

Avondale Primary School

English Policy

Intent

At Avondale Primary School, 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 and linguists. We want children to enjoy and appreciate literature and its rich variety. Literacy is at the heart of all children's learning. Literacy 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.

English at Avondale will not only be a daily discrete lesson, but is at the cornerstone of the entire curriculum. It is embedded within all our lessons and we will strive for a high level of English for all. Through using high-quality texts, immersing children in vocabulary rich learning environments and ensuring new curriculum expectations and the progression of skills are met, the children at Avondale will be exposed to a language heavy, creative and continuous English curriculum which will not only enable them to become primary literate but will also develop a love of reading, creative writing and purposeful speaking and listening.

Our intentions

To encourage children:-

- To be effective, competent communicators and good listeners;
- To express opinions, articulate feelings and formulate responses to a range of texts both fiction and non-fiction using appropriate technical vocabulary;
- To foster an interest in words and their meanings, and to develop a growing vocabulary in both spoken and written form;
- To enjoy and engage with and understand a range of text types and genres;
- To be able to write in a variety of styles and forms showing awareness of audience and purpose;
- To develop powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness in all areas of literacy;
- To use grammar and punctuation accurately;
- To understand spelling conventions and use this to spell accurately;
- To produce effective, well-presented written work using fluent and legible handwriting.
- To be able to orchestrate a full range of reading cues (phonic, graphic, syntactic, contextual) to monitor their reading and correct their mistakes;

Implementation

Planning

A variety of teaching and learning styles are adopted to ensure that all children are included and valued and in accordance with requirements of the 2014 curriculum. Teachers plan within key stages and work closely with year group colleagues to ensure consistency of opportunity for all children. Clear objectives are set for each session and are shared with pupils. Teachers use engaging and adaptive resources according to the needs of the pupils and use intervention programmes for targeted support. Literacy is encouraged and developed across our curriculum and links are made where appropriate. IT is used where it enhances, extends and complements 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. In KS2 where staffing allows, for both guided reading lessons and English lessons, year groups have use of an additional teacher, splitting the year group into 3 smaller class sizes.

EYFS

We believe that communication and language with opportunities to explore reading and writing underpins children's future learning. The practice in EYFS will follow the revised Early Years Framework (Sept 2021) and will work towards the Early Learning Goals aiming to meet the statement of the goals by the end of reception year. In EYFS the daily routine will include planned and spontaneous activities that include the following areas from the seven areas of learning.

Communication and Language

Listening and attention: children listen attentively in a range of situations. They listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions. They give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaged in another activity.

Understanding: children follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. They answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events.

Speaking: children express themselves effectively, showing awareness of listeners' needs. They use past, present and future forms accurately when talking about events that have happened or are to happen in the future. They develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.

Literacy

Reading-Comprehension and Word Reading: children read and understand simple sentences. They use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately. They also read some common irregular words. They demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read.

Writing: children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways that match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. They write simple sentences that can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible.

At the end of the EYFS year the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is completed for each child. Teachers assess if the children are emerging or at expected levels against the Early Learning Goals. The results are then shared with year 1 teachers who use this data to set targets for the next year.

Key Stages 1 and 2

The English programme of study, as detailed in the National Curriculum 2014, is based on the following 4 areas of teaching and learning:

- Spoken language
- Reading
 - Word reading/decoding
 - Comprehension
- Writing
 - Composition
 - Handwriting and Presentation
 - Spelling
- Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation

By the end of each Key Stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in each area.

Spoken Language (Oracy)

Intent

Pupils will be able to:

- listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers
- ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge
- use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary
- articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
- give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings
- maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments
- use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas
- speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English
- participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play, improvisations and debates
- gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s)
- consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others
- select and use appropriate registers for effective communication.

Implementation

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. Children regularly work in pairs and mixed ability groups to discuss aspects of their work and report on their learning and the opinion of others. They are encouraged to use a range of sentence stems, build on or challenge ideas.

