

# English Policy

April 2023

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## **Our vision**

At Woodborough Woods, we 'Grow Together' following Jesus' example to 'Love your neighbour as you love yourself' (Matthew 22:37-39) because through love for one another, we can build a strong learning community ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to flourish.

## **Intent**

At Woodborough Wood's, we believe that literacy and communication are key life skills. Through the English curriculum, we will help children develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively through spoken and written language and equip them with the skills to become lifelong learners. We want children to enjoy and appreciate literature and its rich variety.

English is at the heart of all children's learning. English enables children both to communicate with others effectively for a variety of purposes and to examine their own and others' experiences, feelings and ideas, giving these order and meaning. Because literacy is central to children's intellectual, emotional and social development it has an essential role across the curriculum and helps pupils' learning to be coherent and progressive.

## **Purpose**

- To promote a shared love and understanding of English
- To establish an entitlement for all pupils
- To establish high expectations for teachers and pupils
- To promote continuity and coherence across the school

## **Overview**

This policy consists of key paragraphs that explain how English is taught and appendices that give further guidance about:

- Reading
- Writing
- Spelling and Phonics
- Spoken language

## **Aims of Policy**

### **Intent**

To encourage children to:

- be effective, competent communicators and good listeners;
- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information, knowing that reading is a wonderful relaxation tool and enhances mental health, as well as developing knowledge. We aim for them to be able to identify a number of authors and a genre they enjoy reading

- express opinions, articulate feelings and formulate responses to a range of texts both fiction and non-fiction using appropriate technical vocabulary; • foster an interest in words and their meanings, and to develop a growing vocabulary in both spoken and written form;
- enjoy and engage with and understand a range of text types and genres; • be able to write in a variety of styles and forms showing awareness of audience and purpose;
- develop powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness in all areas of literacy;
- use grammar and punctuation accurately;
- understand spelling conventions;
- produce effective, well-presented written work.

### **Impact**

By the time children leave our school, we expect them to communicate through speaking and listening, reading and writing, with confidence, fluency and understanding and in a range of situations. We want every child to take pleasure in reading across a range of genres and have a strong motivation to use these skills to the best of their ability.

### **Implementation**

As a core subject English is allocated approximately 7.5 hours per week at both key stages. This will include daily phonics sessions (in EFYS and KS1) small group guided reading sessions and whole class teaching reading, writing, grammar and handwriting skills.

At Woodborough Woods Foundation School, we follow the statutory guidance for the teaching of English, as set out in the National Curriculum 2014. We aim to develop the English skills children will need to equip them for everyday life in an ever-changing society. We strive to create an engaging, language rich environment, where children can learn and develop skills in a purposeful manner, making strong links with other curriculum areas where appropriate. Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the Primary National Curriculum English Document (2014).

### **Teaching and Learning Planning**

Teachers use the National Curriculum 2014 and high-quality texts as a starting point for creating their medium term English plans. The teachers also use a writing and reading planning progression grid to ensure that planning within and across year groups is building on previous knowledge.

High quality class texts have been carefully selected to ensure coverage of genres, text types maximizing the opportunity for engagement and learning.

Planning now follows a set proforma to ensure progression and coverage of skills and knowledge. Clear objectives are set for each session and are shared with pupils. Teachers differentiate according to the needs of the pupils and use intervention programmes for targeted support, this can happen within and outside of a designated English lesson. Teachers work towards independent learning and plan for different working groups. Teachers employ a range of teaching strategies to engage and inspire the pupils.

IT is used to enhance, extend and complement English teaching and learning. Additional adults are used to support the teaching of English. They work under the guidance of the teacher with small groups of children or individuals.

### **Inclusion**

All children receive quality first English teaching on a daily basis and activities are differentiated accordingly. In addition, where identified pupils are considered to require targeted support to enable them to work towards age-appropriate objectives, intervention programs are implemented. Teachers and teaching assistants plan programs together and monitor progress of these pupils.

There will be adaptation for pupils who have an identified special need. At all times, any personalised curriculum will endeavour to fit in with the curriculum that the rest of the class are receiving but at a level that the child is able to access.

