

The Intent, Implementation and Impact of Our English Curriculum at Fairfield's

1. Intent:

At Fairfield's, we believe that English is a vital part of a child's education. We want our children to become resilient, independent learners with a passion for reading that they will carry forward into their later lives. We aim to inspire an appreciation of our rich and varied literary heritage and a habit of reading widely and often. We want to develop a culture where children take pride in their writing, write clearly and accurately and adapt their language and style for a range of contexts. 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.

We believe that children need to develop a secure knowledge base in English following a clear pathway of progression as they advance through the primary curriculum. A secure basis in literacy skills is crucial to a high quality education and will give our children the tools they need to participate fully as a member of society. We will begin by offering our children a secure grounding in phonics as a foundation for their reading, alongside comprehension skills taught in whole class sessions and within Guided Reading. We will give all our children frequent opportunities to develop their writing both within English sessions and through cross-curricular writing opportunities. We will also embed learning about grammar, punctuation and spelling from the Early Years throughout children's time at Fairfield's.

Within our curriculum, we aim to provide opportunities for children to become confident learners, ready to move on to the next phase of their education able to:

- read a wide range of texts with confidence, fluency and understanding
- plan, draft and edit their own writing across a range of genres
- speak clearly, fluently and confidently to a range of audiences
- demonstrate flowing and legible handwriting
- recognise and use a varied, nuanced vocabulary
- apply their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness within their work

2. Implementation:

The English curriculum covers a wide range of knowledge and skills, progressing as the children move through their time at Fairfield's. Our curriculum is guided by the Early Years Framework and the National Curriculum for English, which set out statutory requirements for learning across the primary phase.

- The Early Years Framework and the National Curriculum provide statutory frameworks, allowing the development of reading skills throughout Fairfield's and ensuring a clear progression of knowledge and skills between each year group.
- In the Early Years, the statutory framework defines the areas of learning and development which shape our provision. Communication and language is one of the prime areas of learning, involving offering the children opportunities to experience a language-rich environment and to develop their confidence in listening to others and expressing themselves. One of the specific areas of learning set out in the Early Years Framework is literacy, with children to be given experience of a wide range of reading materials as well as linking sounds and letters, and beginning to read and write words and simple sentences.

Reading

We aim to develop a love of literature in all our pupils through widespread reading for enjoyment, enabling all children to read easily, fluently and with good understanding. We also aim to support the children in acquiring a wide vocabulary and give them the opportunity to explore a wide range of texts and genres.

Competence in reading is key to independent learning. Success in reading has a direct effect upon progress in most other areas of the curriculum and is crucial in developing children's self-confidence and motivation.

The teaching of reading consists of two key dimensions: word reading and comprehension (both listening and reading).

Our provision for reading addresses a number of key areas:

- Phonics
- Whole-class teaching
- Guided Reading
- Reading books

Phonics

Skilled word reading requires children both to be able to recognise quickly familiar words and to work out the pronunciation of unfamiliar words through understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds heard in spoken words. This is taught through a programme of systematic synthetic phonics.

Research shows that when phonics is taught in a structured way – starting with the easiest sounds and progressing through to the most complex – it is the most effective way of teaching young children to read.

Almost all children who receive good teaching of phonics will learn the skills they need to tackle new words. They can then go on to read any kind of text fluently and confidently, and to read for enjoyment.

At Fairfield's we follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme for the teaching of phonics, which sets out a clear progression from EYFS into Key Stage One. *(See the phonics policy for more detail about phonics provision at Fairfield's.)*

Whole-class teaching

Whole-class English sessions make up a crucial part of the teaching of reading at Fairfield's. English teaching across the school features a wide range of high-quality, engaging texts, including fiction, non-fiction and poetry.

- Teaching in the Early Years comprises both whole class teaching and child-initiated activities, responding to each child's emerging needs and interests. Stories are regularly shared together in both Nursery and Reception, modelling fluent story-telling and reading behaviours.
- Within Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the National Curriculum sets out the requirements for the teaching of reading covering a wide range of areas, including finding information, inference, summarising, developing vocabulary, making predictions and identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to the meaning of a text *(KS2)*.
- Regular whole-class sessions will support the teaching of reading within the Primary phase. These may focus on one specific strand of comprehension or look more generally at finding and inferring information within a text.
- In Key Stage 2, classes will base their English teaching around a different class novel each half-term, enabling children to experience a variety of exciting, engaging texts. This enables the children to read whole texts rather than just extracts, helping to develop their reading stamina and confidence with identifying themes within a text as well as cultivating a love of reading.

