



# Nursery Hill Primary

## English Policy

Status of policy – **Statutory**/Non-Statutory

**DATE REVIEWED:** November 2022

**DATE APPROVED:** November 2022

**By**

**NEXT REVIEW DATE:** November 2023

**Signed: Alexis Gardner                      Chair of Governors**

**Signed: Sarah Jeans                              Headteacher**

## **Our Intent**

At Nursery Hill, our vision is to create confident, responsible and happy individuals, who aspire to fulfil their full potential. In English, our intent is to instil a love and passion for reading and writing in every child. We want the children to flourish by giving them access to a rich English curriculum. We recognise the importance of nurturing a culture where children love to read, take pride in their writing, and can accurately adapt their language and style for a range of contexts.

We provide children with opportunities to write across a range of genres, thinking carefully about the purpose and audience they are writing for. Children are encouraged to read a variety of books from different authors and topics, taking them out of their comfort zone and experience authors that they would usually not go to.

We want to inspire children to be confident in the art of speaking and listening and to be able to use discussion to communicate and further their learning. In our school, English is the foundation for every subject in our curriculum, and the skills that children develop in their English lessons are transferred across the whole curriculum.

## **Introduction**

At Nursery Hill Primary School, English is the foundation for all learning. It is imperative that we deliver a high quality of education, teaching children to read and communicate effectively, through speaking and listening as well as writing. By using these skills, the children are empowered to access the whole curriculum, learning more to remember more.

We work particularly hard to develop a love of literature and to enable all children to play a full and active part in their own learning and development across all areas of the subject, supporting them to reach their full potential.

## **Aims**

At Nursery Hill, we deliver the requirements of the National Curriculum (2014) as well as supporting the children to fulfil the following aims:

- Speak clearly, fluently and confidently
- Listen patiently and carefully, so that they can communicate effectively in a range of situations
- Develop their ability to learn through discussion, elaborating where needed and explaining their ideas and understanding clearly
- Read fluently with good understanding
- Develop a love of literature and language
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often for pleasure and information
- Acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- Write clearly, accurately and effectively for a range of audiences and purposes, as well as for pleasure

## **Oracy**

At Nursery Hill, we know that fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all areas of the curriculum. As a result, opportunities for speaking and listening permeate the whole curriculum throughout our school. Children are encouraged to clarify their thinking and organise their ideas for writing, as they are taught to:

- Speak clearly and convey ideas confidently using standard English
- Justify their ideas with reasons
- Ask questions to check understanding
- Develop their vocabulary
- Negotiate with others

- Evaluate and build on the ideas of others
- Give well-structured descriptions and explanations
- Develop their understanding through speculating, hypothesising and exploring ideas.

Specific practices include:

- Talk partners
- Participating in group and class discussions
- Listening, reciting and responding to rhymes, poems, songs, stories and non-fiction
- Roleplay and drama activities
- Regular writing tasks
- Opportunities to draft and edit their writing

## **Reading**

We recognise the crucial role that reading plays in enabling children to acquire knowledge, knowing more to remember more.

All staff promote the love of reading and encourage children to read widely. Each classroom has a designated reading area, designed to encourage the children to read a variety of books. Each class have books relevant to the age of the children and staff ensure books, relevant to their topics, are available.

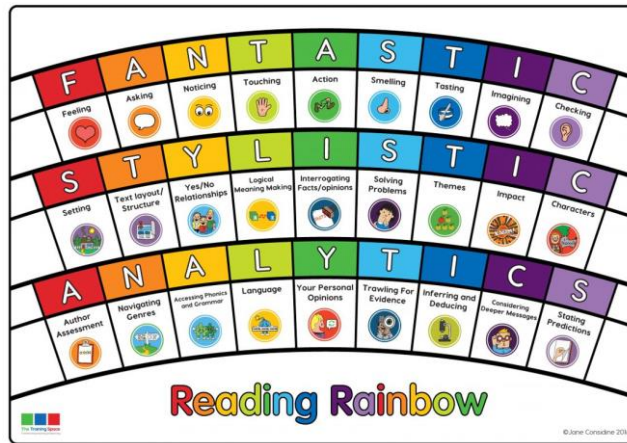
Staff act as role models for reading, by talking about their own reading and being seen to read for pleasure.