The needs of children with English as an additional language will be met through planning and support from the Multicultural Support Agency where appropriate. This is supported by our equal opportunities policy.

### **Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

Assessments are made in line with the school assessment policy.

Teachers use effective assessment for learning to ensure planning is based on prior attainment and that pupils know what they need to do to achieve the next steps. Group or individual targets are set accordingly. Marking is in line with the school marking and feedback policy.

Analysis of assessment data is used to set targets. Class targets are derived from the school's key skills and are regularly reviewed. Where applicable, school issues are addressed through targets linked to Appraisal.

The teacher keeps records that enable them to deliver an effective, creative and relevant curriculum that builds on prior attainment and meets the needs of pupils.

### **Staff Development**

Teachers are expected to keep up to date with subject knowledge and use current materials that are available in school or online.

Training needs are identified as a result of whole school monitoring and evaluation, performance management and through induction programs. These will be reflected in the School Development Plan. The English lead will arrange for relevant advice and information, such as feedback from courses or newsletters, to be disseminated. Where necessary, the English lead or SLT will organise school based training.

Additional adults who are involved with intervention programs will receive appropriate training that may be school based or part of central training.

### **Resources and Accommodation**

A comprehensive range of resources is available in school. Every class has a selection of reference books e.g. dictionaries, thesauruses and a class library.

Teacher resources are located in classrooms. Guided reading books are kept in the school libraries. These books are banded according to book bands.

The school library contains a range of fiction and non-fiction books.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The subject leader is responsible for improving and monitoring the standards of teaching and learning in English through:

- Monitoring and evaluating English
- Pupil progress
- Observations and feedback
- Auditing provision
- Purchasing and organising resources
- Keeping up to date with English developments
- Moderation of children's work

**Review** This policy was reviewed in Spring 2023 and will next be reviewed in accordance with the School Development Plan.

## **Reading**

### **Aims**

To enable children to:

- develop a love of and positive attitude towards reading so that it is a pleasurable and meaningful activity;
- use reading skills as an integral part of learning throughout the curriculum; • read and respond to a variety of texts whilst gaining increased level of fluency, accuracy, independence and understanding
- develop different strategies for approaching reading and be able to orchestrate the full range of strategies

### **Entitlement**

Pupils have access to a wide range of reading opportunities that include:

- guided reading
- shared reading
- regular independent reading
- home/school reading
- hearing books read aloud on a daily basis
- selecting own choice of texts including ICT texts
- reading in other subjects including ICT texts

Much of the Program of Study will be taught through English lessons. Additional time is provided on a regular basis for reading at other times. There is time set aside for independent reading, using the library, listening to whole class stories and research linked to other subjects.

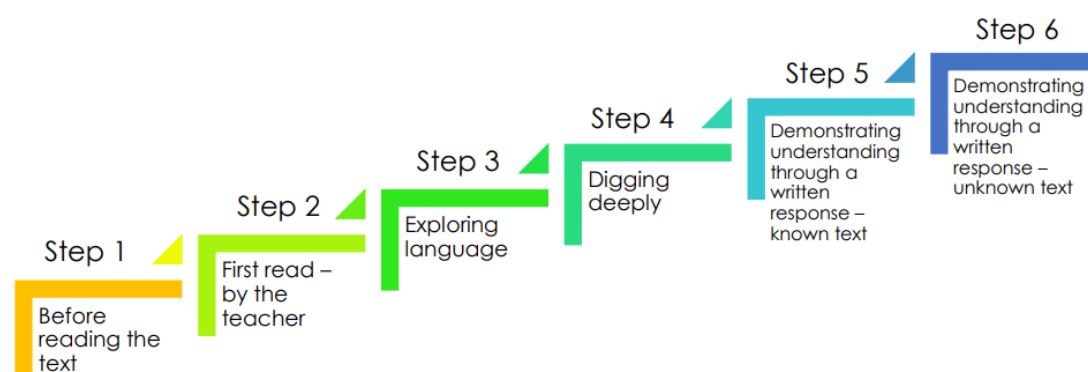
### **Teaching and Learning**

Teachers promote and value reading as an enjoyable activity and a life skill. Teachers plan for a range of comprehension strategies that allow pupils to engage with text in a variety of ways to suit different learning styles.

