English Policy

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1. **Curriculum Statement**

Intent

At William Patten we believe that a quality English curriculum should develop children's love of reading, writing and discussion and expose them to a variety of high quality texts and stimuli, as well as frequent, purposeful opportunities to practise and review key skills. Our curriculum closely follows the aims of the National Curriculum for English 2014 to enable all children to:

- 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 language and style for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn, showing an ability to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- become competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

These aims are embedded across our English lessons and in the wider curriculum, where expectations of writing (including handwriting) are consistently high and children continue to develop speaking and listening skills while also being presented with a range of inspiring reading materials. Our vision of English instruction is one of enthusiasm, excellence and enrichment for all. Our provision, which follows a clear pathway of progression as it advances through the primary curriculum, enables children to confidently master the English language in all its modalities, as well as to appreciate and create literature. Research repeatedly highlights that 'knowledge of language, which includes linguistic knowledge like vocabulary and grammar, as well as knowledge of the world for comprehension, underpins progression in spoken language, reading and writing' (Ofsted, 2022), and therefore it is with clear intent that we prioritise progression and precision in knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and language forms and usage. It is our aim that, through our provision of hands-on experiences and explicit teaching of vocabulary and background knowledge, every child leaves William Patten with a wealth of expressive and receptive vocabulary at their disposal, and the cultural capital to succeed far beyond the primary and secondary classroom. In particular, our approach has been carefully selected and developed with an understanding of SEND and the different needs of our learners at its heart, so that every child experiences success in English and is carried from their point of access to the realisation of their potential. Texts and stimuli are continually reviewed to ensure that they remain ambitious, inclusive and representative, offering cultural breadth and meaningful opportunities for all pupils to see themselves and others reflected in the curriculum.

Implementation

English is taught over multiple lessons every day and has the most time dedicated to it of any curriculum area. As well as daily reading (phonics/HLR) lessons, English (writing) lessons and discrete teaching of spelling and handwriting, the teaching of English is embedded across the curriculum.

Early Reading: Systematic Synthetic Phonics

Early reading is secured through use of the Read Write Inc scheme. Children are taught the alphabetic code (phoneme-grapheme correspondences). As well as teaching reading, this

component knowledge supports spelling and letter formation, and structured activities within sessions are used to leverage this. Vocabulary and spoken language are also developed during RWI sessions, through comprehension and discussion of core and link texts. For their phonics sessions, children are grouped by book level/phonic knowledge in accordance with the scheme and work in small groups with a high adult-to-child ratio. Regular training and development days ensure that staff are equipped to teach with the expertise and skills required to promote excellent progress amongst our youngest children, as well as to develop their love of reading.

The English subject leader, working with EYFS and KS1 phase leads, will monitor fidelity to the RWI programme, the match between pupils' secure phonic knowledge and the books they read, and the prompt provision of keep-up support for pupils at risk of falling behind.

Reading and HLR

Once children have completed the RWI programme, they are supported on their reading journey through our implementation of the Hackney Loves Reading scheme (Destination Reader). Children develop their fluency (accuracy, prosody, pace and expression) and comprehension through reading class texts and individual instructional level books, through which children experience a range of high-quality fiction, non-fiction and poetry in every year group. Instructional reading draws on Vygotsky's idea of the Zone of Proximal Development, using texts more challenging than the child's independent reading level but more accessibly than those which require full adult support. This ensures that, on these days of the program, every student is introduced to new vocabulary and that the greatest possible progress in reading occurs. Reading stems are used to support children in dissecting a text for meaning, while also giving them the spoken language structures to explain their comprehension of a text verbally and in writing, using the skills of prediction, inference, making connections, asking questions, evaluation, summarising and clarifying.

As reading for pleasure, reading widely, and reading independently are central to the implementation of our aims, each class has timetabled weekly access to the KS1 or KS2 library, as well as opportunities to visit during two lunch times a week.

During periods of warmer weather, the subject lead will bring out texts and put up a 'book line' in the trees next to the outdoor classroom. All class book corners have literature organised by genre, helping our children to become more aware of their personal preferences and to take ownership over their reading identities.

Writing

We deliver our teaching of writing using The Write Stuff approach, in which the craft of writing and language use is broken down, demonstrated and taught explicitly. The basis of each unit of work is a quality text, selected based on literary merit and the exemplification of the tools, techniques, ideas and language that we are seeking for our children to master. In addition, these texts provide cross-curricular links wherever possible, giving children purposeful and inspiring stimuli for writing as well as aspirational models to learn from. A balance of lesson types (experience, find the shape, sentence stacking and independent writing/editing – see appendix 1) enables children to gain the knowledge, skills, vocabulary and experiences required to become masterful, creative and passionate writers. Handwriting and spelling, which are also taught in short discrete sessions, are another focus within English lessons. During 2026-27, the English subject leader will work with phase leaders and the SENDCo to review the sequencing, teaching and impact of the discrete teaching of spelling and handwriting from EYFS to Year 6, to ensure that every pupil is explicitly taught the intended transcription curriculum through coherent, accessible and appropriately

ambitious approaches, and that barriers to accuracy, legibility and fluency are identified and addressed promptly.

Across lessons, adaptive teaching ensures English is ambitious for all pupils, with teachers targeting resources, modelling and scaffolds in response to pupil need while maintaining the intended curriculum and high expectations. Monitoring considers whether pupils are increasingly able to apply taught knowledge independently, rather than only within highly scaffolded outcomes.