Spoken Language outcomes are planned for in all areas of the curriculum and will be a focus across the curriculum and across the school day in a variety of settings.

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
- 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
- KS2 debating club

Reading

Intent

To enable children to:

- develop positive attitudes towards reading so that it is a pleasurable and meaningful activity;
- confidently develop reading skills using Phonics as the prime approach
- use reading skills confidently 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

Implementation

Reading is an integral part of our curriculum. All staff value reading and promote it at every opportunity. We want all our children to be motivated, engaged readers who view reading as an enjoyable experience. Reading skills at Avondale are taught in a variety of ways. We use Accelerated Reader as our tool for monitoring reading practice and progress once children are fluent readers from Year 2 upwards.

Phonics

Phonics is our prime approach to teaching early reading. It is taught explicitly in Foundation Stage and KS1 and where necessary in KS2. We follow the 'Red Rose Letters and Sounds' Programme which is a robust and rigorous phonics programme developed by the Lancashire Professional Development Team. This ensures young children will be able to blend phonemes (individual units of sound) to decode words accurately building fluency as they progress. Children will also develop their ability to segment the sounds in words in order to develop spelling abilities. Phonics is taught daily in an engaging way with rigour and pace. Children are taught using a Quality First Teach model where all children are exposed to age related expectation. They then move into smaller groups to access bespoke group activities using additional staff.

Children's progress is carefully monitored using our assessment tool 'Phonics Tracker.' Children are regularly tracked and timely intervention is made if necessary. Year 1 children take the Phonics Screening Check in June. This assessment will confirm whether individual pupils have learnt phonic decoding to an appropriate standard. If a child does not reach the appropriate standard then additional support will be put in place in order for the child to make accelerated progress with their reading during Year 2.

Guided Reading

EYFS, KS1 and in KS2 where needed

We use a group guided reading structure daily to ensure all children are given the opportunity to develop reading skills. Children read a phonetically decodable book that matches their phonics development. We utilise extra staff during these sessions with a clear focus on providing as much opportunity as possible for children to learn to read accurately with developing fluency and prosody and also that they can comprehend. We use the acronym VIPERS to aid the teaching of the 6 reading domains. For early readers we focus mainly on V - vocabulary, E - explain, R - retrieve and S - sequence. Once children are fluent readers (ideally at the end of Phase 5 phonics) they are assessed for Accelerated Reader.

KS2

We use a whole class structure for guided reading in Year 3 to year 6. The intention of this method is to expand pupils' vocabulary and deepen their understanding of the texts they are reading. Texts are selected to link to class novels and half termly topics. Across a half term we select x2 fiction texts, x2 non-fiction texts and x2 other style of texts. The structure of a whole class guided reading lesson is:

- Revise and Revisit - 5 mins
- Read - model, practise, decode, develop fluency/prosody - 5-10 mins
- Teach - introduce content domain using VIPERS - 5-10 mins
- Practise and apply - independent application of taught skills - 10 mins

Whole class reading

We timetable a daily opportunity for children to practise their own reading and be read to by an adult. This develops reading/listening skills, a love for storytelling and promotes reading for pleasure.

Shared reading

This happens in English sessions when introducing text and prior to writing. The teacher models as an expert reader and draws out the key elements of the content. This type of reading immerses children in the pattern of story and features of text types.

Many other opportunities are provided for pupils to practise and extend reading in other subjects.

All teachers are responsible for providing a stimulating reading environment, promoting book ownership and recommending books to pupils. Our reading areas follow guidance given in The Reading Framework document. Classroom and central displays are language rich. All classrooms have a well-stocked book area with a range of fiction and non-fiction books. Our school library is an important resource that children are timetabled to use regularly each week. School accesses further books by loaning from 'Lancashire Schools Library Service.'

Reading at home is regarded as an important part of reading development and forms part of our homework policy. Parents are expected to read with their child/ren a minimum of 5 times a week. This is monitored by school staff. Parents and pupils are encouraged to respond to their reading practice through individual reading diaries.

