understanding of structured synthetic phonics in order to decode and encode unfamiliar words with increasing accuracy and speed;
- Be able to read with expression, clarity and confidence;
- Develop a good linguistic knowledge of vocabulary and grammar; including developing a bank of rhymes, traditional tales and stories from a range of cultures that they can draw upon when composing their own work;
- Develop respect and care for books;
- Develop a purpose, context and audience for their writing
- Master the technique of constructing a well-planned and exciting piece of writing

## Reading

Reading is a vital skill that will support children's learning across the whole curriculum. As a school, we will ensure that our children are taught to read with fluency, accuracy and understanding through a variety of discreet and cross-curricular learning opportunities. We equally value reading for pleasure and promote this regularly through school in a variety of ways, including daily shared whole class stories, reading events, dedicated reading areas and local library visits. We have also created and resourced our own year group recommended reading lists which are updated annually. Above all, we want children in our school to become enthusiastic, independent and reflective readers.

The development of reading cannot be seen in isolation from writing. We read as writers and write as readers! We also recognise that speaking and listening are vital skills to develop in order to understanding texts. In our Theme lessons across the curriculum, we try to give pupils opportunities to talk and listen in a wide range of contexts.

Strategies for writing and speaking and listening therefore form an integral part of reading. In our school, we will strive to give pupils a stimulating environment, where reading materials are presented in an attractive and inviting way. Furthermore, within lessons we create an environment that stimulates the generation of ideas from high quality texts where all ideas are accepted and valued.

### Early Years

- All children in F2 bring a book bag into school each day. From Autumn term they are initially given a picture book, followed by a book which is matched to their phonic ability to take home every week. Books are changed by an adult once a week.
- The teacher provides every child with a reading book and a reading home/school diary. We encourage children to read with an adult at home at least three times a week.
- Phonics lessons using the DFE validated Twinkl scheme take place every day. From the Spring term children are taught in class groups according to their phonic needs.
- Individual reading – The teacher/TA will hear each child read 1.1 on a weekly basis. This will be recorded in the child's reading record with either as a stamp or written comment. Progress is recorded in a whole class reading folder and the children's individual blue reading record book.

- In the Summer Term, children are grouped for guided reading with a text at their level
- Parents are regularly invited into open mornings to share learning experiences which includes sharing stories
- Teachers read aloud to children every day – props and puppets are incorporated into story time as often as possible.
- Children are taught a story a nonfiction text as well as poetry/rhymes every half term in order to start to build up a bank of stories and texts that they are very familiar with.
- Children are encouraged to tell/share their own stories orally
- Children borrow a book to share with an adult at home from the year group Recommended Reading List (RRL) every week

## **KS1**

- The teacher provides every child with a reading book and a reading home/school diary. We encourage children to read with an adult at home at least three times a week. Children are given a book which is matched to their phonic ability to take home every week.
- Phonics lessons using the DFE validated Twinkl scheme take place every day – children are taught in class groups according to their phonic needs
- Whole class shared reading happens at least three times a week and children are heard read individually at least once a week by the Teacher/TA. This will be recorded in the child's reading record with either as a stamp or written comment. Progress is recorded in a whole class reading folder and the children's individual blue reading record book.
- Teachers read aloud to children every day.
- All children are grouped for guided reading with a text at their level. They take part in guided reading activities every week.
- Throughout the year, children become familiar with well know stories, which they can they use as models to support writing.
- Children are taught a story a nonfiction text and poetry every half term as part of our whole school Readers Journey.
- Children borrow a book to read or share with an adult at home from the year group Recommended Reading List (RRL) every week