Special events and competitions, such as World Book Day, Shakespeare Week and poetry competitions, are part of our core offer and enrich our love of reading, writing and performing literature.

Impact

The impact of our English curriculum is a community of enthusiastic readers and writers, who enjoy showcasing their developing literacy knowledge and skills. Children are confident when encountering new vocabulary in their reading, and in including it in their writing. Pupils support one another in their discussions and peer-review each other's work, using the correct terminology when doing so and engaging in productive conversations. Outcomes of work in both English and topic books evidence the high expectations of written work and selecting cross-curricular texts supports this writing as well as competencies across the curriculum. Children write successfully across a range of forms and adapt their writing considering the purpose and audience.

Children achieve highly in the phonics screening check, and at the end of the EYFS. Attainment at the end of KS2 in reading and writing is above that of Hackney and the National Average.

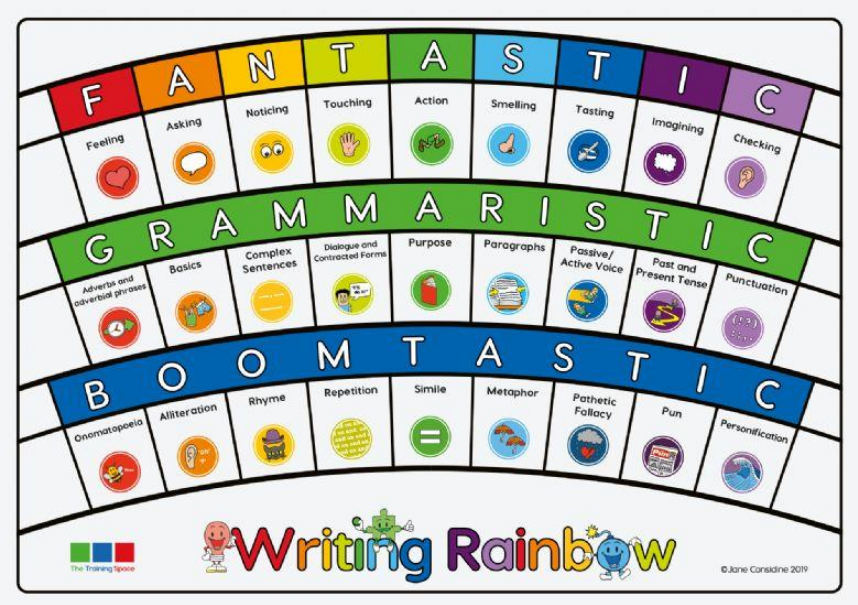
2. Teaching and Learning

Our English provision includes daily reading and writing lessons, short additional handwriting and spelling activities, and a varied enrichment programme. Adaptive teaching is integral to the teaching and learning of English, and high-leverage approaches, such as explicit modelling, oral rehearsal, vocabulary pre-teaching, sentence stems, scaffolded planning, supported transcription and purposeful challenge are implemented across lessons. These approaches are fluid and selected in response to individual need at a given point in time, enabling all pupils to access the same ambitious curriculum wherever appropriate.

We recognise that spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of the language that children hear and use is vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. Teachers ensure continual development of children's confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills. Children are assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others and teachers ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy any misconceptions. As part of the Write Stuff approach, a large portion of lesson time is dedicated to experiencing, considering and trying out different vocabulary. This supports children not only to broaden their vocabulary within lexical sets but to clearly understand nuance and word choice: both that of authors and in the choices they make themselves.

Other key features of this approach include:

- Inspirational, aspirational texts – a range of high-quality models of different text types and genres from within fiction, non-fiction and poetry provides purposeful and inspiring stimuli for writing as well as exemplification of writing knowledge and skills.
- Experience days – lived experiences that ensure all children develop the language and comprehension of texts that is required for effective speaking, reading and writing.
- 'Thinking Side' (partner talk, group discussion and vocabulary collection) – Children work with partners to discuss or 'chot' ideas. This enables them to broaden their understanding and language choices, as well as to connect spoken words to their written forms. This also allows them to prepare vocabulary before they write, and to learn from each other whilst taking on board feedback so as to improve their own ideas.
- The Writing Rainbow – there is a sharp focus on how sentences are constructed using tools, techniques and ideas (called the 3 zones of writing). These are illustrated with symbols as a writing rainbow:



The lenses from the writing rainbow are used the generate success criteria, to guide the children on how to produce a successful outcome. In each year group, the lenses are a vehicle through which children learn and recall many of the National Curriculum objectives for writing (particularly grammar objectives).

- Modelled Writing – teachers model writing and editing to demonstrate effective use of the tools, techniques and ideas of writing (the rainbow), as well as the high expectations they have. They verbally 'think aloud' in order to make the writing process explicit and provide examples of how to apply rich and varied vocabulary in writing. Teacher modelling, along with chunked lesson structure and a step-by-step approach to sentence construction is the primary way through which all children are scaffolded to achieve the learning intention.
- Deepen the Moment – children who are confident using the modelled skills to write are challenged to independently 'Deepen the Moment', by making writerly choices and selecting other appropriate lenses to enhance their writing without moving on to the next plot point or text section.
- Sentence Stacks – teachers use the ideas from the children to create shared pieces of writing. This enables the children to see the writing process in action, understand how texts fit together cohesively, and have pride and ownership over a finished piece on display.
- Independent writing and editing – independent writing sequences give children the opportunity to showcase everything they've learnt in their experience days and sentence stacking lessons.