In EYFS and KS1 reading is taught specifically through smaller guided reading groups, following the Monster Phonics programme and using the matching books. As a school we have invested heavily in the Monster Phonics' texts that support the children and staff in this. Pupils are taught to read by decoding, developing prosody and thereby strengthening their comprehension skills. They access a broad range of texts and become children who choose to read for pleasure and develop a wider cultural capital, through questioning and discussion.

High quality class texts to support the delivery of reading and writing across the school, have been carefully selected covering a wide range of genres and specifically chosen for their language, illustrations and teaching opportunities.

At Woods, teachers plan using the reading progression document that covers the National Curriculum objectives. Short term planning follows a **6 step approach to reading**:



The timing of each Step is dependent on the learning objective and needs of the cohort. A Step may last for part of a lesson, a whole lesson, or a series of lessons. E.g. if the topic/theme in a text is unfamiliar, pupils may need more time on Step 1 than if the topic/theme has been taught previously.

In **Step 1**, pupils will be taught to use background knowledge in order to maximise ‘access’ to the text and to develop motivation to read.

In **Step 2**, pupils will be taught to **actively listen** to the fluent reading of the text in order to develop a basic understanding and to form an initial response.

In **Step 3**, pupils will be taught to explore **unfamiliar language** in order to deepen their understanding of the text and to refine their response.

In **Step 4**, children will be taught to use the knowledge and skills needed to further their understanding of the text and to consider how the author affects the reader.

In **Step 5**, children will be taught how to understand and answer a range of written questions in order to demonstrate their understanding of the text through a written response.

In **Step 6**, children will independently demonstrate their reading skills on an unseen text and be taught to analyse their own written responses.

Many other opportunities are provided for pupils to practise and extend reading in other subjects. Pupils select texts under the guidance of the teacher for independent and home/school reading. Teachers monitor independent reading and discuss progress with individual pupils on a regular basis.

All teachers are responsible for providing a stimulating reading environment, promoting book ownership and recommending books to pupils. Classroom and central displays are language rich and special displays should promote authors and books.

### **Reading Frequency**

Reading at home is regarded as an important part of reading development. Parents are encouraged to hear their children read regularly and respond to their child's reading through Home-School Link Books.

All teachers are responsible for hearing children read at least once per week. Reading volunteers, peer mentors and TAs hear children read more frequently during the week where necessary.

### **Resources**

All classrooms and the school library have a well-stocked book area with a range of fiction and non-fiction. Pupils have regular access to the central library and are taught how to use it appropriately.

### **Reading rewards**

We want every child to have the opportunity to practice their reading skills at home as well as at school. They each have a reading diary and are encouraged to read daily, discuss what they have read and fill in the diary. Each class teacher records the number of reads in the pupils' diaries. When a child reaches 100 reads at home they receive a badge and a certificate. At 200 reads they are able to choose their own, brand-new book to keep and at 300 reads they are invited to a party to celebrate their commitment to daily reading. We are aware that not every child is able to read at home for a number of reasons. The system allows us to see where this occurs and to intervene by creating opportunities for those children to read in school.