Our expectations are for children to read regularly at home. All children have a reading record, in which staff and parents can comment and communicate with each other to ensure a strong home-school partnership. Key Stage 2 children are encouraged to reflect on their own reading.

This year, we have implemented Little Wandle's Letters and Sounds as our Systematic Synthetic Phonics programme and Jane Considine's Hooked on Books for Years 2 to 6. Our curriculum is centred around the high-quality texts, both fiction and non-fiction. They are taught to read fluently and understand a wide range of texts through:

- Daily phonics for EYFS and Key Stage 1
- Reading practise sessions for Reception and Year 1, linked to phonics 3 times per week.
- Daily reading for target children
- Exposure to a wide range of quality texts
- Planned opportunities for independent, paired and shared reading
- Regular Guided Reading sessions, linked to Hooked on Books for Year 2 to Year 6
- Regular written comprehension for Year 2 to Year 6
- Oral rehearsal of comprehension activities for Reception and Year 1, offering writing opportunities when the children are ready
- Links made between reading and writing activities and the wider curriculum

Staff use the Reading Rainbow in their class, to develop the children's reading skills, through their Guided Reading sessions. All staff have had training for this to be used and have had definitions for each part of the rainbow (See appendix 1)

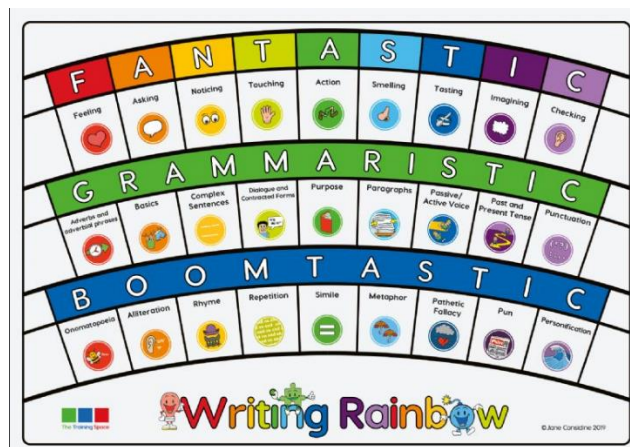


## Writing

At Nursery Hill, we believe that writing is an essential skill, linked to thinking and learning, and as a result, we strive to promote the enjoyment of this complex skill.

This year, we have implemented Jane Considine's 'The Write Stuff', to further improve standards in writing. The approach of chunking our lessons, delivering high quality modelling to the children, will help them to develop their individual skills, with a deeper understanding. This will help them to know more, remember more.

We use the Writing Rainbow to develop planning and the children's writing;



Our children are taught to:

- Spell and punctuate sentences with increasing accuracy
- Use an interestingly wide range of grammar correctly
- Write down ideas fluently, using clear and neat handwriting
- Use an increasingly wide vocabulary
- Communicate ideas effectively, with a clear awareness of the audience and purpose
- Develop skills and stamina to write at length

Specific practices include:

- Using high-quality texts and resources, so that the children are exposed to a rich and varied language that different authors use
- High quality modelling of writing.
- Planning sequences of lessons, where children can develop skills and use these in a wide range of writing genres
- Planning writing activities into creative teaching sequences which engage and inspire children.

- Planning meaningful and, where possible, real-life purposes and audiences for their writing, within and beyond the classroom
- Providing opportunities for extended writing, so that the children can apply the skills they have learnt
- Sentence stacking – highlighting what the children have done well and celebrating this in our classrooms.
- Teaching children to plan, proof-read, edit, redraft and present their work appropriately
- Delivering daily phonics sessions in EYFS and Key Stage 1
- Teaching spelling explicitly in accordance with the requirements of The National Curriculum for England 2014 (Years 1 to Years 6)

## **Planning**

We seek to ensure that planning delivers the requirements of the National Curriculum for England 2014, is suited to the needs of all our children and provides a creative and enjoyable sequence of learning. Our planning ensures that:

- There is a clear focus on outcomes
- There are appropriate and achievable learning objectives for all children
- Activities are differentiated by task where appropriate
- There is continuity and progression in learning
- There is a balanced coverage of word, sentence and text level learning
- There are links with other areas of the curriculum where appropriate
- The needs of all children are addressed, including those working below or above age related expectations.