Appendix 1, features of an English lesson, provides a child-friendly overview of many areas of the Write Stuff approach.

In order for children to be successful, independent readers, they need to possess a secure knowledge of word reading as well as confident comprehension skills. The relevant knowledge and skills are taught explicitly through our two reading approaches – Read Write Inc and Hackney Loves Reading – and are continually referred to during additional reading opportunities in literacy lessons and wider curriculum subjects.

Application of English knowledge and skills is reinforced across the curriculum. For example, at the end of every topic unit children produce their own written summary of what they have learnt throughout the entire unit of work. Other extended writing opportunities also take place during a topic, for example non-chronological reports. This provides children with the opportunity to demonstrate their literacy knowledge and skills, showing depth and mastery, while allowing them to write about a familiar topic without explicit literacy success criteria guidance. There is a strong focus on developing the quality, presentation and content of children's written work across all subjects. The standard of children's writing is expected to be the same high standard across all subjects – see assessment section for further information.

Displays are used throughout the school to promote reading, writing and discussion. We recognise the important role display has in the teaching and learning of literacy. Each class displays work, which celebrates a variety of children's achievements to a high standard of presentation. All aspects of the literacy learning process are illustrated through displays including vocabulary enrichment, grammar and punctuation support, the planning process and finished pieces of writing. Every classroom has an attractive book corner designed and made with the children to promote and celebrate a love of reading.

Learning outside of the classroom is also key to our English provision, and particularly relates to 'experience day' element of our writing approach. The subject leader will identify and map school trips that support at least one writing unit per year group per half term, using the School Trips Mapping document. The document outlines recommended trips that would build relevant experiences and evoke ideas and vocabulary that will support the subsequent writing. At the beginning of the year, teachers will choose one trip per half term from the list.

Teachers, in collaboration with SLT, subject and phase leaders, will ensure that there is diversity in the subjects that children are accessing school trips in. The category that each trip falls under, is also mapped and considered at planning stage to ensure a broad and balanced enrichment offer.

School Trip Categories							
Natural World – parks, woodland	Places of Worship	Architecture and Heritage - Historic sites and contemporary buildings	Artistic - Theatres, galleries and creative settings	Science and Discovery	Adventure Activity and Leisure Centres	Zoos and Aquaria	Regional/ national Museums

Children from reception to Y6 have the option of accessing school trip locations via the London underground as well as local bus routes.

The school will also seek to provide access to authors, poets, journalists and other relevant reading and writing role models from the local and wider community to enrich the curriculum.

3. **Assessment**

Assessment and monitoring are proportionate and draw on a range of evidence, including data, pupils' books, reading behaviours, lesson visits, pupil voice and moderation. This evidence is used to identify underachievement early and inform precise support, with particular attention to disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND, pupils with EAL and pupils who are not on track.

Formative assessment

The learning intention (LI), referring to the specific text type/purpose for writing is shared with the children, in the form of a 'Can I…?' question at the beginning of the lesson slides. The success criteria for the session (the 3 key tools, techniques or ideas that should be included to produce a successful outcome) are displayed prominently, and children in KS2 write each of these as subheadings in their books. This enables children, as well as teachers, to categorise and assess success within a lesson. Children are assessed formatively through thorough questioning and marking to ensure that teachers understand where children are currently in their learning and what their next steps need to be. This helps to ensure that maximum progress is made throughout literacy teaching across the school.

Teachers use verbal feedback to give timely, specific feedback during lessons to address inaccuracies (such as, for example, inconsistencies in the use of capital letters, punctuation or grammatical structures) and to support the development of spoken language. Written feedback in red pen is used where further attention or pupil follow up is needed. As part of this, in each sentence stacking lesson, an appropriate spelling error (where present) is corrected and a model provided for the pupil to practise the correction in green pen prior to the next lesson. Teachers may also use a similar prompt when handwriting and grammar needs improvement. As there is a strong focus on developing the accuracy, quality and presentation of children's written work across all subjects, this sort of marking will be evident beyond English books.

The majority of marking takes the form of highlighting. If a sentence or word is highlighted, it indicates a successful feature of the child's work. For example, this could indicate:

- evidence that the key tools, ideas or techniques for that English lesson have been applied;
- use of key vocabulary (e.g. statutory spellings for the phase) or ambitious vocabulary;
- Good use of grammar for effect beyond what has been directed in the success criteria, or any other focus from the English National Curriculum Program of study.

During lessons where no written outcome is produced (e.g. experience lessons), teachers will use formative assessment to ascertain that children have met the learning goals of the lesson. They will also use the spoken language statements from the National Curriculum Program of Study to ensure verbal feedback explicitly instructs children on their success and areas for development in these areas. The lesson slides of lessons without a recorded outcome will indicate the key knowledge and skills covered and how these were taught, including what the children did.

In reading, teacher assessment is a continual and constant process that helps teachers and leaders to ensure children are reading the correctly levelled materials, and that comprehension tasks are pitched appropriately, to move children on in their learning. In our small-group RWI sessions, every child's reading is heard and assessed by an adult every day. In HLR, every child is heard reading at their instructional level at least once over the course of a week. Teachers in KS2 use reading records to make more detailed notes on the reading fluency and comprehension of the lowest attaining 20% of readers and target these children, as well as those in receipt of the PPG, for additional reading opportunities. These identified children will read with the class teacher at their instructional level at least twice but usually more, over a week, as well as with other members of staff. Across the school, weekly comprehension activities support formative teacher judgements.