We recognise and value children's efforts with their reading practice using class and whole school reward systems. We celebrate and further promote reading wherever possible including World Book Day, themed weeks, author visits, book fairs etc.

Writing

Intent

Pupils will be able to:

- acquire a wide range of sophisticated vocabulary
- write in different contexts and for different purposes and audiences
- develop writing skills so that pupils have the stamina and ability to write at or above the age expected standard.
- be increasingly aware of the conventions of writing, including grammar, punctuation and spelling
- plan draft and edit their writing to suit the purpose
- use IT as a literacy medium for presenting work and manipulating text
- form letters correctly, leading to a fluent joined and legible handwriting style, giving increasing regard to presentation
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Implementation

Teachers promote writing and look for ways to inspire and motivate pupils so that they see themselves as 'writers'. Writing should be a creative/developmental process both at a functional and an imaginative level. The compositional and transcriptional skills are taught alongside the creative aspects. Immersion in reading, talk and preparation for writing is essential to the writing development process.

Writing is taught through:

Modelled writing The writing process is modelled by the teacher as the expert writer. The emphasis may be on the generation of ideas, grammatical awareness, spelling and phonics, compositional, transcriptional, presentational and text level skills or other key strategies needed in writing. Not all of these can be modelled in one session, but the teacher as the expert writer leads the cumulative writing process.

Shared writing The writing process is modelled by the teacher as the expert writer with contributions from the children

Guided writing that targets children at their point of writing. Guided writing takes place in small groups with a teaching focus using targets and writing already modelled. The main part of the session is spent by the child writing with the adult intervening when appropriate.

Independent writing gives the children opportunities to develop their confidence and practise their writing skills. Independent writing is supported through the use of dictionaries, word banks, writing frames or plans and alphabet cards.

The school environment celebrates quality writing through displays of work in both handwritten and typed form as well as signs and labels. All classrooms should have attractive and well-equipped resources for writing that children can access. Opportunities for writing are planned for and accessible throughout the learning environment and school day.

In EYFS, Year 1 and 2 the focus for writing is on teaching high-quality transcription and sentence instruction, while gradually developing broader writing skills. We use **Colourful Semantics** as an approach to supporting this.

Writing is taught through the **Talk for Writing** Process. Talk for Writing is the developmental exploration, through talk, of the thinking and writing processes and the taught organisation of thoughts into words.

The Talk for Writing process moves from imitation, through innovation into independent application.

The imitation stage is centred around getting the children to learn a story which enables a child to internalise a narrative pattern so that it is added to their linguistic repertoire.

The innovation stage is where the children draw upon the underlying structure and language features of the original model, to enable them to create their own version using shared writing.

In the independent application stage the children independently use the features focused on in the unit to create a new piece of writing. Pupils are taught to revise and edit their work.

Children will be given opportunities to write independently in weekly extended writing sessions and in other areas of the curriculum.

Handwriting

Letter formation and then handwriting is explicitly taught throughout the school-see handwriting policy.

Continuous Cursive style handwriting is used. The correct formation/join/patterns of letters is firstly modelled by the teacher for the children to then practice. Good presentation is emphasised at all times and through all forms of writing. 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.

Spelling

Children are taught strategies enabling them to:

- Spell accurately and identify reasons for misspellings
- Proof-read their spelling
- Recognise and use word origins, families and roots to build their skills
- Use dictionaries, thesauruses and spell-checks.
- Write from memory simple sentences dictated by the teacher, that include words and punctuation taught.

Teachers provide a wide range of contexts for reinforcing spelling patterns and tricky words throughout the school day. Teachers plan for the teaching of spelling using the appendices from the National Curriculum 2014.

Spelling Shed is used in year 2-6 to aid planning and for the children to practice their spellings. Learning takes place in a variety of situations and group settings. For example, these could include working independently to practise tricky words, possibly using ICT; working collaboratively on an investigation and participating in short, focused whole class activities.

Children are expected to spell high frequency words correctly and the word lists for their particular year group.

Children are tested weekly on their given spelling lists.

Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation

Teachers should understand, teach and demonstrate in their everyday practice the formal conventions of Standard English language.