## **KS2**

- Every child has a reading book which is matched to their phonic/reading ability, and a reading home/school diary. We encourage children to read with an adult at home or independently at least three times a week. Children will either take a reading book home at their level or choose a book from the class or school library. In KS2, books will be changed when required – depending on the length of the text.
- Guided Reading - All children take part in guided reading which is led by an adult throughout week. All guided reading sessions have an objective linked to year group skills and expectations.
- Shared Reading - During a shared read, specific reading skills or features of differing genre will be taught. This includes big books, text extracts or texts displayed on the Interactive White Board. This is an opportunity to incorporate book talk to discuss the use of language, widen the children's vocabulary and develop their levels of comprehension.
- Frequent opportunities for 1:1 reading are provided through Guided Reading and Reading for Pleasure sessions. Children who are working below the expected standard for their year group are heard read at least once a week by the Teacher or TA. Progress is recorded in a whole class reading folder and the children's individual blue reading record book in LKS2.
- Teachers read aloud to children every day
- Children are taught a fiction, poetry and nonfiction text every term as part of our whole school Readers Journey.
- Children regularly borrow a book to read from the year group Recommended Reading List (RRL)

Opportunities are planned for children to read aloud to a variety of audiences. These could be through Theme work, Guided Reading or performances to audiences including whole school, class and family assemblies. Books are also used as rewards for children during key phase assemblies.

Other additional reading opportunities are provided for children across school in different year groups, these include: Reading Between The Lines, DEAR (Drop Everything And Read), Reading Ninjas and Bookmark volunteer's reading 1:1 with children.

### **Library and School Library Service**

There is an UKS2 School Library which contains a variety of free reader books as well as fiction, nonfiction and poetry books. Visits to Compton Centre Library also take place to allow the children a chance to experience community libraries.

The School Library Service provides additional resources that are used to enhance the school's own selection of books.

## **Writing**

Our curriculum ensures that all children have plenty of opportunities to write for different purposes. We encourage writing through all curriculum areas and use quality reading texts to model examples of good writing. Writing is taught through a number of different strategies. We believe that children need lots of rich speaking and drama activities to give them the imagination and the experiences that will equip them to become good writers.

This is reflected in our school's 'Writing Process,' which provides the structure for teachers to coherently sequence the journey children will go through when producing an extended piece of writing. This was developed in collaboration with our Writing Team, which is represented by one teacher from each year group as well as additional teachers around school (e.g. SLT members, SENCo). The Writing Process reflects the time children need to internalise their familiarity with and understanding of a text before identifying and using specific features relating to grammar, punctuation, vocabulary and structure. This is then applied when the children produce their own extended piece of writing linked to the text. At Harehills Primary School, we want our children to write for a clear purpose and audience, so the children will have the opportunity to edit and improve their work in response to feedback from adults before publishing the final version of their writing. On our Medium-Term Planning documents, teachers structure the Literacy elements of the Theme around the Writing Process.

Our approach ensures there are clear, explicit links between reading and writing and that our children know that the best readers become the best writers.

### **Writers' Journey**

Our Writers' Journey, which maps the text types children will experience throughout their time at Harehills Primary School, is very clearly linked to our Readers' Journey. Our Writers' Journey ensures that during their time with us, they will learn how to write for a range of purposes and audiences so that every child will have the opportunity to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study by the end of Key Stage Two. Our children will be taught to write for four broad purposes: to entertain, to inform, to persuade (introduced in Year 3) and to discuss (introduced in Year 5). Where children revisit a text type, we ensure that this builds on previous learning and adds high levels of challenge.

### **The Writing Process Overview**

To enable our children to become the best writers they can, we follow our Writing Process from Year 1 through to Year 6. A typical Theme, which may last for a half-term, slightly longer than a half-term or a full term depending on the Theme itself and the year group, is structured in the following way:

**'Building the Foundations' (1 week):** Before children are expected to write, they need a secure background knowledge in the subject matter they're writing about. Therefore, the first week of any new Theme will be dedicated to teaching and developing the **key knowledge** linked to the relevant Science or Foundation

Subjects learning that children will need to write successfully. The first week of the new Theme will also include the 'Inspirational Starter Lesson' (ISL) to 'hook' and engage the interest and curiosity of the children.