## **Cross-curricular Links**

Where appropriate, written tasks in other subjects are used for the teaching of specific English skills (e.g. report writing in Science, instruction writing in Geography, letter writing in History) these are included in English planning and/or other curriculum planning.










Wherever possible, ICT is employed to enhance the English Curriculum.

## **Assessment**









Assessment is imperative to ensure that we are planning our lessons to the correct level of our children. Throughout our lessons and through marking, we assess the children, highlighting things that they are doing well, as well as areas for them to develop. These are noted on our planning so that we can plan lessons to cover these areas.

We have 3 formal assessment points each year, where we use NTS or previous SAT's papers to see how well the children are progressing in Reading as well as their Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar. Writing continues to be Teacher Assessed and then this is moderated within school and within our local cluster of schools, to ensure our assessments are accurate.

## Our English Curriculum: The Reading Rainbow symbols overview – Appendix 1

FANTASTICS – The ideas of reading		
Lens	Meaning	Explanation
	<b>Feeling</b>	This lens focuses on the emotions within a text. It allows the reader to identify key feelings experienced by central character. They will consider if they can personally relate to them. It stimulates discussion on evocative moments and encourages pupils to discuss and develop empathy for characters' plights. Emotions of people in non-fiction texts can be explored too.
	<b>Asking</b>	This lens places emphasis on the oral interaction in a text/ book. Central characters conversations are dissected - inspires discussion about what they expose. Dialogue might function to propel the action forward or to reveal a characters inner thoughts. Readers need to consider what characters say, and how they say it as well as thinking about the things they leave unsaid. Quotes from non-fiction books can also be extrapolated here. Pupils might consider how expert opinion is quoted or consider the dialogue features of voices from the past.
	<b>Noticing</b>	Characters in stories are often written in first person narrative, which means we begin to see the world through their eyes. When working with this lens, pupils should be considering the perspectives and viewpoints of characters. Equally, this lens encourages awareness of observable aspects that authors let us see through description and imagery.
	<b>Touch</b>	Writing is more engaging when it is a multi-sensory experience. The sense of touch is an important lens. Expressing how things feel to the touch is another way that writing can replicate real life experiences. Children need a rich repertoire of texture words to enable them to explore this lens.
	<b>Action</b>	Children should be able to seek out the main action in a story. Identifying and discussing key events helps pupils to connect with what is happening. Memorable aspects are often high intensity with main characters running and jumping through the plot. However, pupil often need support to notice the smaller – sometimes more revealing – action. The white-knuckle cliffhanger stuff might be more obvious, but sometimes a more subtle action can expose an important new character trait.
	<b>Smell</b>	This lens is used less frequently by writers. However, when it is used well, the impact is a wonderful three-dimensional experience for readers. Smells can be evocative of positive and negative experiences in our lives: a waft of perfume or the nasty whiff of a rotten sandwich. Often neglected, but very powerful, a 'smell' dimension in writing can enhance it to a new level. Identifying how authors use smell – or choose to leave it out – can be an interesting exercise, as can exploring how smells are used to create different moods.
	<b>Taste</b>	Tasting is not always relevant for authors to include a sense of taste. Of course foodstuffs in a story can be described in such a provocative and enticing way that readers can almost taste them too. Conversely, readers might balk at the descriptions of horrible tastes such as burnt toast, lumpy porridge or cold gravy. It is the more subtle tastes that readers need to be on the lookout for – the acrid black smoke from a chimney or the sticky, sweet aroma of candy floss at a fairground. A higher order skill is identifying the way some writers manipulate the sense of taste and attach it to feelings, e.g. a taste of fear welled up in his throat.
	<b>Imagining</b>	Good writers allow us a window to the deeper, inner thoughts of their characters. Clever writers create dialogue that we know contradicts a character's actual thoughts/ motives. Writing is a mix of expressing the outward behaviours of a character, as well as their internal thinking. Through extensive reading, pupils are able to empathise more closely with central characters they gain insight into their private thoughts and motivations.
	<b>Sound</b>	Crash! Bang! Wallop! Sounds bring a story to life and writers can choose to accentuate certain sounds for effect. Sometimes, pauses and long moments of silence can be even more powerful, magnified to create tension, e.g. the slow creaking of a door handle. Awareness of how sounds can create atmospheres and tension promotes meaningful discussion about their positive and negative impacts.