100



200



300



### **Education Library Service**

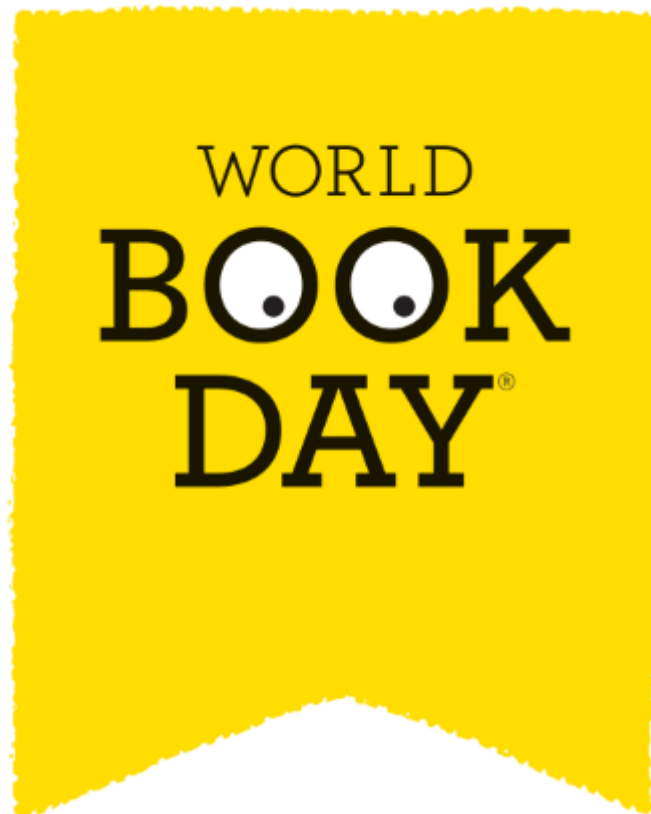
As a school we made the decision to fund 220 texts from the Education Library Service. These texts are pre-ordered to match the programmes of study in each year



group. They may be in the form of guided readers, non-fiction texts or fiction, to support both the children and members of staff. Over the school year we therefore have approximately 1200 texts in school that we wouldn't otherwise have access to. On top of this we also pay for the Education Library Service mobile library to come to school once every half term. This houses a vast array of books and, again, allows our children to visit a library at a time when cuts in the local library service makes access difficult.

### **World Book Day**

Although we celebrate books and reading throughout the year, we always take part in the nationwide World Book Day so that children can see that they are part of a bigger picture. We love pairing up with other classes and sharing books as a school. We vary our theme year on year and always encourage the children to redeem their free book token.



## **Writing**

### **Aims**

Children should learn to:

- write in different contexts and for different purposes and audiences
- be increasingly aware of the conventions of writing, including grammar, punctuation and spelling
- plan draft and edit their writing to suit the purpose
- form letters correctly, leading to a fluent joined and legible handwriting style, giving increasing regard to presentation

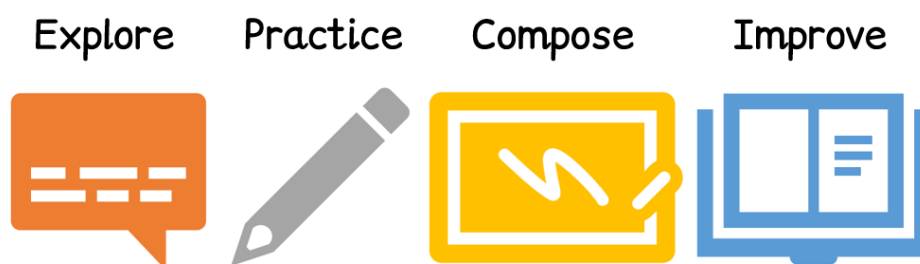
### **Entitlement**

Pupils have access to a wide range of writing opportunities that include:

- shared writing
- guided writing
- independent writing
- writing different text types and narrative styles
- writing in different curriculum areas
- handwriting practice
- collaborative writing
- writing related to own experiences and enjoyment
- writing from a variety of stimuli
- planning, drafting, editing and presenting
- using ICT

## Teaching and Learning

Teachers promote writing and look for ways to inspire and motivate pupils so that they see themselves as 'writers'. Teachers establish the purpose and audience for writing and make teaching objectives explicit to pupils so they know why they are studying a particular text type, the kind of writing activities they need to undertake and what the expected outcome will be. The following teaching sequence for reading and writing will be used as a framework:



Our writing sequence:



### 1. Explore

In this initial phase, children should be introduced to a high-quality example of the eventual intended outcome. This model should be reflective of the features and content expected. Children should have opportunities to explore the structures, features, grammar and unpick these. Children deconstruct those features and build their own rubric to consolidate their learning of this genre and/or purpose. It is important the focus is upon the genre/purpose and not on the thematic content (i.e it would be features of a recipe, not features of a recipe for making a cake). It is non-negotiable that children identify the What, Who and Why at this point.