**Poetry (1 or 2 weeks):** Within a busy curriculum, it is easy for poetry to become lost despite the benefits experiencing a wide variety of different types of poetry brings to development of children's vocabulary, their skills in using spoken language and their ability to read and write. We are determined that our children receive a wide and varied diet of poetry across school, so every term in every year group, the children will learn about one specific type of poetry (e.g. list poems, alliterative poems, haiku poems, performance poems, cinquain poems), following a short sequence similar to our Writing Process: read the poem, respond to the poem, compose a poem, perform their poem.

**Writing Process for an Extended Piece (up to 4 weeks):** The Writing Process forms the main Literacy element of any Theme, which progressively builds over a period of time to enable children to experience and respond to a key text prior to planning, drafting, editing and publishing an extended piece of writing (please see more detail around the structure of this on the following page).

**Quick Write based on a text previously taught (1 or 2 weeks):** The opportunity for children to revisit previously taught text types and apply them in different ways is crucial to their development as independent writers so they can make decisions around punctuation, grammar, vocabulary and structure for themselves. Therefore, in each Theme, teachers revisit a previously taught text type so pupils can produce an additional, piece of writing. This may be done within the Foundation Subjects if appropriate.

### **The Writing Process for an Extended Piece**

When producing an extended piece of writing based on or in response to the key text on the school's Readers' Journey for a particular Theme, class teachers will plan the Writing Process for an Extended Piece around the following structure:

**Read, Engage and Respond - Seeing self as a Reader:** Time to read and enjoy the text, delve deeper into characters, settings, Theme, the subject matter etc... Time to reflect and ask/answer questions as the text is being read. Model reading, oral rehearsal and use of S&L/Drama is crucial at this stage.

**Analyse and Evaluate - Read as a Writer:** Time to really understand author intention through analysing key language and layout features for the text type and genre (activating previously taught knowledge). Look at the impact and effectiveness of these on the reader through discussion, answering questions, creating emotion graphs etc... Make links to learning in other subjects.

**Practise the Skills Splat – Grammar, Punctuation and Vocabulary - Write as a Reader:** Time to revisit previously taught grammar and punctuation skills and to look closely at new language features in the text not previously taught (linked to Grammar and Punctuation). Time to explore and play with sentences, orally rehearse them, practice applying newly learnt vocabulary in context.

**Plan, Draft, Proofread, Edit and Improve - Seeing self as a Writer:** Planning - give children time and space to imagine, invent, draw and write their ideas and plans.

Compose the draft in 'chunks,' applying skills with opportunities to re-read and proofread, reflect and respond to marking (*please see the school's Marking and Feedback Policy*) with the use of editing and revising strategies based around our school's Editing and Revising Guide. This will happen throughout the process as the children's writing evolves.

Finish with publishing the draft in the style of the text type and present to the intended audience.

### **A Text-Based Approach**

As there are clear links between Reading and Writing, we teach Writing using a text-based approach. All Themes begin with a 'hook' or ISL (Inspirational Starter Lesson) and the children will read a key fiction, non-fiction or poetry text linked to their Theme. The key text in each Theme forms the basis of the Writing Process for that half-term.

We incorporate the Talk for Writing model into the teaching of writing in EYFS and KS1. Children are encouraged and supported to learn key texts by heart through teacher produced models, before trying to innovate them and gradually apply more independent changes to the model until they can write freely with confidence. In addition, picture books and theme work are used as a stimulus for writing.

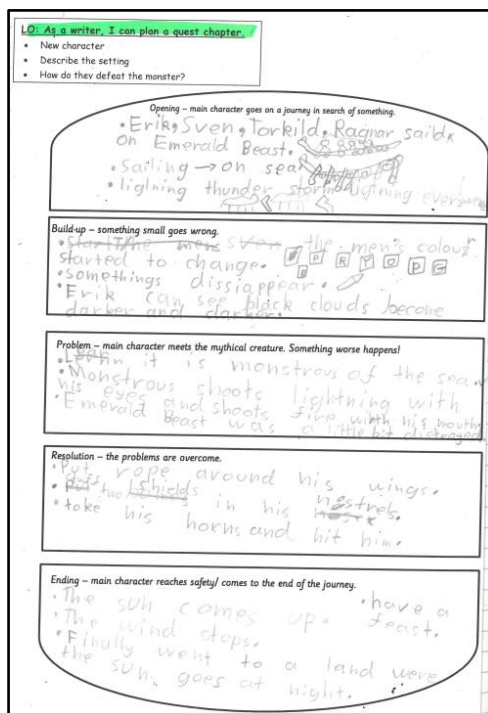
In Key Stage 2, children are taught to write using a fiction, non-fiction or poetry text linked to their class theme as a starting point/stimulus. Throughout the year, the children study various text types, building on their experiences of writing for varied purposes and audiences. Challenging texts are chosen to ensure that children have an excellent model for their own writing.

