



English Policy

At Howley Grange we strive to ensure that our curriculum enables all children leave our school with the wisdom and courage to make the right decisions now and in their future.

Aims

It is our intention that as our pupils' journey through the school, our English curriculum enables each child to experience success, challenge and enjoyment in reading, writing and discussion through high quality teaching and creative learning activities.

We are determined that every pupil will read easily, fluently and enthusiastically for both pleasure and information, as we believe that reading is the cornerstone of their learning. Through developing a range of reading strategies, our pupils will explore and deepen their understanding of a wide range of genres, authors and styles and be able to voice their opinions and thoughts about the texts read.

We want every child to write independently with confidence and clarity for a variety of purposes and audiences across the curriculum, whilst developing their own individual flair and style. This will involve writing with grammatical accuracy, applying spelling knowledge, patterns and rules correctly plus using neat handwriting. The link with reading is fundamental in exposing our pupils to a wide range of engaging, high-quality texts, from which they will fuel their imagination and acquire new vocabulary alongside knowledge about themselves and the world in which they live. We also aim to develop a culture where children take pride in their writing and can re-read, edit and improve their work as it progresses.

We believe that spoken language is essential to the development of reading and writing and is intertwined within school activities. We encourage our pupils to share their own voices alongside listening to and respecting those of others.

We intend to develop positive attitudes to reading and writing across all subjects and so foster a lifelong love of both whilst recognising that every child has their own starting point for learning from which they are expected to make progress. At Howley Grange we also recognise the importance of parents and carers in supporting their children to learn and strive to encourage a successful home-school partnership to facilitate this.

Finally, we recognise the utmost importance of reading, writing and speaking and listening as key life-skills and crucial in achieving our overall curriculum aim in readiness for each child's continuing journey in education and beyond.

Curriculum Planning

To ensure all of our children have the appropriate age-related knowledge and skills, English is implemented at Howley Grange using the Early Year Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework and Key Stage 1 (KS1) and Key Stage 2 (KS2) National Curriculum Programmes of Study as the foundation. We have developed our own progression of reading and writing skills through the school using these objectives, which in turn forms the basis of each year group's assessment mark book.

We have an integrated approach to curriculum design and have developed our own Creative Curriculum using the National Curriculum as its basis. A termly medium-term English overview detailing the reading, writing, phonics/spelling and speaking and listening skills and activities to be taught is planned by staff from the progression document and adapted further in daily lessons to reflect the ongoing needs of the pupils in the class. The English activities are first and foremost creative and purposeful; they may be linked to the class reading book, to the topic theme or to the subject area if it is a cross-curricular activity.

Teaching and Learning of English

Children at Howley Grange receive a daily English lesson. Throughout the week teachers ensure there are opportunities for children to gain specifically chosen English skills in reading, writing, phonics and spelling. Once these skills have been gained, the children are given the opportunity to apply them when completing an extended writing task and reinforced in other subject areas. In addition, teachers incorporate speaking and listening opportunities within the delivery of English and across the curriculum.

Writing

Our writing lessons are sequenced and culminate in a final piece of independent writing and often based on Pie Corbett's Talk4Writing sequence. The children are taught the features and language of the text before moving onto modelling and shared writing. Once their writing is planned it is then written independently before being edited and improved. Within this process is a focus on spelling, grammar and punctuation linked to the genre. Writing is always taught through a quality text that has been purposefully chosen to inspire and motivate learning. Whilst exploring the text, the children are exposed to a wealth of vocabulary and language to create their own ideas. Our writing curriculum is not static - it is led by the needs and interests of the pupils.

Each class has a working wall where the writing process is evident. Here, key learning, vocabulary and ideas are displayed to support and inspire the pupils in their own writing and creativity.

Phonics and spellings

In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, phonics is taught using the Letters and Sounds program as its foundation and follow the lesson structure of review, teach, practise and apply model. Following rigorous assessment, groupings are formed within Reception, Years 1 and 2. Children receive a phonics session 4x per week. A variety of approaches are encouraged so that children can hear, identify and use sounds in their reading and writing. Frequent reviewing and assessing takes place and there is flexibility between the different phase based groups.

From Year 3 onwards, Rising Star spelling scheme is used on a weekly basis to teach whole class spellings. Many of these words would be included in a class's weekly spelling list that would be tested the following week.

Handwriting and Presentation

We use the Kinetic Letters program to teach our younger children the foundations in order to build towards a joined and fluent style of handwriting. Kinetic Letters revolves around four strands of learning:

- Making bodies stronger/ motor and spatial preparation
- Learning the letters/using dynamic movement for learning the letter shapes
- Holding the pencil/optimal pencil hold for speed and legibility
- Developing flow and fluency/speed and stamina developed.

Older children are then encouraged to continue to use a joined, fluent style of handwriting. Staff are encouraged to model best practice during all lessons.

Reading

The systematic teaching of phonics has a high priority throughout EYFS and KS1 and is instrumental in each child becoming a reader. During this early stage of reading, children gain the phonetic knowledge and development of vocabulary needed as a foundation for reading. The children are taught to use phonics as their primary method of reading unfamiliar words whilst being introduced to other strategies which help with meaning, understanding, fluency, accuracy and expression. Towards the end of KS1, reading lessons continue to develop decoding and fluency in addition to more formal skills of developing understanding of a text. In KS2, the focus moves to widening vocabulary, continuing to develop age-appropriate comprehension and analytical skills plus reading for a range of purposes across the curriculum and at home.

