

English, literacy and reading policy

Stepping Stones Short Stay School (PRU)



Approved by: The
Committee (SEC)

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Contents

1. Aims.....	2
2. Legislation and guidance	2
3. Our vision for English and literacy in our school	2
4. Our guiding principles for the teaching of English and literacy.....	3
5. Roles and responsibilities	3
6. Curriculum	4
7. Marking and feedback.....	5
8. Monitoring, assessment and moderation	5
9. Learning environment	6
10. Resources.....	7
11. Review	7
12. Links with other policies	7

1. Aims

This policy is for all staff. It aims to set out:

- Our approach to teaching, monitoring and assessing English, literacy and reading knowledge and skills
- How we will make sure our provision for the teaching of English, literacy and reading is of consistently high quality

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements and expectations set out in the:

- [National Curriculum programmes of study for English](#)
- [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice 2014](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Reading framework 2023](#)

3. Our vision for English and literacy in our school

Our school aims to develop pupils' skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening. By the time that pupils move on from our school, our aim is for them to:

- Become more confident fluent readers and writers, having made good progress from their starting point
- Have a positive attitude towards books and reading, reading widely for pleasure and information
- Enjoy writing in different contexts and for different purposes and audiences
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting language and style accordingly
- Be curious and creative when it comes to reading and writing – for example, by being interested in learning the meaning of new words
- Have a wide vocabulary and understanding of grammar
- Feel confident speaking in class and be able to clearly explain their understanding and ideas
- Listen carefully and sensitively to adults and their peers
- Be competent in the art of speaking and listening by taking part in discussions, presentations and debates.

4. Our guiding principles for the teaching of English and literacy

We teach English and literacy best when:

- There is a joyful culture around reading and reading for pleasure in school
- All staff feel they have the knowledge, skills, understanding and professional support they need to teach English and literacy effectively
- There's sufficiently detailed and frequent ongoing assessment of pupil progress
- We expose pupils to different types of reading material, such as through stimulating, high-quality and curiosity-inspiring classroom displays and also linked to each class's current foundation subject themes each half-term.
- We involve families in supporting their child's reading and writing
- The English curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced and is in line with the National Curriculum. Staff utilise the guidance and support documents from the Lancashire Professional Development Service (LPDS), in order to plan units of work. Teachers plan and deliver a balance of fiction, non-fiction and poetry which is relevant to their class's needs, abilities and gaps in learning; and links to the foundations subjects where appropriate
- We identify where pupils have learning gaps or aren't making the expected progress, and put in place interventions to target these
- Teaching resources are available, up to date, varied and diverse, and match pupil and curriculum needs
- We engage pupils in high-quality back-and-forth interactions
- We model new language and accurate grammar to pupils
- We support pupils with speech, language and communication needs – for example, by putting on extra small-group story time

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Building a team of expert teachers who know and understand the processes that underpin learning to read and write
- Providing teachers with the appropriate training and resources so that they can competently deliver the English curriculum
- Creating a stimulating school environment where pupils are exposed to different types of reading material, such as through displays, books and other classroom resources
- Promoting a culture of reading for pleasure at the core of the curriculum
- Developing links with organisations such as school and public library services, reading charities and others
- Involving parents and families in supporting their children's reading

5.2 The English and literacy lead

Our English and literacy lead is Jo Dowker, who is responsible for providing leadership and management for English and literacy to secure:

- High-quality teaching and subject knowledge of staff
- A coherently planned and sequenced English curriculum where pupils are taught to read and write; and have their reading and writing skills and knowledge develop from the moment of Entry to Stepping Stones.
- A rigorous programme that includes well-conceived and structured resources for teaching phonics
- A programme of reading aloud to all pupils across all classes
- Consistent assessment and accurate teacher judgements within English and literacy
- Effective use of resources

5.3 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- Planning effective English and literacy lessons - our children often come into school disengaged from their learning and start at different points during the school year depending on when they have been excluded or referred. Children may arrive or leave mid-way through a topic. Therefore, teachers plan from the most relevant age group for their class, using the KLIP's to prioritise certain areas of English. This can change during the year.
- Providing opportunities for pupils to apply their English and literacy skills in a variety of ways
- Completing the relevant marking and assessment
- Demonstrating their understanding of systematic synthetic phonics in their teaching so trainee teachers can learn from them how to teach reading effectively
- Making sure that support staff have:
 - Access to planning materials and resources
 - The knowledge and skills they need to support and challenge pupils
 - Access to the training resources when required for the phonics programme

