



Nelson Academy English Policy

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum, and at Nelson Academy is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- 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.

Reading:

Reading is a skill essential for life and at Nelson we want our children to leave school with a love of reading. Reading is a habit and that habit needs to be grounded in what we do at school. Children need to see adults loving books, so school staff are encouraged to share their love of reading with the children. All staff put up a poster on the door showing the book they are reading, and discussion with the children about these books is encouraged.

The programmes of study for reading at key stages 1 and 2 consist of two dimensions:

- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading).

Phonics

Word reading starts in EYFS with pupils sounding and blending unfamiliar words quickly and accurately using phonic knowledge and skills based on Letters & Sounds. Phonics lessons based on Letters and Sounds occurs daily from EYFS to Y2. Regular half-termly assessments ensure that those children not making sufficient progress are supported to catch up as rapidly as possible. Children in Y3 onwards who have not made sufficient progress in phonics are supported in intervention groups using Sound Discovery, and from Y5 onwards use Toe by Toe. All teachers and Teaching Assistants have had whole school training on Phonics.

Guided Reading

Teachers read with pupils a range of texts focusing on comprehension and specific features in relation to objectives and content domains. This is an opportunity for teachers to model the act of being a fluent reader. Teachers demonstrate to the class by ‘thinking aloud’ the skills required to be a reader. For guided reading, the text chosen should be at a level slightly higher than the majority of the class and the teacher should plan differentiated questions around the text that encourage the children to enjoy, understand, **discuss** and analyse the written word in a supported environment. For children working below age related expectations, guided reading is taught in a smaller group session using a suitable text. Within guided reading we use Reading Vipers (taken from the Literacy Shed) as a way of exploring the different content domains found in the National Curriculum, allowing children to break down questions into key skills and understand how they are required to approach a text. Fred’s Reading is used as a valuable resource which uses up to date and topical material. Teachers will teach the key skills regularly.

Class read:

Every class across the school is read to by an adult on a daily basis, fostering a love for reading through exposing the children to high quality literature. The books chosen are based the Five Plagues of Reading in order to ensure that children are able to navigate reading with confidence. In addition to this children and staff are encouraged to choose appropriate books. The books are selected to ensure children are exposed to a wide variety of literature from different genres and authors. Teachers are encouraged to choose challenging texts that will uncover new vocabulary and themes, opening up discussions around the language of books.

Reading Assembly:

Each term children are given the choice to listen to a variety of books for pleasure. Each teacher will choose a book and the children will choose which book to listen to. Every Wednesday children will go to that teacher’s classroom to listen, discuss and enjoy that book.

Independent Reading:

Children engage in independent, sustained reading. It provides an opportunity for pupils to read and enjoy a range of texts and to apply reading strategies. Each class has a dedicated, exciting reading area containing a range of books and text types for children to access independently.

Every class should have a range of books including:

- Poetry / plays
- Fiction – the choice of books reflects the spread of interest and reading abilities across the class, for example picture books, graphic novels, etc

- Non-fiction – as wide a range as possible, including plenty linked to the subject areas being studied

Library

We have an extensive new purpose- built library which each class will access weekly and children will be expected to choose books from. All classes will also visit the Downham Market library.

Books Going Home

EYFS & KS1: Children are heard reading independently by an adult or their peers on a regular basis, changing their books when required. Children learning phonics up to Phase 5 are expected to have a phonically decodable book appropriate to their phonic stage to take home (based on Big Cat Phonics) as well as an “inspirational” book.

KS2 & those above phase 5 in Letters and Sounds: Children work their way through the colour bands as the teacher thinks appropriate according to their ability, progressing to reading literature of their choice (checked for suitability by an adult where necessary).

Vocabulary

At the age of six there is a gap of a few months between the reading age of children who had good oral language skills at five, and those with poor oral language skills at five.

By the time they are 14, this gap has widened to five years difference in reading age.

The teaching of vocabulary should permeate through every lesson particularly in lessons that are not English, it is vitally important to teach vocabulary in foundation, maths and science lessons. Vocabulary should be taught daily, possible resources include Vocabulary Ninja and Twinkle. Word Aware should be used with those struggling with vocabulary and early acquisition EAL children.

Spelling

The systematic teaching of phonics in KS1 using the Letter and Sounds scheme and the recurrent teaching of spelling strategies and conventions at KS2 using No Nonsense Spelling. (Spelling Shed will be used to help consolidate this work)

- Regular dictionary and thesaurus work.
- Use of word banks and spell checks.
- Regular opportunities to identify and use spellings within a context

Assessment

Regular assessment will occur every day in individual lessons, but whole school assessment of reading and comprehension will occur as follows:

- Salford Reading Test – at the start of Autumn term and termly for those significantly below their reading age
- Pixl tests termly.

It is essential that these tests are analysed and key lessons learnt, to this end, there will be regular staff meeting times to analyse and put into place plans to address any areas that need to be developed.

Writing

The programmes of study for writing at key stages 1 and 2 are constructed similarly to those for reading:

- transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing).

As a school, we try to ensure that children understand the reason for writing with an obvious audience for their work and is based around a variety of high-quality texts or poems, and wherever practical linked to the topic they are studying. Writing is based around the principles of The Write Stuff to ensure clarity to the mechanics of writing. Following a method called ‘Sentence Stacking’, the approach places emphasis on sentences being ‘stacked together’ chronologically and organised to engage children with short, intensive moments of learning that they can then immediately apply to their own writing. Within each genre studied by the children, they will learn to sentence stack, focusing on the style of the author and impact of words and sentences most appropriate for that particular genre. All genres covered within writing sessions are those as taken from the Genre Overview Document.

Within each writing lesson, pupils learning is ‘chunked’ into three distinct parts for a writing lesson; initiate, model, enable.

Parts of the lesson

The initiate stage is a time to inspire: through the use of a stimulus, pupils are immersed in a rich language discussion and activities to provide a wealth of vocabulary to aid their writing.

The model stage is the chunk whereby the teacher demonstrates the thoughts and processes of a writer and articulates writing choices.

The enable stage is the opportunity for pupils to showcase what they can do within particular writing parameters known as The Three Zones of Writing: FANTASTICs, GRAMMARISTICs and the BOOMTASTICs. The Three Zones of Writing are essential components to support pupils in becoming great writers. Through the nine idea lenses known as the FANTASTICs, pupils focus on intended purpose of a sentence. The GRAMMARISTICs allow pupils to focus on the grammar element of writing which focuses on sentence structure, grammar rules and punctuation.

The BOOMTASTICs allow pupils to capture and create a vivid visual for the reader through the use of poetic devices.

The Writing Process

Within the writing process, children edit and redraft their work in response to feedback from their teacher and peers. Through this, children access a modelled text and write their own version of it incorporating the range of skills provided by the Fantastic, Grammaristic and Boomtastic lenses. They may produce related independent pieces and following the unit children plan, prepare and edit a final piece of independent writing

Handwriting and Presentation

At Nelson, children are taught to write legibly, fluently and at a reasonable speed. We believe a cursive style with correct letter formation must be taught as early as possible, where appropriate. Children follow the “Letter Join” scheme of work throughout the school.

Grammar and Punctuation

Grammar and punctuation will be taught regularly through explicit lessons and linked to more general English session and across the whole school curriculum. The school follows the “Classroom Secrets” scheme.

Assessment

Regular moderation will take place every half term. Strengths and weaknesses will be analysed and form the basis of teaching going forward. Reading and Writing will also be the key feature of Pupil Progress Meetings termly.