English at Ashton Gate Primary School

Primary level English focuses on developing foundational literacy skills, including reading, writing, speaking, and listening, with an emphasis on grammar, vocabulary, and spelling. Students learn to communicate effectively, understand different types of texts, and develop a love of reading.

Intent

It is our intention that a high-quality English education at Ashton Gate Primary School will teach pupils to communicate confidently, clearly and fluently through speaking and writing, and comprehend the communication of others through reading and listening.

The explicit teaching of reading skills and exposure to a range of literature allows pupils to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know, thereby being able to access their secondary education.

Reading

Our intention is to foster a lifelong love for reading among our pupils, enabling them to become confident, fluent readers who can comprehend and critically engage with a diverse range of texts across the curriculum. We aim to develop not only their decoding and word recognition skills but also their ability to understand contexts, themes, and the emotional resonance of literature. Our reading curriculum is designed to meet the varied needs of our pupils, reflecting their backgrounds and interests while ensuring that all children achieve the highest standards.

We strive to:

- Create an inclusive reading culture that celebrates diversity and promotes equality, ensuring that all learners feel valued and represented.
- Establish a strong foundation in phonics through systematic, high-quality phonics instruction that is engaging, interactive, and developmentally appropriate.
- Encourage comprehension skills through rich discussions, varied questioning techniques, and activities that promote critical thinking and text analysis.
- Provide access to a wide variety of reading materials, including fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and digital texts, to inspire curiosity and broaden horizons.
- Embed reading across the curriculum to enhance vocabulary and subject knowledge, demonstrating the relevance of reading in all areas of learning.

Writing

It is our intention in Ashton Gate Primary School, to create ambitious, confident writers who have acquired a range of skills to enable them to independently write for a variety of different purposes and audiences. Alongside a love of writing, we want to enable them to recognise the importance of effectively communicating through carefully crafted sentences and the significance of this in securing future employment.

We want to inspire writers of the future and give them the opportunity to understand how powerful the written word can be as a medium for self-expression and critical thinking; therefore, our curriculum is designed around the following key principles:

- **High Expectations:** We set ambitious goals for all learners, encouraging them to aspire to excellence in their writing while valuing the unique voice each child brings.
- **Cultural Relevance:** Our writing programme reflects the diverse backgrounds of our pupils, integrating texts and themes that resonate with their experiences and interests.
- **Sequential Progression:** Our curriculum is meticulously structured to provide a coherent progression of skills, techniques, and knowledge, allowing all students to build on prior learning systematically.
- **Real-World Application:** We encourage writing for genuine purposes by connecting tasks to real-world audiences and encouraging pupils to engage with the wider community through their writing.

Our School Drivers

English learning at Ashton Gate Primary School develops our school drivers in a range of ways.

Cultural diversity

- Exploring texts which are based in other cultures and by a variety of authors.
- Reading books with characters from different cultural backgrounds can help students see themselves reflected in stories and broaden their understanding of different perspectives; pupils can develop empathy and celebrate cultural richness
- Storytelling and oral traditions are explored, creating opportunities for students to share their own family stories, traditions, fostering a sense of pride and belonging, and a connection with the wider world and its diverse cultures.
- Exploring the structure of different languages can broaden students' understanding of linguistic diversity and divergent communication styles.
- Discussing stereotypes and prejudices related to different cultures can help students develop critical thinking skills and challenge harmful biases.

Independence

- Using the CEEAAC model (shown below), allowing for independent application of knowledge and skills in each lesson. Explicit instruction and modelling of thought processes demonstrates to pupils how to analyse text, including character development.
- Teachers encourage metacognitive thinking by modelling editing and self-assessment skills, which allows for discussion of how to make improvements and setting personal targets.
- Providing varying levels of scaffolding, which is gradually lessened with increased proficiency, allows pupils to apply their learning independently.
- Pupils are encouraged to research their writing using thesauruses and dictionaries, by synthesising information from different texts, and through researching relevant historical, scientific or literary information to enrich their fiction or non-fiction writing.
- Pupils are encouraged to use resources including word mats, grammar checklists and success criteria to support independent learning.