### 2. Practice

Across a range of learning opportunities, children will be introduced to year-group-specific grammatical features, technical aspects of writing and other writing components such as Alan Peat style sentences. Children are given a technical understanding of the grammar of these, using the correct grammatical terminology. They have a subsequent lesson (or lessons in KS1) to continue to explore the given feature(s) and grammar. Children also apply this grammar and sentence work into a paragraph during this stage. Children are explicitly taught how to plan and construct paragraphs. In every writing 'unit', children will have 2 separate sequences which

introduce the sentence and its grammar → practice it further → apply it into paragraphs.



### 3. Compose

At this stage, the children synthesise their planning, worked examples and ideas into producing the given writing outcome. This is done on paper with the work to hand to support children to make independent decisions to compose their piece. Success criteria is provided and used for self and teacher-marking following the write.



### 4. Improve

Children make corrections to non-negotiable aspects of the work appropriate to their age and stage including spellings, punctuation and keyword spellings. A directly-taught improvement should also be made, with an additional grammatical focus – this would not have already been taught in the unit. It may be a revisit of prior learning from another term or year group. For instance, following a story-write, children may have a ‘taught improvement’ around expanded noun phrases which they then go and add to their written piece. Whilst all work should identify an authentic audience, it may sometimes be that this leads to a ‘published’ piece.

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Subject-specific texts that link to work being undertaken in other areas may also be used in English lessons to support the wider curriculum. Teachers use shared writing to model the writing process. Shared reading and writing provide a context for discussion and demonstration of grammatical features at word level, sentence level and text level. Activities are differentiated through the use of writing frames, spelling banks, collaborative work and peer or adult support. Teachers encourage ‘talk for writing’ as an integral part of the process.

All year groups have a long term plan for writing detailing what should be taught in each year group and term by term to ensure progression through the year and between year groups. A progression map of genres gives teachers more specific guidance on the key skills for each purpose for writing (to entertain, to inform and so on). Knowledge organisers for each class also give teachers detailed guidance about the grammar and punctuation requirements. Teachers provide pupils with specific success criteria to assess their writing, which is then used to inform half-termly assessments using the school’s writing trackers; these are based on the objectives set out in the National Curriculum.

## Example Y1 Knowledge organiser:

# Year 1 Writing

## Woodborough Woods C of E Foundation School

Grammar used in Year 1	
Key vocabulary	
noun	A single word that names a person, place or thing. <i>e.g. Mr Smith, cat, house, table</i>
suffix	A suffix is a letter or group of letters that can be added to a word to make a new word. <i>e.g. noun – dog dogs or verb - help helping</i>
singular	Just one of something. <i>e.g. dog jump lift</i>
plural	More than one of something. Adding suffix s/es. <i>e.g. cat – cats box – boxes jump – jumps dish – dishes</i>
determiner	A single word that introduces a noun (an introducing word) <i>e.g. a, an, the the dog an orange a building</i>
adjective	A single word that describes a noun. <i>e.g. small, gigantic (size) red, blue (colour)</i>
noun phrase	A group of words that describe a person, place or thing. Has a determiner and a noun <i>e.g. the house, a dog. Can be expanded by adding an adjective e.g. the blue butterfly, the old man</i>
sentence	A group of words that make sense on their own, containing a subject (who/what the sentence is about) and a verb.
verb	A single word that describes an action. <i>e.g. jump, skip, shout, ride</i>
preposition	A single word that describes time (when) or place (where) <i>e.g. after, at, before, near, inside, off, on, up, with</i>
adverbial phrase	Tells us where/when something happens and contains a preposition. <i>e.g. down the road at lunchtime on Tuesday with Jim</i>
conjunction	A single word that joins (a joining word).
co-ordinating conjunctions	These join ideas. <i>e.g. and but cats and dogs small but strong</i>
tense	Tells us when an action took/takes/is taking place. <i>e.g. suffix s/es for present tense (pushes, jumps) ed for past tense (waited)</i>
main clause	A complete sentence that makes sense on its own.

