

# English Policy and Handbook



# Wath Victoria Primary School

**Updated January 2025**

**Review due: September 2026**

## **Intent**

At Wath Victoria Primary School, we believe that the study of English develops a child's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including the communication of their ideas, views and feelings. Children are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as of non-fiction and media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. They will use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations.

This policy aims to clarify the teaching and learning of English at Wath Victoria Primary School, and to provide guidance for teaching staff, parents and governors on agreed practice within the school.

## **Implementation**

### ***Teaching and learning styles***

At Wath Victoria Primary School we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our English lessons, as recommended by the National Curriculum Programme of Study for English. We use Rosenshine's Principals of Instruction in our teaching practice, with our principal aim being to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in all areas of the English curriculum. We do this through a daily English session in which children experience a variety of teaching and learning activities. These include whole-class reading or writing activities; whole-class focused word or sentence activities; guided group or independent activities and whole-class sessions to review progress and learning. Such input is balanced during the teaching of an English unit in order to achieve the best possible outcomes for the students.

Children have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts, and to support their work with a variety of resources. Children may use ICT in English lessons where it enhances their learning, as in drafting their work and in using multimedia to study how words and images are combined to convey meaning. Wherever possible, we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

### ***Equal opportunities***

In all classes children have a wide range of abilities, and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons we do it through differentiated group work, while in others we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use Teaching Assistants to support targeted children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals. Working walls and help desks are used in all classrooms to support children to be independent in their learning.

### ***English Curriculum Planning***

English is taught using the pathways to write scheme throughout school. The mixed age planning is used to support mixed aged classes and ensure that the whole curriculum is taught with a clear progression of skill acquisition and retrieval of previously taught skills.

### ***English in Foundation Stage***

English is taught in Foundation Stage as an integral part of the school's work. The format for the daily lesson varies according to the needs of the children. Aspects of the English curriculum are related to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals, which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. We give all children the opportunity to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and extend their vocabulary and

communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore words and texts, to enjoy them, to learn about them and to use them in various situations.

## ***Communication***

Beginning in EYFS and progressing throughout their school career, children's communication skills are seen as fundamental to their development. Early language skills are planned for and taught from Pre-School. Throughout school, children are expected to speak in sentences, with teachers modelling this where necessary. Talk for writing strategies are used alongside 'hot seating', 'role play' and 'conscience alley' to engage the children's communication skills in English and the wider curriculum. At Wath Victoria, children are actively encouraged to:

- Have the opportunity to talk through their ideas before they write, discussing vocabulary choices and impact of language
- Listen and respond with constructive comments, questions or answers in a variety of speaking and listening activities across the curriculum, developing wide ranging and suitable vocabulary
- Join in group discussions and interactions, taking different roles in groups, making a range of contributions and working collaboratively
- Join in drama activities, performing in role and responding to performances
- Listen to and follow instructions and to relay messages accurately;
- Develop social skills and good manners
- Use talk partners to encourage development of ideas

## ***English Skills 1: Reading***

At Wath Victoria Primary School, we believe that children are entitled to love reading and to read to the very best of their abilities. Many opportunities are provided for children to practise and extend their reading in English and other subjects. Reading for pleasure and enjoyment is given a high priority. Teachers also read a class novel or short story on a regular basis as part of a 'story-time' session.

### **Reading Aims:**

- All children will become independent readers, able to understand and evaluate a variety of reading material at an appropriate level.
- All children will be able to read for a variety of purposes and in a variety of forms, at an appropriate level
- All children will understand the importance of reading as a means of communication
- All children will see reading as a purposeful activity
- All children will be exposed to a variety of genres and authors
- All children will be encouraged to love reading for pleasure

### **Assessment of Reading**

Children's reading skills are assessed using the NFER testing system on a termly basis and by using the reading assessment documents as well as lesson by lesson AFL techniques. The accelerated reader programme assessment are also done termly to track children's reading ages. The system allows teachers and SLT to look at standardised scores, age standardised scores and chronological reading ages. Teachers report reading data two times per year, including the NFER results and class observations. Children's progress in reading is monitored through Pupil Progress meetings. In EYFS and KS1, children's levels in phonics and their ability to apply this phonic knowledge to their reading, are rigorously tracked. [\(See Phonics Progress Tracker, Appendix 5\)](#). It is our aim to enable children to continue their reading progress outside of school by providing them with phonically decodable texts, matched to their phonic phase, which they can read at home.

