

English

‘When I read great literature, great drama, speeches, or sermons, I feel that the human mind has not achieved anything greater than the ability to share feelings and thoughts through language’

James Earl Jones

We believe that reading, writing and speaking and listening open up a world of inspiration and creativity. It is our aim to enrich and empower our children’s vocabulary so they are able to articulate themselves clearly and confidently. We aim to inspire our children to become fluent readers who develop a life-long love of literature, whilst also giving them the opportunity to develop their own style and expression through writing.

In line with the National Curriculum, we ensure that all children:

- 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 their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- Use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- Are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

Curriculum planning:

Phonics and Early Reading:

We believe that all children should begin to acquire the knowledge of synthetic phonics as soon as it is appropriate for their stage of development. As a school, we commit to one systematic synthetic phonics program; Read Write Inc. Daily delivery, along with identified individual support, ensures each child progresses through the program and succeeds in learning to read and thus being able to read to learn. All children who are working on the

Read Write Inc. phonics program will bring home a Read Write Inc. storybook to read at home. This will match their current phonological awareness enabling them to consolidate and practice their reading skills at home. All staff receive regular training to ensure delivery of the program is highly effective.

To find out more about Read Write Inc. please see the Reading section of our website.

Shared and Reciprocal Reading:

In all of our classes shared reading is planned for and prioritised daily by class teachers so that children are able to experience and enjoy a wide range of stories that they may not otherwise experience. Through planned reciprocal reading lessons, children are supported to develop their confidence in clarifying unknown vocabulary, inferring and deducing ideas beyond the text and in linking ideas and themes within and across texts.

Reading for Pleasure:

‘The simplest way to make sure we raise literate children... is to show them that reading is a pleasurable activity, and that means finding books that they enjoy, giving them access to those books, and letting them read them.’

Neil Gaiman

Across school, staff support children to identify books they enjoy by regularly sharing and discussing different texts with their classes that span a range of different genres. Children are encouraged to read regularly at home through the use of reading records. All children are able to borrow books from their classroom libraries to read and enjoy at home whilst children and parents are regularly encouraged to recommend books to one another.

We believe that books should provide mirrors for the children in which they can see themselves reflected, and windows, through which they can look into the lives and stories of people who are different. Using this approach, we carefully select high quality books from a diverse range of authors that represent the unique community that we serve.

Writing:

We believe that writing should have a purpose. Children are engaged in authentic writing opportunities that are linked to curriculum projects. These are further enhanced by additional units that are inspired by high quality texts. Grammar and sentence structure is modelled explicitly using exemplar texts as part of the writing process so that children can learn, practice and experiment with language structures in a wide range of different genres.

A carefully sequenced progression ensures that our children develop and practice key grammatical structures with high levels of repetition through school. This results in children

who can write confidently and with a high degree of technical accuracy by the end of key stage 2.

Critique is built into our writing structure to enable the children to consider and improve the accuracy and effectiveness of their writing through a process of feedback, editing and redrafting. A final draft or presentation piece is created to showcase the children's finished work.

Spelling and Handwriting:

Both spelling and handwriting are taught and modelled in discrete lessons and also practiced and applied through writing. We follow the Read Write Inc. Spelling Programme and the Nelson handwriting programme. This ensures that these skills are developed through carefully sequenced and organised lessons. In English, drafting books are used to enable children to edit their work – final drafts are produced with an emphasis on accuracy and a high standard of presentation.

Speaking and Listening:

We believe that speaking and listening forms the foundation for all other learning. It is central to forming relationships and acting as a cognitive tool. We model language and provide opportunities for our children to practice speaking clearly and confidently. Talk partners are used across the curriculum to enable the children to rehearse responses and we encourage all children to take part in group and class discussions. We are determined that our children should develop a rich and varied vocabulary. This is achieved primarily through the sharing of high quality texts – we believe that reading to children has the greatest impact on their language development. This is supplemented by the wider curriculum experiences we plan for our children across school, including subject specific and technical language developed through projects, educational visits, and residential trips.

Assessment:

For information about assessment in English, please see the Assessment document in the Policies section of our website.