In addition to the above, regularly timetabled summative assessment opportunities are planned into the academic year to ensure that the progress in knowledge and skills that each child makes is accurately measured. Summative assessment opportunities are used to support teachers in their assessment judgements and should not replace teacher judgement based on experience of the child in everyday lessons.

Writing Assessment

As well as ongoing formative assessment teachers from Reception to Year 6 assess the writing of every child at least half termly, through analysis of an independently produced piece.

Teachers look for evidence of the child meeting objectives from the National Curriculum Program of Study in the writing outcome, and highlight the statements on the marking sticker accordingly. Extended written outcomes in Y2 and Y6 are assessed in accordance with the statutory Teacher Assessment Framework. In other year groups, the NC PoS has been used to create similar frameworks that progress towards these TAF statements at the end of each key stage. The statements highlighted by the teacher will indicate the extent to which the writing demonstrates that the child is –

- Working towards the age expectation
- Working at the age expectation
- Working at greater depth within the age expectation

These statements enable consistency in judgements across pupils and teachers, and support the internal moderation process. Teachers also take into account work completed throughout the term to support their termly judgement. Independent work always matches the genre / topic that children are currently studying and is part of the unit of work. As the assessment follows the topics studies, over the course of the year, most writing genres will be assessed.

4. **Planning and Resources**

From Y1 – Y6, the Write Stuff unit plans are used as a basis for planning in most cases. This helps to ensure that coverage of the National Curriculum is secure and that year group expectations are met. However, as the Write Stuff is an approach and not a scheme, teachers are also able to plan a unit using a book/model of their choice. In these instances, coverage is verified by the teachers and subject lead. Teachers have access to plans online.

We use RWI and Nelson handwriting resources to support the teaching of handwriting in EYFS and KS1. Handwriting teaching resources are accessed online and additional practise books are stored within individual classrooms. Further detail about discrete handwriting and spelling teaching is provided in sections 7 and 8.

HLR texts and core texts used for writing are stored within classrooms. As well as these individual resources, some literacy resources stored throughout the school and are used on a regular basis.

KS1 Reading Room
Multiple copies of books (for guided reading) are kept in the KS1 group room. The guided reading books are levelled using the book band system. Books from the 'Oxford Reading Tree' are also kept here and these are sent home in addition to children's weekly library book.

RWI Resources
RWI Resources are kept in cupboards in the bottom hall near the Reception and Year 1 classrooms. (For more information on this see RWI Policy).

KS1 Library
The KS1 library has an excellent stock of fiction and non-fiction books. The library is timetabled for KS1 children to enjoy reading books in the library. They are able to take books out weekly.

KS2 Reading room
Multiple copies of levelled high quality books are kept here for 'Hackney Loves Reading' sessions as well as dual language books.

The KS2 library
Like the KS1 library, the KS2 library has an extensive range of fiction and non-fiction books and is used by children from Y2-Y6. The librarian is responsible for ordering and cataloguing books. The PA to the Headteacher organises the timetable for classes and the librarian opens the library at lunchtimes on a rolling basis.

5. **Organisation – KS1 and KS2**

In Y1-Y6, English lessons (writing) run for at least 1 hour, 5 days a week. Reading lessons are approximately 40 minutes long. When children have completed the RWI phonics program from Year 2 upwards they participate in Hackney Loves Reading lessons. These take place 5 x week and cover the National Curriculum reading objectives as well as many of the oracy and discussion objectives too.

Hackney Loves Reading (HLR) is taught as a whole class. Two days per week the children work in mixed ability pairs to read and analyse a class book at the age expected level. On the next two days, the children work in ability pairs to read and analyse a text at their instructional level. Once a week, children complete a 'Big Picture' comprehension activity based on a seen or unseen passage. The reading skills explicitly taught in HLR are:

- predicting
- clarifying
- asking questions
- summarising
- inferring

- making connections
- evaluating

In Y1 – 6 writing (English) lessons are created in conjunction with the Write Stuff approach and focus on developing the knowledge and skills needed for writing effectively in a particular genre or text type. E.g. instruction writing or suspenseful story writing. Appendix 1 – the lesson structure poster for writing lessons – clearly shows how these lessons are organised. Development of vocabulary and spoken language underpins writing development and is a focus across units, with oracy playing a central part in experience lessons. Where possible, English lessons will have a cross-curricular approach and support work done in other areas of the curriculum when topics allow close links.

Knowledge and skills from the NC PoS have been mapped across lessons and units to make sure that children are able to develop mastery of all writing objectives. These range from word level knowledge such as using expanded noun phrases to sentence level skills where children are able to demonstrate their knowledge of increasingly complex sentence structures.

In addition to the above, handwriting and spelling are taught through regular, discrete sessions. The timetable for this is as follows. Further detail is provided in sections 7 and 8.

KS1	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	Session 1 - Spelling Focus rule/word grouping taught. Patterns are explored and word definitions clarified. Children practise reading and recognising the words with a short activity e.g. word search, highlight the key words in a sentence	Session 2 – Combined handwriting and spelling practice. Children complete activities in their Nelson handwriting books, using taught graphemes to spell words and sentences.	Session 3 - Spelling Focus rule revisited. Children practise writing their weekly spelling words using taught letter formation (or joins in Y2, when and if appropriate). Dictation used as part of this session.	Session 4 – Combined handwriting and spelling practice. Children complete activities in their Nelson handwriting books, using taught graphemes to spell words and sentences.	Session 5 Spelling assessment. New focus rule may be introduced.
Year 1 / 2 children who attend phonics will also complete spelling work using taught sounds 3x a week in these sessions. Year 2 HLR children should complete brief additional spelling practice using the weekly list or statutory spellings at least 3x a week at 9.05 (similar to KS2). Additional spelling practise through dictation also takes place in Year 1 and 2.					