### **1.1 Early Reading (EYFS & KS1)**

During EYFS and KS1 at Wath Victoria, children are **learning to read**. We aim to teach most children **how** to read by the end of Key Stage 1, in order for them to be able to read effortlessly, for pleasure and for learning. We aim for children to master the following 5 strands:

1. Phonics: decoding of words
2. Automatic reading of high frequency and common exception words
3. Prosody: fluency and expression in reading
4. Language and vocabulary development
5. Comprehension

## Phonics

Phonics is our main strategy for decoding words. In Pre-School and EYFS, language development underpins all teaching and learning. EYFS and KS1 systematically follow the progression of Little Wandle Letters and Sounds, starting with Phase 1 and 2 activities in Pre-School (F1). Phonics Phase 3 teaching begins in Foundation 2.

Children are taught phonics in groups, according to need and ability, with the aim of most children achieving age related expectations for their year group. Children are assessed every 6 weeks, using the Little Wandle assessments. Groups are adapted accordingly as a result of these assessments.

## Reading Skills

Starting in Foundation 2, the skills of reading are taught through small group guided reading sessions. Children are taught to apply their phonic knowledge, to automatically read high frequency and common exception words, and strategies to read fluently and with expression.

Comprehension is taught through carefully written questions in guided reading sessions in order further develop comprehension skills. EYFS and Year 1 use shared reading strategies when using texts during a wide range of curriculum lessons. In Year 2, the aim is to progressively teach more lessons as whole class reading. Children in this year group who are working below and towards age related expectations, will access appropriate reading interventions.

## 1.2 Reading in Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2, children are **reading to learn**. Children should be able to read fluently, gather information, comprehend and interpret the texts they have read and read for their own personal enjoyment. Children who are working below and towards age related expectations in Key Stage 2 are provided with appropriate reading intervention programmes, including Little Wandle Phonics 'Keep Up' as necessary. We use a variety of methods to teach reading in Key Stage 2, such as:

- Whole class reading (using shared and/or paired reading strategies), using the class novel and other texts
- Explicit teaching of specific comprehension skills – decode, explain, interpret/infer, language choice / authorial intent
- 1:1 reading with an adult
- Daily independent reading for pleasure

## Whole class reading

Opportunities for whole class reading occur within the discrete Reading lesson, English and within other lessons across the wider curriculum; the teacher models the reading process to the whole class as an expert reader, providing a high level of support. Teaching objectives are pre-planned and sessions are characterised by explicit teaching of specific reading strategies, oral response and high levels of collaboration. The children join in, where appropriate with the reading of the text. The texts selected are quality texts, linked to topics and the curriculum, that reflect the teaching objectives.

## **Reading for Pleasure**

Time is allocated in the timetable for each child to read independently, or be read aloud to, every day, for pleasure. Adults also model reading aloud to the children every day, to nurture the children's love of reading and stories.

## ***English Skills 2: Writing***

At Wath Victoria Primary School, we encourage all of our children to enjoy being writers. We aim to deliver engaging, purposeful lessons which allow the children to express themselves clearly in a range of written styles and genres. We use the Pathways to Writing Scheme which sequentially builds up national curriculum objectives through the medium of literacy providing the children with opportunities to write for a range of purposes and audiences.

At Wath Victoria Primary School, we believe that the learning of writing skills should be embedded across the curriculum. The key skills of planning, composing, evaluating, spelling, handwriting, presentation, grammar, punctuation and vocabulary are, therefore, taught explicitly in the context of English lessons but also indirectly through cross-curricular writing tasks in other subjects.

### **Writing Aims**

- All children become independent writers
- All children will be able to write for a variety of purposes and in a variety of genres
- All children will understand the importance of writing as a means of communication
- All children see writing as a purposeful activity
- All children will use spelling, punctuation and syntax accurately and with confidence
- All children will be given the opportunity to compose, transcribe and refine writing
- All children will write with confidence and derive pleasure from their ability to do so

### **Assessment of Writing**

The marking of writing is carried out by adults providing responsive immediate feedback during lessons and through adult reflection at the end of a piece of work, according to the school's marking and feedback policy. Independent Writing pieces are completed in separate books and moderated in a range of ways: during regular staff meetings across each phase of schools and in key stage moderations using LA provided Writing Trackers. Assessment data for writing is reported twice a year and children's progress monitored in Pupil Progress meetings.

### **Shared writing**

Shared writing takes place within the English lesson and within other lessons across the curriculum; the teacher models the writing process to the whole class as an expert writer, articulating the process. Teaching objectives are pre-planned and sessions focus on the explicit teaching of specific writing strategies, oral response and high levels of collaboration. The children join in, either individually or through partner work, with the writing.