### Planning Scaffolds

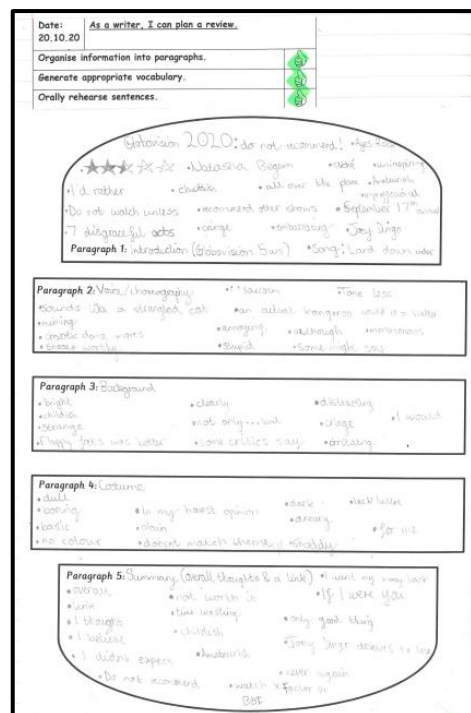
As children move through school, they need to increasingly make their own decisions around their selection of grammar, punctuation, vocabulary and structure. Quality time for children to plan their work before committing to writing more extensively is essential. To ensure consistency and progression through school, the 'planwich' to help children to plan their work is introduced in Year 2 and used throughout school thereafter.



An example of a Year 2 'planwich'



An example of a Year 4 'planwich'

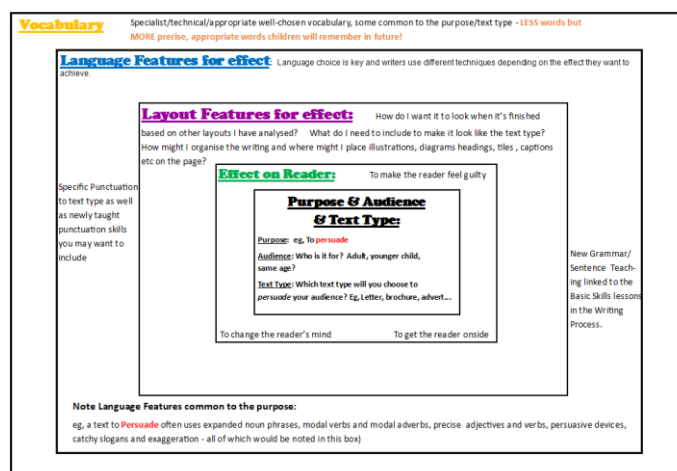


An example of a Year 6 'planwich'

#### Progression in children's planning and writing skills are achieved in a variety of ways:

- Development in stamina for writing, initially planning ideas in sections before planning whole texts across several paragraphs.
- Building on the range of purposes and audiences.
- Increased complexity in grammar, punctuation and vocabulary skills.
- Developing increased independence in the selection of features relating to grammar, punctuation, vocabulary and structure.

In Year 3, we introduce the 'boxed' success criteria so that children can carefully consider the vocabulary, language and layout features they will use in relation to the intended purpose and audience for the text type they're producing and the impact on the reader they're hoping to achieve.



## Handwriting

To ensure the connections between the teaching of Phonics and Handwriting are appropriately sequenced and cohesive, F1 to Year 2 will teach Handwriting based around the *Twinkl Phonics* Scheme, ensuring that the formation of the focus graphemes each week are taught in the children's discrete Handwriting sessions.