## STYLISTICS – The understanding of reading

Lens	Meaning	Explanation
	<b>Setting</b>	The setting is not only a place but a moment in time. If it is somewhere unique, unusual or unfamiliar, pupils can seek out textual evidence of all the smaller elements used to build a detailed description. Two stories can be set in exactly the same place, but feel completely different because of the words chosen by each writer. Often, the smallest of details – or a powerful word choice – can contribute to building a vivid picture in readers' minds. The time of day can also have a significant impact on the mood created.
	<b>Text layout/ structure</b>	No text will make sense unless it is structured in a clear way. At the very least it should have a beginning, middle and end. Pupils need to consider the differences in structure conventions across fiction and non-fiction. For example, how headings and subheadings are used to compartmentalise information in some non-fiction text types. This lens will also help pupils to consider how photographs are used to break up/ group information. As readers, understanding why certain layout features have been chosen – and exploring their effectiveness – is critical.
	<b>Yes/ No Relationships</b>	This lens helps children to examine key characters' relationships with both friends and enemies. The interplay between individuals, and their motives, is often where tension is created in a story or historical non-fiction event, which makes for intriguing reading. Understanding positive and negative relationships means pupils can begin to empathise with central characters/ significant figures in history and their experiences.
	<b>Logical meaning making</b>	Being able to discuss key events – and sequence them- reflects burgeoning comprehension skills. Younger children tend to find the skill more difficult, as they are too focused on decoding to read with the ease and fluency needed to hold up the meaning. Equally, older pupils may be challenged as they meet increasingly complex texts, with hidden aspects and use of deceit as a deliberate device to cause confusion.
	<b>Interrogating facts/ opinions</b>	This is an important aspect of becoming a proficient reader, particularly when reading non-fiction. Mature readers are able to distil facts from opinions and recognise that bias and prejudice can sometimes influence writers consciously or subconsciously. When looking at newspapers, it may be useful to consider how journalists deploy strategies that package opinions as facts, or use hyperbole to inflate facts to such a degree they are no longer factual.
	<b>Solving problems</b>	All stories revolve around the problem that has to be resolved. These problems are the central events that hold stories together and create key tension. When they are finally resolved, it brings stories to satisfactory conclusions. Problems can also be seen threaded through non-fiction text; the focus for a letter, an historical event of the past or changing environment in a geographical text and how this impacts on local people. Pupils need to identify problems of different types, sizes and challenge and consider how they can be grouped for commonality across stories, e.g. defeating the enemy.
	<b>Themes</b>	Although the events of a story may be interesting or exciting, a story without a theme is a little more than a list of events. A theme is revealed to elicit a universal human connection that enables us to engage our attention in a real way. Many people tend to confuse the theme of a story with the plot. Theme is often described as 'the pulse of a story' that threads through all the writing. Common themes include jealousy, appreciation or loss.
	<b>Impact</b>	How effective is the text? What was the authors intended impact on the reader? Did they succeed? What was the effect on the reader? Pupils need to become familiar with the idea that every text is intended to affect its readers in some way. Every reader is, of course, different too and sometimes a text will affect individuals in ways the writer didn't imagine [or one reader may find a depth that others won't]. This is particularly true if the text matches personal experience. A story about bereavement is bound to have more of a profound effect on a child who has lost someone close; Likewise, and non-fiction text about smoking will be more powerful for a pupil who is concerned about a loved one's health. Noticing the intended effect on the reader is an important skill. Even if something doesn't personally interest, horrify, amuse or persuade you, you need to be able to spot what the reader intended its impact to be.