Guided Reading

Guided Reading provides an opportunity to focus directly on developing fluency and comprehension when considering a shared text, working in small groups organised by ability. Guided Reading sessions should develop reading skills for all learners, including those working independently. Once the children have become confident reading phonetically decodable texts, we move on to daily guided reading sessions. In Years 2 to 5, we follow the Herts for Learning model for Guided Reading, a flexible approach which enables teachers to tailor sessions to maintain interest and engagement while selecting the activities that best drive learning. In Year 6, the children move to a focus on shorter extracts to allow them to apply the comprehensions skills that they have acquired to a wider range of text types.

- In Reception and Year 1, and as required in Year 2, the children complete reading practice sessions based on their phonics learning to support their decoding, fluency and comprehension. (*See separate phonics policy for more detail about these sessions.*)
- Daily Guided Reading sessions begin in Year 2 once the children have acquired sufficient confidence with their phonic sounds and blending, with small groups working with a teacher to explore a text at an appropriate level.
- In Key Stage 2, daily Guided Reading sessions continue, however the focus will largely be on developing comprehension skills in line with the Herts for Learning assessment statements. Where necessary, some groups may still look to reinforce word reading skills.
- Teachers use a wide range of book-banded resources within Key Stage 1 and a selection of age-appropriate texts including novels in Key Stage 2, moving on to a variety of challenging extracts of varying genres and levels of formality in Year 6.
- In both Year 2 and Key Stage 2, Guided Reading sessions will involve a carousel of activities. Alongside working with the class teacher, Guided Reading will also include other tasks such as: reading with a learning assistant; independent reading; pre-reading (*in KS2*); written follow-up activities and vocabulary activities. These will further help to support and develop children's reading.

Reading At Home

Alongside the teaching of reading within school, reading at home forms a vital part of children's learning. We expect all children to read regularly at home with a parent, both with their school reading book and their library book.

- The reading record book allows parents to record reading sessions with their child as well as to communicate any concerns with the class teacher.
- In Reception and Key Stage 1 (until they have secured confidence and fluency with the phase 5 phonemes), children will be given both a reading practice book (a book at an appropriate phonic level for them to read independently to an adult) and a reading for pleasure book (to share with an adult to build their love of reading).
- The phonics book will be at the appropriate phase for each child, dependent upon their progress within the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised scheme. This book will have been looked at with an adult within three reading practice sessions before being taken home to read to an adult.
- Once the children have developed a secure knowledge of the phase 5 phonemes and are reading with increasing fluency, they move on to our school reading scheme. This uses the book banding system, with colour bands indicating the progression of challenge within the books. Children will be given books at the appropriate level of difficulty linked with their progress in school.
- Children will continue to receive reading books from our book banded scheme until they complete the final stage.
- Once the children complete the reading scheme, they will be free readers. The children may then read either their own books or those borrowed from school. The children will be able to complete the free reading challenge, to encourage reading a wide variety of novels and to maintain a love of reading.
- All children will also regularly visit our school library, borrowing books to read at home both independently and with an adult.

Writing

The English curriculum at Fairfield's enables children to become fluent writers, embedding both efficient transcription skills and effective composition, becoming aware of how to write for their reader. During their time at Fairfield's, children will be given the opportunity to develop their writing across a wide range of genres.

- English lessons will provide children with the opportunity to practise new genres and writing techniques, looking in detail at how to use the key features of a range of text types to write for the reader.
- In the Early Years, the children will explore a range of books, link sounds and letters and begin to write letters, words and simple sentences.
- Moving into Key Stage 1, the children will further develop their ability to link sounds and letters, and encode the sounds they hear into words alongside developing their handwriting and spelling. The children will also learn how to organise their ideas in writing. By the end of Year 2, the children will have had experience of writing for a range of purposes, planning what they are going to write and re-reading to check for errors and that their writing makes sense.
- In Key Stage 2, the children continue to write across a range of genres, planning their writing and considering the effect upon the reader. Their knowledge of language and experience of a range of texts should help to support their writing, selecting the appropriate form and tone for their purpose and audience.
- Within Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, children will complete a longer piece of writing each week in order to help build confidence and writing stamina.
- In Key Stage 2, the children will also edit their own work, both to correct errors and increasingly to identify how to improve their writing and develop its impact on an audience.
- Opportunities for cross-curricular writing within a range of subjects will also help children to become confident, fluent writers.

Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling

Throughout the English curriculum, pupils will be taught key elements of spelling, punctuation and grammar, and will be given opportunities to apply these to their own writing. The National Curriculum (2014) sets out the statutory requirements across the primary phase, including key grammatical vocabulary and spelling rules.