Year 3 to Year 6 use Penpals for Handwriting, building on the skills learnt in EYFS and KS1 so that children progress through five clear developmental stages:

- **Physical preparation for handwriting: gross and fine motor skills leading to mark-making, patterns and letter formation (FS, 3–5 years)**
- **Securing correct letter formation (KS1, 5–6 years)**
- **Beginning to join along with a focus on relative size and spacing (KS1, 6–7 years)**
- **Securing the joins along with a focus on break letters, legibility, consistency and quality (LKS2, 7–9 years)**
- **Practising speed, fluency and developing a personalised style for different purposes (UKS2, 9–11 years)**

**At Foundation Stage**, children will focus on developing the necessary fine and gross motor skills in readiness for handwriting. They will practise a range of patterns including dots, waves and zig zags to prepare them for letter formation.

In **Year 1**, correct letter formation should become an automatic habit. Don't encourage children to write too small or too quickly. Trying to enforce small handwriting too soon can lead to a very cramped style, which is then difficult to make fluent. At the very end of this year, children will begin to join some pairs of letters within a word.

In **Year 2**, children will learn all of the basic handwriting joins, and will gradually be introduced to more pairs of letters that are joined in the same way. At first, they are only asked to copy joins that they have seen before, but gradually they are encouraged to explore and experiment joining more and more letters with the joins they know.

During **Year 3 and Year 4**, children will be introduced to the idea of joining most of the letters in a word and to trickier joins such as joining from r, s and f.

In **Year 5**, children work on a more sloped style to enable speedier writing. All of the letters and joins taught previously will be revisited to enable them to practise the slope in familiar contexts. They also focus on issues of proportion, size, legibility and different styles for different purposes.

In **Year 6** there is an emphasis on developing a personal, fast, fluent and legible handwriting style. Children are given opportunities to practise a range of ways of joining, with the expectation that they will develop a style that 'works' for them.

All classrooms display handwriting posters at the front of the classroom, and it is expected that a discrete handwriting session is taught once a week. All adults have high expectations on children's letter formation/handwriting *whenever they write*, and all adults demonstrate careful modelling of writing in the Penpals style font in all lessons/books.

### **Assessment of Reading and Writing**

Reading and Writing are assessed using the Harehills LAP assessment grids both formatively and summatively. Summative data, which is informed by ongoing daily formative assessment, is recorded on OTrack. Formative assessment is recorded in a variety of ways including, the pieces of writing children produce, guided reading books or records, 1:1 reading records and planning etc. However, this is informed by and additional evidence is gathered in a variety of different ways: work in Phonics Books; dictations using taught spellings, tricky words/common exception words and words in the Statutory Spelling Lists in the National Curriculum; Phonics assessments; exercises linked to a specific skill in grammar, punctuation or vocabulary; handwriting practise; initial drafts of writing before editing.

### **Moderation**

As a school, we regularly provide opportunities for staff in different year groups to work together to moderate children's reading and writing. This includes checks on teachers' judgements for summative assessment points being secure and checking for evidence of progression across year groups. PDM times are identified for these opportunities. We are also actively involved in opportunities for moderation with other schools as part of the 2gether Cluster.

### **Interventions**

Children who are falling behind age related expectations are identified through regular pupil achievement meetings and support is put into place. This could be from a teacher or member of support staff who works with children in a small group or 1:1. These interventions are closely monitored and adapted as needed.

### **Training and Developing Staff**

Our school is committed to using work with external advisers and experts who have proven records in developing pupils' learning. We use this valuable resource to finely tune our provision, share good practice and offer whole school staff continuing professional development (CPD). SLT Strategic Leads in Phonics, Reading and Writing also attend termly Literacy Subject Leader Network Meetings, delivered by School Improvement Advisors from Education Leeds, as well as the annual Literacy Conference. Leaders also access training from Noctua, which is shared when back in school so there is a positive impact on the quality of our English Curriculum.