*In the run-up to the Phonics Screening Check, the KS1 afternoon sessions focusing on taught GPCs are replaced with additional targeted phonics practise for small groups.

KS2	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	Session 1 Focus rule/word grouping is taught. Patterns are explored and word definitions clarified. Children practise reading and recognising the words with an activity (e.g. a game, wordsearch, or finding the words within sentences/a passage of text). This session may also be completed on the Friday of the preceding week.	Session 2 Combined handwriting and spelling practice. Teachers model joins relevant to the word list, then model writing each of the spelling focus words. Children practise writing each of the words using handwriting paper.	Session 3 – if required Combined handwriting and spelling practice. Depending on the needs of the cohort, this session can be used to repeat single-word writing (session 2) or to break up sentence dictation (session 4) into 5 sentences per session.	Session 4 Combined handwriting and spelling practice. Teachers model writing a sentence that includes a spelling word on handwriting guide paper, drawing attention to taught joins and morphology. Children then apply their spelling and handwriting learning to write a dictated sentence for each of their 10 spelling words.	Session 5 Spelling assessment. New focus rule may also be introduced on this day.
The above sessions are explicitly taught and include detailed teacher modelling. In addition to these, children across KS2 also benefit from opportunities for independent practise and consolidation, such as use of the 'look, cover, write and check' method. Practises such as these take place during soft starts and in other short bursts depending on class timetables. In Year 3, additional modelled teaching of joins also occurs on a weekly basis.					

6. **EYFS**

In Nursery and Reception literacy lessons take place 4 times per week and are based on a core text, which changes on a weekly basis. The core text is selected to fit with the wider topic in EYFS, for example Handa's Surprise might be used to add depth to a topic on Journeys. In Nursery and Reception, this text is explored further through focus activities led by an adult. In Reception, literacy focus activities are adapted in response to children's needs and are completed once a week for each child and are recorded in their literacy book.

Across the EYFS, literacy knowledge and skills are also developed through the continuous provision of the environment. Each classroom has resources available to be selected by the children to support their emergent reading and writing skills. These vary from phonics sounds cards to mini-books. A well-resourced book corner highlights the importance of reading to the children, which occurs at whole class level ('story time') at least twice a day, and the writing tables have activities based around the skills being taught that week.

In Nursery and Reception children also practise writing their names using self-registration boards, and from the Summer term Reception children replace self-registration with opportunities to practise applying phonic knowledge or writing irregular high frequency words.

RWI is taught 5 x per week in Reception in streamed ability groups based on the sounds the children know and their ability to blend as they read. In the second half of the year the children in Nursery also begin to learn their sounds. (See RWI Policy for further information).

7. Handwriting

Purpose and approach

Handwriting is taught as a core transcription skill so that pupils can write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed, freeing attention for composition. Teaching follows the statutory progression from secure posture, pencil grip and letter formation in EYFS and KS1 to appropriate joining, fluency and choice of style and writing tool in KS2.

We use Nelson handwriting as the basis for our approach, providing consistency in letter formation and joining. Handwriting is taught explicitly through regular short sessions, careful teacher modelling and guided practice, so that attention can be drawn to patterns that support letter formation and appropriate letter-joins, and pupils are expected to apply it across the curriculum. From Reception to Y2, Nelson Workbooks are used for the majority of handwriting practise, although there are also opportunities to practise applying these handwriting skills to weekly spelling words (supporting the children to become increasingly secure with grapheme-phoneme correspondences). In Year 3, cursive writing is consolidated using teaching based on letter shape families as well as the types of join. Across KS2, outcomes are recorded in booklets created for the integrated practise of spelling and handwriting; section 8 sets out the school's approach to spelling.

Teachers will make sure that children are concentrating on 'the 3 'P's' during handwriting sessions. These are -

- Paper: the paper children write on should be angled slightly away from the writing hand.
- Posture: sitting up straight, both feet on the floor, adequate desk space.
- Pencil grip: tripod grip is the most efficient way of holding a pencil (held lightly between thumb and forefinger, about 3cm from the point with the middle finger providing additional support).

For younger children, this may be referred to as the 'Writing 123': one hand resting on the paper, two feet flat on the floor, three fingers holding the pencil correctly.

Teachers adapt equipment, modelling, the amount and frequency of practice and recording methods to remove barriers while maintaining the intended progression. Additional fine-motor or transcription support is provided when assessment indicates that a pupil is not developing secure formation, legibility or fluency.

Assessment and monitoring

Handwriting is assessed through pupils' everyday writing rather than during independent writing or display pieces alone. Teachers and leaders consider formation, spacing, joining, legibility, fluency and transfer across subjects. Criteria for assessment may include:

- Does the child adapt the correct posture?
- Does the child hold the pencil correctly?
- Does the child use the correct movements when forming/joining? Are shapes/joins being made correctly?
- Does the child write fluently?
- Is the handwriting generally legible and in line with age expectation?
- Are spaces between letters, words and lines correct?
- Is the writing size appropriate?
- Is the child's handwriting developing in-line with statutory curricula?
- Is there progression in the quality of handwriting from one year to the next?