### Handwriting

In order to be ready to write, children need to have developed their gross motor skills. Once they are in control of their own bodies their fine motor skills will improve. In order to write the children need to be able to:

- Hold a pencil using a tripod grip;
- Write from left to right, top to bottom;
- Start and finish letters correctly;
- Form letters of the correct size;
- Use regular spaces between words.

This process can take much longer for some children than others. The very process of sitting at a table to write can be a challenge for a child who is, as yet, struggling to sit upright or to grasp objects.

### Early Years Foundation Stage

Much of the work in the Early Year is there to improve a child's own sense of self. This is both physically and emotionally. The children have access to play equipment that will help develop their gross motor skills. Daily Monster Phonics lessons encourage participation and movement. The children are introduced to the letters of the alphabet through the Monster Phonics sound cards and given daily access to

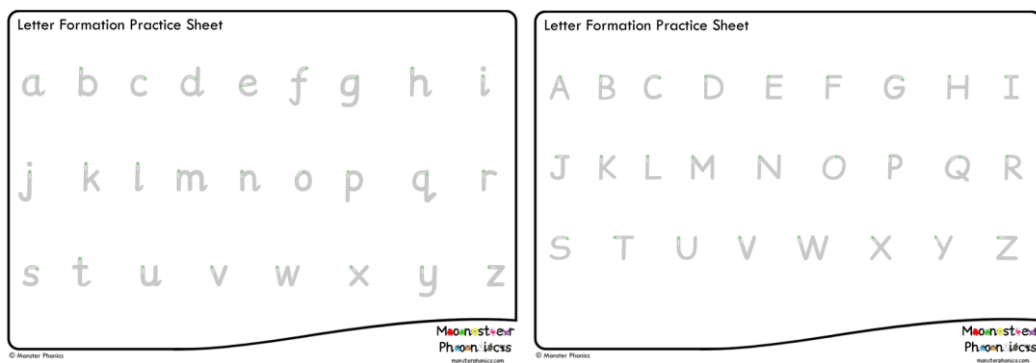
ways in which they develop their fine motor skills, including painting, building and writing areas. White boards are used and the children begin to record in books. Throughout the unit the correct letter formation and pencil grip is modelled and supported.

Our approach to handwriting at Woods does not use lead ins to letters. Letter joins are introduced at the point where the child is forming each letter correctly, has clearly defined ascenders and descenders, regular spacing between words and a developing knowledge of digraphs and trigraphs. This may be towards the end of KS1 or the beginning of Year 3. This mirrors the phonics programme, in that joins can be taught alongside the digraphs being learnt or recapped. A capital letter is never joined.

### Monster Phonics Font:

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

The formation sheet is used throughout school if the need is still there. Each class has this available to support the children where necessary.



A mixture of whole class, small group and individual teaching of handwriting is planned for and delivered at KS2. All staff should model the handwriting cursive script when they write for any purpose within the classroom. All children should be expected to write in this style of handwriting whenever they write, in all subjects.

### Cursive looped style, no lead ins:

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

By the end of key stage 2, all children should be displaying an efficient, quick, neat and legible handwriting style that is effective in recording their ideas.

### Resources

Each class has a range of materials to support the writing process. Writing materials are kept accessible and organised and pupils are encouraged to take care of the equipment and return it to where it belongs. Each class also has a set of age-

appropriate dictionaries, thesaurus and word banks. Teachers use National Curriculum 2014 and various other high-quality resources to support writing. Each year group has a knowledge organiser to refer to for details about grammar and punctuation.

## **Spelling and Phonics**

### **Aims**

Children should be able to:

- Blend and segment sounds easily
- Learn that segmenting words into their constituent phonemes for spelling is the reverse of blending phonemes into words for reading
- Spell words accurately by combining the use of grapheme-phoneme correspondence knowledge as the prime approach, and also morphological knowledge and etymological information
- Use a range of approaches to learn and spell irregular words.

### **Our approach to the teaching of Phonics**

The teaching of Phonics is an integral part of the curriculum in both the Foundation and Key Stage 1 classrooms.