## Characters

The protagonist is the main character in a story: The character that the reader or audience empathizes with. It is critical that pupils appreciate the protagonist's highs and lows as they move through the plot point of a story - so they can begin to see their personality revealed through the reactions and choices they make at each crossroads. In non-fiction, children can learn about the personalities of significant historical figures, for example Nelson Mandela, through their decisions and life choices.



## ANALYTICS – The competencies of reading

Lens	Meaning	Explanation
	<b>Author assessment</b>	Evaluating and reviewing an author's work requires the reader to take a critical stance. A good book review analyses, evaluates and judges the content. The skills needed to access an author's effectiveness build overtime, both through experience and through having more compatible texts to use as benchmarks.
	<b>Navigating genres</b>	Reading text with the knowledge of the conventions of certain genre types means that similarities and differences can be explored in a meaningful way. As a reader, the recognisable features of science fiction, suspense or romance can be identified and considered in relation to what is commonly expected from certain text types. A skilled reader, using their 'writerly eye' should be able to identify common features of fiction and non-fiction text types.
	<b>Assessing phonics and grammar</b>	Early readers are beginning to evidence 1:1 correspondences, drawing on their developing phonic knowledge to link graphemes and phonemes, decode simple words and recognise a core of known words. More advanced readers begin to yield patterns of meaning from different word classes. Young readers can make good funny guesses and older readers can make good grammar guesses. As pupils become more proficient readers, they begin to see how writers can manipulate word orders for dramatic effect and also how a particular word/ phrase can function in different ways.
	<b>Language</b>	Through precise language choices and literary devices, an author can create intrigue and interest. Pupils should be encouraged to notice unusual turns of the phrase and consider why these word choices were made. Equipping them with the correct terminology to discuss writerly devices will help them to explore their impact and effectiveness. The BOOMTASTIC's are a comprehensive collection of the poetic and figurative language devices used by authors to create impact and give their work a personal stamp.
	<b>Your personal opinions</b>	How you respond to a text, and how it engages you and grips your attention, is vital. Pupils should be taught that their opinions are valid and that they are the critical audience for children's authors. Sharing book reviews with other pupils is an excellent activity for young readers - underlining the fact that their personal perspective is a benchmark for others to begin to test out similar or differing viewpoints.
	<b>Trawling for evidence</b>	The 'heart of the matter' for skilled book detectives is: supporting quotes, events' summaries and capturing other data. Lines of inquiry, conclusions or analysis must be packaged and delivered with a valid textual evidence. Diligent book detectives are able to collect evidence from different places across a text to justify pertinent points.
	<b>Inferring and deducing</b>	Think of deduction as taking a lot of information and distilling it down to one fact through a process of reasoning. Deduction is a summary skill, a drawing of a conclusion, an educated guess based on what has been read. For example, you work at a hospital, you trained for seven years, you work long hours. I can deduce you are a doctor. An inference is the opposite: you take one fact/ hint and exploit it out into several assumptions. For example, you are a doctor; therefore, I think you are intelligent, kind, care about people and work in a hospital. Children need regular opportunities to develop both of these crucial skills.
	<b>Considering deeper messages</b>	In every story, there is one big idea - the lesson an author wants the reader to learn. Stories often serve as analogies for our own lives. It is not only Aesop's Fables that are trying to communicate a moral direction or advice for us. This is one of those 'zooming out' reading strategies that requires pupils to take a broad sweep of the text and draw out summative conclusions about the key message or messages.
	<b>Stating predictions</b>	As young readers, children are constantly learning to make predictions as they travel through a text. What do you think will happen next? Who do you think could save them? These types of questions help children to monitor their understanding of a story while also thinking ahead to the next part. If a pupil is able to make good fairly accurate predictions, the chances are that they are comprehending the text well. Exploring good predictions and hypothesis, and recognising when we are surprised/ shocked by a turn of events, is all part of developing maturity as a reader.