Throughout the writing process, and during written work in the wider curriculum, children are also encouraged to assess their own handwriting. A visual prompt to present work neatly and with a high standard of handwriting can be found on lesson slides for children to refer to in order to reflect and assess.

The expectation for a high standard of handwriting is always clearly communicated prior to writing tasks. Neat presentation is always recognised and praised by the class teacher.

The wider assessment, inclusion and leadership arrangements in sections 3, 10 and 11 also apply to handwriting.

8. Spelling

Purpose and approach

First and foremost, our pupils are given opportunities to explore and investigate the English language and its patterns through speaking and listening. As pupils move through our key stages, they develop, consolidate and secure the skills needed to read, share, enjoy and use language. Exposure to broad, exciting and ambitious vocabulary is the precursor to its written use and spelling, and our aim to encourage creativity, challenge and confidence within language use is a central part of teaching and learning.

Spelling is taught explicitly so that pupils build accurate, increasingly automatic transcription and can devote greater attention to composition. Phonic knowledge and grapheme-phoneme correspondence underpin early spelling through RWI; teaching then develops pupils' knowledge of orthographic patterns, morphology, etymology and statutory word lists. From Year 1 to Year 6, year-group overviews based on National Curriculum English Appendix 1 support progression and coverage. Pupils receive regular short teaching and practice, including teacher modelling, word investigation, dictation and retrieval. Spelling and handwriting are taught together where this strengthens knowledge of letter patterns and word structure; see section 5 for the timetable in KS1 and 2, and section 7 for further information on handwriting.

Weekly word lists and checks may support practice and retrieval, but they do not replace explicit teaching or assessment of application in independent writing. Assessment is continual, drawing on multiple sources and used to identify precise gaps, plan timely keep-up support and evaluate whether pupils transfer taught spelling patterns and strategies into independent writing. Examples of assessment include:

- Spellings in an unseen, dictated sentences
- Spellings in independent writing
- Results of weekly spelling tests

The success of the school's approaches to spelling is evidenced by high results in the phonics screening check at the end of year 1 and in children's achievement in the GPS standard assessment tests at the end of KS2, where our results are above both the Hackney and National Average. Outcomes of written work further evidence the children's confidence and accuracy in spelling across the school. Our weekly timetabled 'short burst sessions' of handwriting and spelling have raised the profile of orthography in our classrooms, and an improvement in weekly spelling assessment results have been reported across the key stages.

Teaching is adapted to remove barriers for pupils with SEND, pupils with EAL and pupils with specific literacy difficulties while maintaining access to ambitious content. The assessment, inclusion and leadership arrangements in sections 3, 10 and 11 also apply to spelling, and home practice is addressed in section 12 and Appendix 2.

9. Equal Opportunities

All children have equal opportunities to reach their full potential across the English curriculum, regardless of their race, gender, cultural background, and ability, or of any physical or sensory disability. Tasks, activities and pedagogical approaches are carefully

considered and designed to ensure appropriate challenge for all learners. This entitlement applies equally to the spelling and handwriting curriculum, including access to explicit teaching, appropriate resources and suitably ambitious practice.

10. Inclusion

All pupils are entitled to an ambitious English curriculum. Adaptations are used to remove barriers to participation and understanding without unnecessarily reducing the intended curriculum content or expectations.

Children with English as an additional language:

It is vital that children who have English as an additional language have English modelled accurately by all staff at school. Collaborative work with peers (where English is their first language) is essential and EAL children are provided with consistent opportunities for this verbal interaction. Dual language books are available for each class (available from the Inclusion Department) and each classroom has a display key words associated with current topics being studied. All teachers include a range of strategies to support children with EAL which includes: teacher and peer modelling and consistent use of visual support, repetition and recasting of language features, word banks and scaffolded speaking and listening activities.

Teachers work with the Inclusion Coordinator to best meet the needs of individuals within their classes. Children who are new to English are assessed and support is put in place by the Inclusion team to help them make rapid progress.

In addition, class teachers deploy teaching assistants to provide targeted support and the use of home language support and peer-buddying is encouraged.

Assessment data is used to inform and allocate appropriate intervention, including speech and language groups. The school will also support EAL children and their families through drop in sessions for parents and carers, in line with the inclusion policy.

Pupils with SEND

Class teachers inform the SENDCO and Inclusion Department if they are concerned that a child may have underlying learning difficulties. Quality-first teaching and high-leverage approaches within adaptive teaching are used to support all pupils. Other support for pupils with SEND may include the following, as appropriate:

- Intervention and small-group writing teaching based on class texts
- Volunteer readers
- Reading buddies
- Language groups
- Social skills groups
- Booster classes
- Toe by Toe
- Get Spelling scheme
- One-to-one RWI

(see SEND policy for further details).

Spelling and handwriting
Where pupils have gaps in spelling or handwriting, teachers adapt instruction, practice, equipment and recording methods while maintaining access to the intended curriculum

wherever appropriate. Support may include explicit modelling, shorter and more frequent practice, alternative writing tools, fine-motor support, enlarged or visual models, pictorial vocabulary support, targeted spelling or handwriting groups and carefully selected home practice. The English subject leader works with phase leads and the SENDCo to evaluate whether these adaptations and any keep-up support successfully remove barriers and enable pupils to apply taught transcription knowledge increasingly independently.