6. Curriculum

- All children complete a baseline assessment and data is gathered from their mainstream school on entry to Stepping Stones in order to ensure targeted and differentiated high quality teaching is in place for reading, writing, phonics and spelling.
- Phonics, spelling, punctuation and grammar lessons are embedded within the English curriculum.
- The English curriculum is in line with the National Curriculum.
- Children are expected to write daily across the whole curriculum.
- Within Upper School, Maple and Oak Classes (KS2) (when appropriate, in Hazel (lower KS2)), all English units should have a desired outcome and follow the progression of reading, analysis, gathering content, drafting, final products.
- Teachers should focus on delivering key skills in order to target the gaps in learning, consolidating punctuation, spelling, grammar and ensuring children are exposed to and using ambitious vocabulary.
- Within English lessons teachers will model reading and writing through shared and guided reading and writing opportunities.
- Within Lower School, Elm class (KS1) daily writing is based on the Readers within the phonics scheme – Success for All Phonics (Fisher Family Trust). Hazel class (lower KS2) pupils will access daily writing based on readers in the phonic scheme as appropriate for individual needs. In Elm, genre writing is completed as a week's theme each half-term, and within continuous and enhanced provision as appropriate.
- All children also work towards their own individual targets within English.
- Independent writing is gathered in a separate folder / book to monitor the progress of children and to inform termly assessments using the KLIPs / PIVATS statements.
- We have high expectations for all children and aim for our children to meet their half-termly SMART targets for English and make appropriate' progress from their starting point.
- Teachers identify whether the writing was supported, guided or independent within their English books.
- Teachers keep a record of the writing checklist (Twinkl resource) in the file to monitor the frequency of children meeting their targets, ensuring they are making appropriate progress.
- Teachers embed writing skills throughout the year in cross-curricular writing opportunities.
- Teachers moderate writing half-termly to ensure consistency of assessment across school.
- Writing interventions are in place for children who require support for writing. E.g. Fischer Family Trust, Clicker; some children are working on a teacher developed intervention to help them to achieve progress.
- Children's written work is celebrated and displayed across school.
- All staff to have high expectations for children's progress within writing.

6.1 Timetabling

All children read and write daily. Phonics is taught daily in Elm class(EYFS & KS1). Spelling, grammar and punctuation is taught daily with the pupils in Key Stage 2. Where a KS2 pupil requires consolidation/teaching of early phonics, they access 1:1/small group teaching of phonics alongside teaching of KS2 spelling rules as appropriate.

Classes are usually mixed age groups, sometimes crossing Key Stages; there is therefore a wide variety of ability and needs. Timetabling reflects this. Class timetables can change termly in order to meet the needs of the cohort at the time and are set in order to ensure an appropriate range of reading and writing teaching and learning is completed across each week. A cohort's needs can change frequently within a PRU setting.

We ensure that reading is a key focus. We aim to hear the children read individually each day in Key Stage 1. In the Key Stage 2 classes, there is an ongoing class novel read daily; and individual children are heard read 1:1 as required.

6.2 Cross-curricular links

We will facilitate cross-curricular learning of English and literacy skills, making sure that the links with other curriculums are natural and not forced. This will be achieved through activities in other subjects such as:

- Annotating sources
- Group discussions
- Comprehension
- Topic research
- Drama activities

6.3 Differentiation

We will provide suitable differentiation and adaptations, to make sure that every pupil makes maximum progress in English and literacy, by:

- Recognising where some pupils need specific help with their English skills – for example, if they have dyslexia;
- Providing resources such as phonics mats and writing frames to scaffold pupils' learning, maintaining fidelity to the school's phonics scheme;
- Quality first teaching for all pupils;
- Identifying pupils who would benefit from more support in an area of their English learning; and running small intervention groups for targeted support each week to aid their progress and attainment. Monitoring and assessment takes place to ensure intervention is effective, timely and the impact is measured;
- Making sure pupils who need it are extended through the use of additional, more demanding and open-ended tasks and planned challenges within each lesson.

7. Marking and feedback

Feedback will clearly explain to pupils what they're doing well, and what they need to do next to continue to improve their work.