<https://monsterphonics.com/>

At our school we use the Monster Phonics Letters and Sounds systematic synthetic phonics programme (SSP). This is a fully comprehensive programme where children start learning single letter sounds in the autumn term of their Reception year and it builds in progression throughout Foundation Two and Year One, preparing children for the statutory phonics screening that takes place at the end of year 1.

Phonics is taught every day and children learn to apply their phonics skills in reading practise sessions. This helps our children develop their fluency and comprehension skills. Monster phonics draws on the latest research into how children learn best; how to ensure learning stays in children's long term memory and how best to enable children to apply their learning to become highly competent readers.

Phonics begins in Nursery – daily 'phase 1' activities are introduced to embed the foundations for phonics. This will ensure children are well prepared to begin grapheme–phoneme correspondence and blending at the start of Reception.

Reception learn phase 2 graphemes during the Autumn 2, phase 3 in the Spring Term and phase 4 in the Summer term. Year 1 recap phase 3 and 4 in the Autumn term and then focus on phase 5 to prepare them for the phonics screening check taking place in the summer term. Year 2 recap phase 5 during the Autumn term.

Throughout the phonics programme, progress is tracked and monitored closely to identify children who require 'keep up' sessions. These short sessions will be specific to individual needs and will take place throughout the school day.

Children in Key Stage 2 will continue to receive 'catch up' sessions until they have a secure knowledge of phonic phases 1-5.



Alongside the teaching of Phonics, children have access to a language rich environment where they are able to apply their decoding skills and develop language comprehension in order to 'read'.

Pupils have access to a range of phonics opportunities:

- Whole class teaching of specific spelling conventions and rules
- Discrete phonics teaching as part of an intervention group where gaps in phonological knowledge have been identified
- Using phonological knowledge in real life contexts
- Applying skills in cross curricular contexts

### **Teaching and Learning**

Teachers provide a wide range of contexts for reinforcing spelling patterns and tricky words throughout the school day. Children are expected to spell all the high frequency words from the National Curriculum correctly and the word lists for their particular year group.

### **Spelling Homework**

- Five to 10 spellings per week (according to ability)
- Spellings are taken from the National Curriculum

## **Spoken Language**

### **Aims**

Children need to be able to:

- Communicate effectively, speaking with increasing confidence, clarity and fluency;
- Participate in discussions and debate in a variety of contexts;
- Listen to the views, opinions and ideas of others with increased interest;
- Articulate ideas and thoughts clearly with appropriate tone and vocabulary recognising audience;
- Respond to questions and opinions appropriately;
- Retell stories and poems which are known by heart;
- Ask questions with increasing relevance and insight.

### **Entitlement**

Pupils have access to a wide range of speaking and listening opportunities that include:

- Talking about their own experiences, recounting events
- Participating in discussion and debate;
- Talk for writing;
- Talk Homework;
- Retelling stories and poems;
- Expressing opinions and justifying ideas;
- Listening to stories read aloud;
- Presenting ideas to different audiences;
- Taking part in school performances;
- Responding to different kinds of texts;
- Talking to visitors in school;
- Listening to ideas and opinions of adults and peers;
- Role-play and other drama activities across the curriculum;
- Use dramatic techniques, including work in role to explore ideas and texts;
- Create, share and evaluate ideas and understanding through drama.

### **Teaching and Learning**

Teachers provide a wide range of contexts for spoken language throughout the school day. Teachers and other adults in school model speaking clearly. This includes clear diction, reasoned argument, using imaginative and challenging language and use of Standard English.

Listening is modelled, as is the appropriate use of non-verbal communication, respecting the views of others. Teachers are also sensitive in encouraging the participation of retiring or reticent children.

Spoken Language outcomes are planned for in all areas of the curriculum. Roles are shared amongst pupils: sometimes a pupil will be the questioner, presenter, etc.

Learning takes place in a variety of situations and group settings. For example, these could include reading aloud as an individual, working collaboratively on an investigation, reporting findings as a newscaster, interviewing people as part of a research project, acting as a guide for a visitor to school or responding to a text in shared or guided reading.

Spoken Language will be a focus across the curriculum and across the school day in a variety of settings.