11. Role of the Subject Leader

The role of the subject leader in literacy is to coordinate the teaching of reading, writing and communication across all phases of the school. This seeks to secure high quality literacy provision for every child, including outstanding literacy teaching and learning, effective use of resources and the highest standards of achievement for all.

Key duties that the English subject leader will undertake over the course of the year include:

- Monitoring of English, reading, handwriting and spelling books
- Reading walks and participation in lesson observations
- Planning and organising literacy enrichment opportunities and competitions
- Helping to identify, facilitate and provide support for the subject-specific professional development needs of staff
- Liaising with SLT to implement school improvement priorities and report on actions, progress and impact
- Liaising with the school SENDCO to best support children experiencing difficulty in literacy
- Organising, maintaining and cataloguing resources
- Keeping abreast of new initiatives in English teaching, including attendance of borough forums and dissemination of key content.
- Leading a coherent annual monitoring cycle that includes planning review, book looks, pupil voice, lesson visits, phonics and reading data review, and writing moderation
- Reviewing the sequencing, implementation and impact of spelling and handwriting teaching, including the accessibility and ambition of provision for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND
- Working with EYFS and KS1 leaders to maintain strong phonics and early-reading provision and a coherent transition into reading fluency and comprehension
- Reviewing the English text spine and enrichment offer for quality, representation, accessibility and participation

Lesson slides and outcomes for each unit of work will be monitored by the SLT, in collaboration with subject and phase leaders. This will inform any necessary follow-up action and support, to ensure that school systems are consistent across year groups, age phases across the school throughout the curriculum. This is part of the school's commitment to ensuring a high quality, broad and stimulating curriculum.

Regular opportunities will be provided throughout the year for moderation of children's achievement, according to the programme of study for their year group. The subject leader will use the outcomes of this process to support further development in design and technology, as well as the findings from regular book looks (where teachers across year groups will view outcomes of work in each subject). The book look process itself will provide an opportunity to recognise, celebrate and disseminate good practice, and inform judgements as to the progress being made towards identified whole school and subject priorities. Wherever possible, models and that the children have created will be seen as part

of this process. In-house moderation and Book looks will be scheduled to take place within teachers' directed time.

12. Parents

We recognise how crucial the home/school link is for supporting children to have the highest standards of achievement in literacy. At the 'Meet your teacher' meeting at the beginning of every academic year, the literacy standards of the year group are explained, as well as further meetings throughout the year to support parents to understand new literacy initiatives. Regular RWI meetings for parents also take place throughout the year to support parents to help their children's phonics progress.

Homework is a crucial component in a successful literacy home/school link and is organised as follows.

Reception

- RWI sound sheet, ditty or phonics book to be read at home in accordance with the RWI teaching cycle
- One picture book chosen by the child from the class Book Corner to be taken home each week (this is to be shared with an adult)
- From the Autumn term, children also take home two Oxford Reading Tree books

KS1

- RWI phonics book to be read at home in accordance with the RWI teaching cycle
- One picture book chosen by the children from the KS1 Library to be taken home each week
- Weekly spellings sent home for practise and consolidation each week

KS2

- One book chosen by the children from the KS2 Library to be taken home each week (to be changed as and when it is has been read due to the differing lengths of more advanced books)
- Weekly spellings sent home for practise and consolidation each week

In addition to these homework tasks, children may also be asked to complete literacy activities at home to address areas that they find particularly challenging. This could include additional spelling or handwriting homework. Children may also be given the opportunity to complete literacy-related competition entries at home or other literacy activities which support their reading and writing development.
Strategies to support spelling practice at home are provided in Appendix 2. Handwriting-specific homework is used where additional practice is needed, with expectations and suitable approaches communicated clearly to families.

Appendix 1: Features of an English Lesson (The Write Stuff Approach)

FEATURES OF AN ENGLISH LESSON

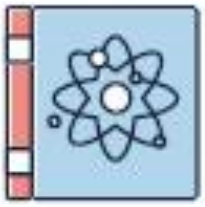
ENGLISH UNITS

All units are inspired by brilliant books or texts. We use these to learn to write different types of...



FICTION

NON-FICTION





POETRY

TYPES OF LESSON

The 4 types of lesson are:

EXPERIENCE	FIND THE SHAPE	SENTENCE STACKING	INDEPENDENT WRITING
			
Experience lessons can be trips out, visitors in, drama activities or anything that helps us connect to the text and build our vocabulary.	Here, we study the structure of a specific poem or non-fiction text. We learn what it is made of and how it fits together.	These lessons are where we learn our craft! We think deeply about word choices and construct impactful sentences.	At the end of each unit we independently apply our learning. We plan, write and edit texts that we are proud of.

SENTENCE STACKING

1.



LEARNING INTENTION

My teacher shares:

- The goal or purpose of our writing (including who it is written for)
- Where we are in the story plot or text structure
- Success criteria - grammar, techniques and ideas to ensure success

2.



PREPARE

We write or stick the date and learning intention.

In KS2, we divide the 'Thinking Side' of the double page we are working on into 3 equal rows, one for each learning chunk.



3. LEARNING CHUNKS

INITIATE

A photo, video clip, book, soundscape or object sparks our imagination. We explore vocabulary and gather words on our 'Thinking Side' page.



MODEL

Using grammar or techniques from the success criteria, our teacher models crafting a sentence that achieves its purpose.



ENABLE

Now it is our turn to write a successful sentence. Our challenge is to 'deepen the moment', which means writing further sentences that add detail or impact while staying in the same text shape or story moment.