Feedback will be given daily, both verbally, and in the pupils' books. Please see our school's marking and feedback policy for detail.

8. Monitoring, assessment and moderation

8.1 Monitoring

We will monitor the teaching and learning of English, literacy and reading in our school to make sure that all of our pupils make the best possible progress from their starting points.

School leaders and the English Lead will monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' learning through:

- Conducting learning walks
- Reviewing marking and feedback
- Termly pupil progress meetings
- Book scrutiny, within professional conversation with the class teacher regarding the written work
- Half-termly writing moderation

8.2 Assessment

We will track pupils' progress using a combination of formative and summative assessment, for example, through ongoing formative assessment throughout every lesson; in-school summative assessment in the form of termly assessments within reading, writing, spelling and phonics; and formal summative assessment at the end of each Key Stage where applicable.

Our pupils will sit the following formal assessments:

- The phonics screening check at the end of year 1; and in Y2 where required ie a Y2 is on roll with us who did not meet the phonics screening requirements in Y1.
- National Curriculum tests in the summer term at the end of KS2 where required.
- KS2 grammar, punctuation and spelling (GPS) tests

We will provide regular targets for pupils; and provide termly written reports against these at pupil reviews: i.e. pupils will receive a written report at the time of their reintegration back to their mainstream school or to a new school setting; or at a progress review for our permanently excluded pupils. Pupils with an EHCp will receive reports on their English and literacy progress as part of the child's Annual Review.

>Y2 and Y6 staff attend cluster training in order to support making accurate judgements. This is cascaded through the teaching team.

We are expecting children to develop their fluency, stamina and enjoyment for reading and writing as they move through the school.

8.3 Moderation

We will standardise writing samples to:

- Demonstrate how pupils' work meets National Curriculum attainment targets for KS1 and KS2, to help with assessment
- Make sure staff have a consistent approach to marking pupils' work
- We will refer to the exemplification materials for [KS1](#) and [KS2](#) from the Standards and Testing Agency (STA) to support with this. Joint moderation of writing portfolios enables staff to make informed judgements and enables a consistent approach across school.

We will moderate teacher assessments of writing every half-term.

For each National Curriculum statement, we will:

- State what the activity involved – for example, if it was done in controlled conditions or involved specific resources
- Explain how the evidence was collected – for example, by observation, written work or drawing
- Indicate how much support was given to the pupil during the activity
- Record the outcome of the activity to judge success/progress against ARE's.
- Through the collection of independent pieces of writing, we aim to have portfolio of evidence for each child to show their progress through their placement.

9. Learning environment

Pupils will learn English and literacy in spaces that:

- Are well-organised
- Contain appropriate and good-quality resources for pupils to refer to (in a space where they can find or see them easily)
- Have minimal distractions
- Display letter cards and posters showing grapheme-phoneme correspondences that match our school's phonics teaching programme

10. Resources

10.1 Books

We will select and use books that meet the recommendations in the [2023 reading framework](#), including that they:

- Cover a wide range of subjects and vocabulary
- Elicit a strong emotional response
- Have a strong narrative
- Have illustrations that are engaging and reflect children from all backgrounds and cultures
- Include fiction, non-fiction, modern and traditional stories

Once we have chosen our books, we will:

- Identify a core set of stories for each year group
- Refresh the list regularly (at least once a year), as new books are published and as our school welcomes new teachers
- Identify a core set of poems for each year group, based on the criteria on page 30 of the reading framework.
- Share the list with parents, and explain its purpose, so they can buy or borrow the books

10.2 Book corners

When visiting their book corner, pupils will be able to:

- Browse the books
- Revisit the ones the teacher has read to them
- Borrow books to read or re-tell at home
- Spend time there

When arranging the book corner, teachers will display books clearly and in an engaging way.

10.3 Rhymes and poems

We will choose rhymes and poems that will develop pupils' language skills.

10.4 Dictionaries and thesauruses

To support with writing and spelling, we will make sure that pupils have access to dictionaries and thesauruses by:

- Having at least 1 dictionary and thesaurus available in each classroom

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed every year by English Lead. At every review, the policy will be shared with The Committee.

12. Links with other policies

This policy links with the following policies and procedures:

- Curriculum policy
- SEN/SEND policy and information report
- Marking and feedback policy
- Behaviour policy
- Early Reading and Phonics Policy
- Reading Statement