Explicit knowledge of grammar is very important, as it gives us more conscious control and choice in our language. Building this knowledge is best achieved through a focus on grammar within the teaching of reading, writing and speaking. Once pupils are familiar with a grammatical concept they should be encouraged to apply and explore this concept in the grammar of their own speech and writing and to note where it is used by others.

GPS can be taught daily as part of English lessons (i-model) and/or as a discrete lesson.

Teachers plan for the teaching of vocabulary, grammar and punctuation using the appendices from the National Curriculum 2014 (English appendix 2)

Learning new vocabulary is an important part of English Language. Pupils have access to a wide range of opportunities to learn and explore new vocabulary that include:-

- Word hoards
- Access to dictionaries and thesauruses
- Whole class guided reading
- Guided reading
- Class novels
- Explicit vocabulary teaching
- Language rich environment
- Working walls
- Exposure to ambitious vocabulary daily

A range of extra activities are used to promote Literacy in school including author visits, debating club, drama opportunities (performance in shows), book fairs, spelling bees, poetry competitions, public speaking and visits to the theatre.

Impact

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessments are made in line with the school assessment policy.

English is measured, against year group expectations. It is expected that children will achieve these outcomes by the end of the year. We strive to ensure that our children's attainment is in line or exceeds their potential when we consider the varied starting points of all our children. We measure this using a range of materials, whilst always considering the age-related expectations for each year group. Children will make at least good progress in Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening from their last point of statutory assessment. The impact of our English curriculum will ensure our pupils are academically prepared for life beyond primary school and throughout their educational journey.

Teachers use effective formative assessment to ensure planning is based on prior attainment and that pupils know what they need to do to achieve the next steps. Insight is used to track summative data for each child at the end of each term.

Regular feedback is given to pupils (see the school's Marking Policy) and helps them to understand how to be successful, what they have achieved and what they need to do to improve further. The pupils are given time within lessons or within daily timetables to specifically respond to marking feedback and improve their work. Analysis of assessment data is used to set targets. Class targets are derived from the school's data and are regularly reviewed. Where applicable, school issues are addressed through targets linked to performance management. Children are also involved in setting their own steps to success and are encouraged to review their progress towards these through self, peer and teacher assessment. 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.

Teaching English to children with SEND

All children are included in the teaching and learning of English, whatever their needs. It is part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. We provide learning opportunities that are matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties. Work in English takes into account the targets set for individual children in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Specific interventions are planned, delivered and evaluated as necessary. Amendments are made in lessons for children with SEND in order for them to access the English curriculum and achieve their full potential. The progress of children with SEND is tracked on a regular basis to ensure they are making good progress.

As a school we use a variety of approaches to enhance our learning in English; where appropriate children are encouraged to use adaptive resources to scaffold their learning. Visual prompts are used to support the learning of vocabulary in English. Where concerns are raised regarding difficulties in learning in English, assessments are carried out to identify any specific learning difficulties such as Dyslexia and the relevant interventions are put in place.

Examples of adaptive resources

- WIDGIT,
- Pre-teach vocab
- Colourful Semantics
- Text size
- Font
- Dyslexia friendly
- Visuals
- Adaptive questioning
- IDL
- Word mats
- Active participation
- Oral rehearsal/talking tins

Writing frames
Clever fingers/dough disco/interventions
Clicker 6
Smaller class sizes
Sentence stems
Brain breaks
Story maps
Fast Track Phonics - assessment

Pupil Premium

The teaching of English for pupil premium children is closely monitored and reviewed as part of the pupil progress cycle. For those children who are not making the expected progress interventions are arranged. Pupil Premium children are a focus for same day interventions.

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 programmes. These will be reflected in the School Development Plan. The English leaders will arrange for relevant advice and information, such as feedback from courses to be disseminated. Additional adults who are involved with intervention programmes will receive appropriate training that may be school based or part of central training.

Reviewed by A C Pickup and K Nuttal January 2026

Accepted by the governing body

To be reviewed