In EYFS and KS1, the teaching of reading is organised using carousel of Guided Reading activities. During Year 3, there is a gradual change to Whole Class Reading, which is continued through Key Stage 2.

Throughout the school, we use high-quality texts in reading lessons which allow children to widen their experience and expand their vocabulary. These texts are read, shared and explored, vocabulary is introduced, and understanding is deepened and extended; a range of reading taking place and children work in a variety of group sizes. Children are encouraged to talk through and share their answers before recording their responses in a variety of ways. Evidence of reading activities is shown in English books or Reading Journals.

Across the school, VIPERS is used to improve the comprehension of a text in specific reading lessons or when a book is being read daily, allowing staff and children to focus on specific question types linked to the six reading domains.

Pupils are also given opportunities to apply and develop their reading skills across all areas of the curriculum in order to understand the purpose and potential that all reading brings to learning.

Individual Reading

In EYFS and KS1, pupils read books which match their individual phonic knowledge from our new Bug Club Phonics scheme. If needed, these are supplemented by other phonetically decodable books available from Oxford Reading Tree. Currently, as the children move into Year 2 as confident readers, they become established on the higher colour bands of Oxford Reading Tree. EYFS and KS1 Children read individually to an adult at least once a week.

Accelerated Reader has been recently introduced from Year 3 onwards. The books are currently being colour banded according to the Book Level and children are allocated a Book Level to read based on STAR Reading assessment results, teacher assessment and quiz results to ensure continued challenge and widening of each child's reading range. Once a child has read a book, they take an online quiz before choosing the next book.

All children are encouraged to read at school and at home and have a reading diary to use as a record of their reading. Pupils and parents are encouraged to write comments about the books read, so facilitating the link between home and school.

Assessment

Continuous, formative assessment is an integral part of our teaching cycle in all aspects of English. Teachers plan assessment for learning opportunities within their lessons, the

outcomes of which, along with evidence from the marking of children's work is used to record the achievement of knowledge, skills and understanding. Teachers then use this information to plan for next steps of learning.

We use *GAPPS* as a tool to mark children's writing and encourage self-editing.

In addition, each year group has a 'Writing Progression' Folder in which they collect half-termly samples of work evidencing writing assessed as at the expected standard, working towards the expected standard or working above the expected standard for their year group using an end-of-year framework for each year group. Staff are given opportunities to moderate this work with other year groups to deepen and share experiences of assessing writing. The folder also provides evidence of the progression of writing across each year group.

In KS2, children complete STAR reading assessments regularly throughout the year. Pupils also complete termly Rising Star reading assessments, with Year 6 using previous reading SAT papers. These allow staff to monitor progress, address issues, plan for intervention and ensure the level of Accelerated Reader book is correct.

Meeting each child's needs

At Howley Grange, we aim to provide opportunities for all pupils to succeed and reach their potential in English, no matter what their starting points. Those children not meeting their expected targets are identified from teacher assessments and observations, then strategies put into place and monitored at Wave 1, Wave 2 or Wave 3 levels. The intervention will take many forms - from 1:1 daily reading to small group activities. Additional reading schemes such as Project X may be used.

Challenge for the more able children is provided through careful planning and differentiation of independent tasks

Parent partnership

We believe in the importance of working together with parents in all aspects of school life. Workshops are held for parents to show how phonics is taught and its link to reading, how Accelerated Reader works and how to support their child with reading at home. We also use our website and Parentmails to share resources, ideas and updates regarding English at Howley Grange. Parents are updated on their child's progress in English in the form of written reports and parent-teacher meetings three times a year. Parental support is important for homework in all classes. In EYFS and KS1, in addition to adding comments to their child's reading diary to indicate how they child is reading at home, questions to support parents with talking about the story read are also sent home. In Year 2, a reading activity becomes part of the homework that is sent home.

It is expected that KS2 pupils read at home as part of Accelerated Reader and again, parents are asked to support this. A reading activity is given for homework to children in Year 3 to Year 6.

The Role of the Subject Leader

The Subject Leader is responsible for monitoring the planning, teaching and assessing of English across the whole school. In conjunction with teachers, they ensure all resources are up to date and relevant for the topics being taught. They help colleagues to develop their own subject expertise, knowledge and understanding. Action plans and policies for English are the responsibility of the subject leader.

Covid Catch-up (2020-21)

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent closing of schools, various interventions have been put in place for the 2020-21 academic year to ensure rigorous assessment of where children have 'dropped behind' and make sure that children make rapid progress to address misconceptions and 'close the gap'. In English, this has been achieved using the following steps:

1. Children have been assessed in the following areas: Reading Comprehension; Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling; Handwriting; Phonics; Reading Age. Subsequently, a thorough QLA will have been completed against each assessment to analyse strengths and areas for development across the class.
2. Teachers consider which interventions and changes they feel are necessary for specific children or groups of children. From this, specific targets will be set and interventions, changes or adaptations to teaching may be put into place.
3. These interventions are reviewed half-termly to ensure they are fit for purpose and have an impact on children's learning.

S Graham
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Date of next review January 2021 (in light of the continued progression of the English Curriculum Document)