### **Independent writing**

Children are expected to write independently at regular points in their writing learning journey. They are expected to use the resources provided in the classroom and information from the English Working Wall. They may use talk tins, iPad dictation or other strategies to help them orally rehearse their sentences before writing. They are encouraged to self-evaluate their writing, using their success criteria to check and then edit their work. This work is recorded in their Independent Books and marked against Statutory Assessment Grids (at least once per half term).

## Writing in the wider curriculum.

Teachers will always seek opportunities to develop longer writing tasks across the wider curriculum. These would always be carefully planned around where an English unit has just been undertaken. For example, if a biography has been written in English this **may** then be used in science to write a biography on Einstein if the science theme is forces. This should only be done when the link is strong and not tedious and the same expectations of quality as during the English sessions.

## Handwriting

Handwriting is taught throughout the school using the 'Letterjoin' handwriting scheme. **This** provides opportunities for children to practise their skills interactively, using the whiteboard or an iPad, for example, and in their handwriting books. Handwriting skills are developed through the scheme as children progress from a pre-cursive to a continuous cursive handwriting style. Children are expected to use this handwriting in all of their written work, with discrete handwriting lessons being taught twice weekly.

Wath Victoria Writing Units:

	A1	A2	Sp1	Sp2	Su1	Su2
FS						
English	Peace at last- Jill Murphy Home-Carson Ellis	I'm going to eat this ant by Chris Naylor-Ballesteros	Let's all Creep through Crocodile Creek by Jonny Lambert	Clem and Crab by Fiona Lumbers	The Pirates are Coming! by John Condon	Romeosaurus and Juliet Rex- by Mo O'Hara

KS1- Year A						
English	Look Up! by Nathan Bryon  Recount: write a diary entry	The Great Fire of London by Emma Adams and James Weston  Non-fiction: write a fact sheet	The Dragon Machine by Helen Ward  Fiction: write a story with an adventure focus	My Name is Not Refugee by Kate Milner  Recount: write a recount of events from character's point of view	Somebody Swallowed Stanley by Sarah Roberts  Non-fiction: write information about sea animals	Goldilocks and Just the One Bear by Leigh Hodgkinson  Non-fiction: write a report about bears

KS1 Year B						
English	Meesha Makes Friends by Tom Percival  Recount: write a diary entry in first person	Katie in London by James Mayhew  Non-fiction: write a non-chronological report	The Lion Inside by Rachel Bright and Jim Field  Fiction: write a story based on the structure of the text	Beegu by Alexis Deacon  Fiction: write own version of the story	Tidy by Emily Gravett  Persuasion: write a letter in role	The Tempest Retold by Rosie Dickens

LKS2 Year A						
English	Coming to England by Edoella Benjamin  Recount: write a letter in role recounting events of the story	Greek Myths By Jean Menzies  Fiction: make a mini-book of their own adventure	Stone Age Boy by Satoshi Kitamura  Fiction: write a story set in the Stone Age	The Silence Seeker by Ben Morley  Fiction: rewrite the story in third person with dialogue	The Merchant of Venice From A Stage Full of Shakespeare Stories by Angela McAllister  Non-fiction: write a guide	Blue John By Berlie Doherty  Recount: write a letter

LKS2 Year B						
English	Counting on Katherine by Helaine Becker  Non-fiction: write a fact file	Koji's <u>Island</u> by The Literacy Company & Amazing Islands by Sabrina Weiss & Kerry Hyndman  Fiction: write an adventure story from POV of the boy	Our Tower <u>By</u> Joseph Coelho  Recount: write the adventure as a journal	<u>Men</u> and the Lonely <u>Fisherman</u> by Ian Eagleton and James Mayhew  Fiction: write a fantasy story based on a classic tale	Where the Forest Meets the <u>Sea</u> by Jeannie Baker & Jungle Explorer  Non-fiction: write an information board	Amazing Rivers By Julie Vosburgh Agnone and Kerry Hyndman  Persuasion: information board to persuade people to take care of rivers

UKS2 Year A						
English	The Day War Came by Nicola Davies  Persuasion: write a letter to raise awareness	Shackleton's Journey by William Grill  Recount: write a journal entry from the expedition	Beowulf by Michael Morpurgo  Fiction: write a further adventure	Malala's Magic Pencil by Malala Yousafzai  Recount: write an autobiography	Radiant Child The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat  Non-fiction: write an information text for a gallery	Poetry for Kids William Shakespeare By Marguerite Tassi  Fiction: write a sonnet