REPEAT THESE STEPS FOR 2 MORE LEARNING CHUNKS

4. REVIEW

We decide if we have been successful, and share and celebrate our work.

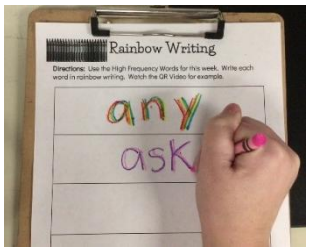
The statutory spelling requirements are set out in National Curriculum English Appendix 1 and are reflected in the school's year-group spelling overviews.

Appendix 2: Supporting Spelling at Home

Please see below for ideas to support your child with learning new spellings and revising previously learned ones.

- making words out of blu-tac, pipe cleaners, or other materials that can be bent to form letters.
- Rainbow writing (writing over words in different colours)
- Making words out of Lego bricks, writing in sand or shaving cream with fingers
- Writing with different parts of the body e.g. elbows, cutting letters out of a variety of materials.

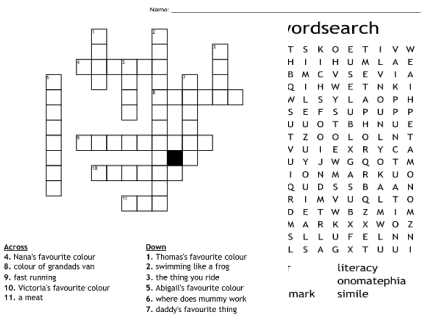






There are a variety of online tools that can create crosswords, word searches, and other activities that can support retaining spellings:

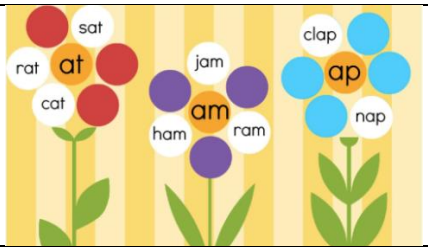
- https://crosswordlabs.com/
- https://thewordsearch.com/



Boggle is often recommended as a game that supports generating spellings, playable online (https://wordshake.com/boggle) or physically.



Grouping words together in 'families' that rhyme, or have similar endings, can support learners to remember whole groups – e.g. the following words are in the 'eight' family: eight, weight, freight, eighty, sleigh.



Making up songs or chanting spellings can provide multiple memory hooks to help to recall spellings. We see this in singing the alphabet song, for months of the year and many more. Tricky three-letter words can be sung to the tune of Jingle Bells or Three Blind Mice, four-letter words can use YMCA or Twinkle Twinkle Little Star, five-letter words can use Row, Row, Row Your Boat or BINGO, 6-letter words can use This Old Man or Happy Birthday. There are many more options.



'Speaking for spelling' can be useful to emphasise difficult-to-hear or silent sounds in words, such as saying the /k/ sound in 'knife', or splitting up 'Wed-nes-day' to clearly say the /d/ sound. Another way to use this strategy is to over-enunciate sounds that may be unstressed such as the /or/ in 'actor' and 'tractor'.



Mnemonic devices can be used to remember spellings, particularly for irregular words. This involves making a sentence with the letters in the word, e.g. **E**very **V**ampire **E**ats **R**aw **Y**ak. It can be helpful to start the mnemonic with the word it is spelling out, and drawing a picture to go along with the word can provide an extra memory 'hook'.





Linking spellings to pictures can support remembering tricky words, such as writing An island **is land** surrounded by water, along with drawing a picture of an island. Drawing pictures provides an additional memory hook for spellings, and can support remembering a tricky part of a word, or a tricky sequence of letters.



Teaching learners to recognise words within words, such as ‘busy’ being spelled ‘bus+y’ (also see ‘an island is land’ above) can support learners to both decode unfamiliar words and remember spellings.

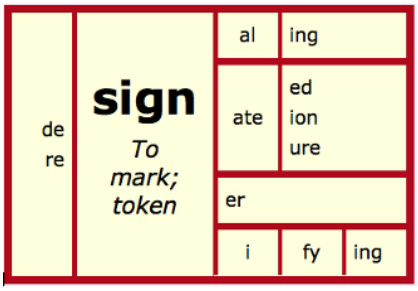
Saturday ship/wreck piece snow/man

Direct teaching of homophones (words that sound the same but have different spellings) can support learners to notice and use the differences between them. Homophones are most efficiently taught together, teaching ‘bear/bare’ or ‘hair/hare’ together can make links between the spellings and allow learners to more efficiently differentiate between them. Homophones should be taught with context, such as teaching ‘bear’ and ‘bare’ using the phrases ‘The wolf bared its teeth’ and ‘I put cream on my bare arms’. This will support learners in choosing the correct homophone.



Encouraging learners to look at the morphology, or the structure of words and their meanings. The spellings of prefixes and suffixes tends to stay consistent across

language, even when the sounds change, for example past tense words tend to use the suffix –ed, whether it sounds like /d/, /t/ or /id/. Another example would be that the ‘g’ in ‘sign’ looks very strange, until put in the context of the word ‘signal’, ‘signalling’. Similarly, the ‘w’ in ‘two’ is often taught as an irregularity, but in the context of words like ‘twins’, ‘twelve’, ‘twenty’, ‘twice’ it regains its meaning.



This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing body.

Policy Agreed: **July 2026**
Policy Review Date: **July 2027**