Equality

- Using an evidence-led curriculum for all, where there is no ceiling to what children can learn

- Using explicit vocabulary instruction to ensure all children have the knowledge they need to be successful in each lesson
- Quality-first whole-class teaching in English lessons
- Critical thinking discussions exploring and challenging stereotypes within texts and be able to identify discriminatory language.
- Through reading, writing, and discussion, students develop empathy for others and learn to see things from different perspectives.
- Students learn to use respectful and inclusive language in their writing and speaking, promoting positive attitudes and behaviours.

Growth mindset

- All pupils are encouraged to 'Rise High Together' and use their 'Ashton Gater' characteristics in English lessons.
- The CEEAAC model uses learning loops to check for understanding and learning is repeated throughout lessons and units.
- Teachers to provide an opportunity for all children to feel successful in English lessons. By creating a supportive learning environment, teachers encourage students to view challenges as opportunities for growth.
- Focusing on the process of writing, by celebrating effort and perseverance, and championing the importance of the planning stages, rather than solely focusing on outcomes.
- Viewing mistakes as learning opportunities – encouraging children to try different strategies and seek challenges.
- Promoting perseverance when attempting reading comprehensions, benefiting pupils' reading stamina.
- A growth mindset can encourage students to experiment with different writing styles, take risks, and revise their work based on feedback.

Implementation

At Ashton Gate Primary School, our English curriculum is taught largely using the CUSP curriculum. CUSP is underpinned by evidence, research and cognitive science. This cumulative curriculum is "deliberately sequenced to activate prior learning, build on skills and deepen knowledge and understanding, enabling robust progression for every pupil".

This scheme runs alongside the Little Wandle Scheme for phonics and early reading in EYFS and Key Stage 1.

Reading

To realise our intent for reading, we employ a cohesive, whole-school approach characterised by effective planning, delivery, and assessment:

1. **Phonics Programme**:
    - We implement a systematic synthetic phonics programme from Reception onwards, ensuring all pupils are taught the necessary skills to decode texts confidently.

- Phonics sessions are engaging and varied, accommodating different learning styles and abilities.

2. **Reading Curriculum**:
   - Our reading curriculum is carefully sequenced and structured, enabling progression in both skill and complexity.
   - We use quality texts that are inclusive of various cultures, perspectives, and genres, ensuring all children see themselves in the literature they read.
3. **Reading for Pleasure**:
   - Dedicated reading time is incorporated into our timetables to encourage pupils to read independently, with a teacher or with peers, fostering a love for reading.
   - We regularly host book fairs, author visits, and themed reading weeks to ignite excitement and promote reading as a communal experience.
4. **Professional Development**:
   - Continuous professional development for staff in effective reading instruction techniques and the latest pedagogical research ensures that all teachers have the skills and knowledge necessary to deliver high-quality reading instruction.
   - Collaboration and sharing best practices among staff are encouraged.
5. **Assessment and Intervention**:
   - Regular assessment through formative and summative measures allows us to track progress, identify gaps, and tailor interventions accordingly.
   - Targeted support is provided for pupils who require additional help, including one-to-one reading sessions, paired reading, and small group interventions.

In the reading curriculum, there are two key dimensions - word reading and comprehension.

- Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. This is why phonics should be emphasised in the early teaching of reading to beginners (ie unskilled readers) when they start school.

- Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills develop through pupils' experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction. All pupils must be encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world they live in, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum. Reading widely and often increases pupils' vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. Reading also feeds pupils' imagination and opens up a treasure house of wonder and joy for curious young minds.

<u>Writing</u>

The programmes of study for writing at key stages 1 and 2 are split between:

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

Writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription: that is, on spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words.

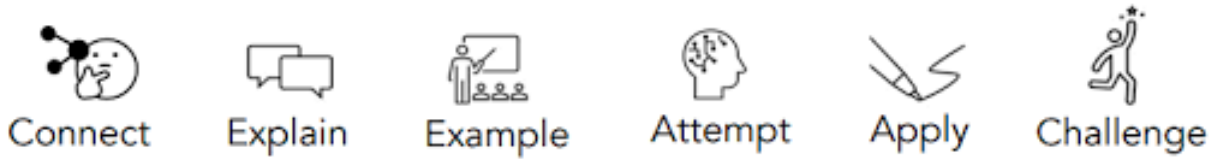
Effective composition involves articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting.