UKS2 Year B						
English	Young, Gifted and <u>Black</u> by Jamia Wilson & Race to the Frozen North: The Matthew Henson Story by Catherine Johnson  Recount: write a series of diary entries	King Kong by Anthony Browne  Fiction: write an action-packed story ending	The Place <u>For</u> Me: Stories about the Windrush generation by K.N. Chibiri + A Brief History of Enslaved African People  Non-fiction: write a hybrid leaflet	The Brilliant Deep by Kate Messner and Matthew Forsythe  Persuasion/information: write an information leaflet	Arthur and the Golden Rope by Joe Todd-Stanton  Fiction: write a myth	Plastic Planet <u>By</u> Georgia Amson-Bradshaw  Persuasion: write a persuasive speech

## 2.1 Early Writing (EYFS & KS1)

In EYFS, children build an understanding of the relationship between the spoken word and the written word and how, through making marks, drawings and personal writing, children ascribe meaning to text and attempt to write for various purposes. Emphasis is given to the development of spoken language, ensuring children know how to construct a sentence orally before being expected to write one. Children are explicitly taught new vocabulary and expected to use these new words in their oral and written work. During phonics lessons, children are taught how to segment words into phonemes, and how to spell "tricky words". The appropriate developmental age in the EYFS curriculum informs planning for learning activities and writing materials are always available for the children in their child-initiated learning and play. Children are introduced to narrative thinking and talk for writing through word and language games, role play and storytelling/helicopter stories.

The development of writing skills at KS1 progresses by building on the basic skills learned during EYFS and very much with an emphasis on talk for writing. Children are introduced to different text genres and opportunities are given for extended writing. Tasks are planned for and scaffolded according to need by the provision of written structures/templates (where appropriate), by the use of IT, or by the intervention of a supporting teacher or adult.

Throughout KS1, children are gradually introduced to the learning sequence used in KS2. With adult support and modelling, children in F2 are encouraged to edit and improve their writing. Throughout KS1, children continue to edit and improve becoming increasingly independent in these skills. However, as a result of the impact of COVID writing progress, the focus for our youngest children will be securing basic sentence construction in Key Stage 1 before moving on to more complex written structures.

## 2.2 Writing in Key Stage 2

## 2.3 Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar

Discrete spelling, punctuation and grammar lessons are delivered using the Spelling Shed resources for each year group daily within the reading hour. Within writing lessons, the teaching of punctuation and grammar is governed by the progression of skills document produced by Pathways to Writing.

## **Spelling**

This is taught using the Spelling Shed scheme of work from Years 1-6.. Key vocabulary for science, history, geography and other foundation subjects is also taught. Children are taught to use a range of strategies to help them learn a new spelling. In written work, spelling errors are identified according to the school's marking and feedback policy. These will focus, in the first instance, on errors being made which are from previously taught knowledge. Spelling and vocabulary is taught, applied, assessed and revisited at school over a period of time and is not encouraged to be set as homework tasks.

## **Punctuation and Grammar**

Punctuation and grammar skills are taught through the Pathways to Writing Scheme. The learning is planned from the year group objectives in the English Programmes of Study in the National Curriculum, using Writing Progression at WV progression documents and Spelling Shed Punctuation and Grammar resources.

## ***Monitoring and Review of English***

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the Head Teacher, Senior Leadership Team, English Leader and the class teacher. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in their teaching, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for English in the school.

## **Impact**

Our aim in the teaching of English is that all children will develop the necessary skills to use the English language, confidently, by:

- *achieving standards at least in line with national expectations*
- *enabling children to speak clearly, fluently and audibly, and to take account of their listeners*
- *encouraging children to listen with concentration, in order to identify the main points of what they have heard*
- *using and understanding a wide range of vocabulary which impacts on outcomes in reading and writing and sets them up for the next stage of their future education*
- *teaching children effective communication skills, both verbal and non-verbal, through a variety of drama activities*
- *helping them become confident, independent readers, through an appropriate focus on word-, sentence- and text-level knowledge*
- *reading a range of texts fluently with understanding and expression*
- *fostering a love of reading, encouraging children to read for pleasure*
- *developing enthusiastic and reflective readers, through contact with challenging and substantial texts*
- *fostering the enjoyment of writing, and a recognition of its value*
- *encouraging accurate and meaningful writing, be it narrative or non-fiction*
- *improving the planning, drafting and editing of their written work and encouraging them to have pride in their handwriting and written presentation skills.*