Other key elements of our implementation include:

- **Explicit Teaching of Writing Skills:** We utilise explicit instruction to teach grammar, punctuation, and stylistic techniques through a variety of texts and genres. High-quality modelling, sentence scaffolding, and guided writing sessions are integral to our teaching practice.
- **Engaging Writing Curriculum:** Our curriculum encompasses a rich variety of writing genres—narrative, descriptive, persuasive, and informative—ensuring that pupils have opportunities to write across subjects and in real-life contexts. We include frequent cross-curricular writing tasks that allow students to transfer their skills and knowledge.
- **Use of Formative Assessment:** Teachers employ formative assessments through regular assessments, feedback and peer review sessions to inform teaching and next steps in learning. Live marking is prioritised for instant, actionable feedback. This ensures that every student's needs are addressed and that progress is celebrated.
- **Encouragement of Creativity and Individual Voice:** We create a culture that promotes risk-taking and innovation in writing, where children are encouraged to explore their ideas freely and develop their voice from the earliest years.
- **Community Involvement:** We actively involve the local community in our writing initiatives, including author visits, writing competitions, and a Poetry Slam. This enhances the relevance of writing and encourages a broader engagement with literacy.

CEEAAC model of teaching

Teachers will deliver the curriculum using the CEEAAC model of learning. This allows opportunities to retrieve prior knowledge at regular intervals and ensures pupils have the background knowledge that they need for each lesson. Vocabulary is explicitly taught and concepts are explained clearly using examples. Teachers are able to check for understanding when pupils attempt learning, building in learning loops to ensure that pupils are ready to then apply their knowledge independently. All children have the opportunity to be challenged in their English lessons.



Impact

Subject leaders will ensure that there is regular monitoring of English teaching and learning and will be given regular opportunities to collaborate with other subject specialists in the Amplify Education trust. During lessons, children will be assessed using learning loops and formative assessment (quizzing) and this will be used to guide lessons through whole class feedback.

Reading

The impact of our reading programme is evident through a variety of measures:

- **Academic Achievement**:
  - A robust tracking system shows that the majority of pupils make at least good progress in reading, with outcomes being comparative with national averages in key assessments (e.g., Year 1 Phonics Screening Check, Key Stage 2 SATs).
- **Engagement and Attitudes**:
  - Pupil voice surveys indicate a high level of enthusiasm for reading, with children expressing enjoyment and confidence in their reading abilities.
- **Broader Skills Development**:
  - Pupils display strong comprehension and critical thinking skills, evident in classroom discussions and written responses where they articulate their understanding and analysis of texts.
  - Enhanced vocabulary development is noted, with pupils using a wider range of language in their spoken and written communication across the curriculum.
- **Community Engagement**:
  - Strong partnerships with families and the local community promote reading beyond the classroom, evident through initiatives that encourage family reading time and community reading events.

Through our dedicated approach to reading, Ashton Gate not only equips pupils with essential literacy skills but also nurtures a love of reading that will benefit them throughout their academic journey and beyond, ensuring that collectively we fulfil our vision of Rising High Together and creating readers for life.

Writing

The impact of our writing programme is evaluated regularly through both qualitative and quantitative measures.

- **Pupil Progress and Achievement:** We consistently track and monitor progress in writing through internal assessment data, which shows that the vast majority of pupils make or exceed expected progress by the end of each academic year. Our end-of-Key Stage

assessments indicate that a high percentage of students achieve age-related expectations and a proportion attain greater depth.

- **Engagement and Motivation:** Pupil surveys and informal feedback indicate high levels of engagement and enthusiasm for writing. Students express confidence in their writing abilities and a desire to participate in writing activities.
- **Quality of Written Work:** The quality of pupils' writing across the curriculum is commendable, demonstrating not only technical skills but also creativity, depth of thought, and personal expression. Work is regularly showcased in classrooms and during school events, reflecting the high standards achieved by our pupils. Parents, staff, and external reviewers consistently note the positive impact of our writing initiatives on students' confidence and overall attitudes toward literacy. Our school has developed a reputation in the local community for excellence in teaching writing.