- In Reception, children will be introduced to basic sentence punctuation such as capital letters and full stops. This will be discussed through reading, then also modelled and encouraged in group work.
- In Key Stage 1 and 2, the children will be taught grammar, punctuation and spelling rules within their English lessons as well as using these within their own writing. At Fairfield, we follow the progression of knowledge and skills set out by the National Curriculum which sets out the statutory content to be introduced and the relevant vocabulary with which the children should be familiar.
- From Year 2 onwards, we use the 'Essential Spelling' scheme to support our teaching of spelling rules and the required word lists for each phase. Alongside this, from Year 1 the children are given weekly spellings to learn and are tested on these in class. In Year 1, these spellings will be linked to the phonic sounds and tricky words that the children are studying, whereas in later years they will be based on statutory word lists, common exception words and spelling rules studied.

Handwriting

Handwriting forms an important part of writing as speed and accuracy of transcription allows the fluent recording of ideas.

- At Fairfield, we use the Nelson Handwriting scheme to help all children develop a confident, legible and fluent handwriting style. It provides guidance to teachers about how to form letters, as well as teaching children how to hold a pencil to enable neat, fluent handwriting.
- In the Early Years, children at Fairfield begin to develop their confidence in using tools such as pencils effectively, moving on to positioning the paper correctly when writing and using a correct pencil grip within their preferred hand. Some children will be increasingly able to write on lines and control the size of their letters.
- In Key Stage 1, the children will have a weekly taught handwriting session which will be followed up with written practise. In Key Stage 2, there will be a taught handwriting session and a follow-up activity each week to develop fluency and practise joining letters.
- Within Key Stage 2, the children are able to earn a pen licence once they are able to demonstrate neat, accurate, joined handwriting across their work.

Spoken Language

Spoken language underpins the English curriculum, with the quality and variety of language heard and used vital for developing both reading and writing skills. These however also form integral aspects of all learning across the primary curriculum.

- ‘Communication and Language’ forms one of the prime areas of the Early Years Statutory Framework and the Early Learning Goals. Children in Nursery and Reception at Fairfields learn to listen to stories and to what other people say, responding appropriately. They also learn to follow instructions and answer ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions, as well as to express themselves effectively.
- The National Curriculum outlines the statutory requirements for Spoken Language in Years 1 to 6, with children progressively becoming fluent, articulate speakers able to justify answers, state arguments and opinions, present their ideas to an audience and maintain the interest of the listener.
- The ‘Spoken Language Progression 1-6’ document from Herts for Learning gives further guidance as to possible activities and skills expected from each phase of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- The children will be given opportunities throughout their time at Fairfields to develop their spoken language skills, both in English lessons and within the wider curriculum.
- In each class there will be a daily session reading aloud by an adult, either from a picture book or a class novel. This will allow clear modelling of fluent, expressive reading.

3. Impact:

By the end of their time at Fairfield's, learners should be fluent, imaginative writers with a love of reading and a drive to continue their learning in English. They will be able to write for a range of audiences and purposes, varying their vocabulary and formality appropriately, as well as reading a variety of texts with fluency and understanding, equipping them well for the next stage of their education.

Assessment forms a crucial part of the teaching and learning process in English, allowing teachers to assess the impact of their teaching to shape the curriculum to meet the needs of all learners. End-of-year and end-of-keystage assessments allow us to reflect upon the success of our implementation of the curriculum and how well we have achieved our key aims and intent. Our analyses of these assessments feed back into our action planning to continue to develop and move forwards with teaching and learning in English.

English assessment at Fairfield's is both formative and summative, taking a number of different forms:

- Work in English books will be marked in line with the 'Marking Format and Procedures' policy, giving the children written or verbal feedback about the work they produce in lessons. This feedback allows the children to see their next steps as well as supporting the teacher to move learning forwards and support the children in making progress.
- In EYFS, the 'Ages and Stages' statements and the Early Learning Goals support the teachers in making judgements about the achievement and progress of learners. In the final term of Reception, class teachers will use observations and evidence collected to complete the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile for each child, to be shared with Year 1 teachers as well as parents.
- Phonics will be assessed both through formative assessment within lessons to guide future sessions and at the end of each half-term. The children will be assessed following the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessment guidance and these results analysed to inform future plans and support needed.
- Within Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, termly assessment allows class teachers to shape future planning to support the needs of all learners.
- In Reading, teachers will use testing, Guided Reading observations and class work to form a judgement about pupils' achievement and progress. At Fairfield's, we use the Herts for Learning assessment criteria to assess reading, with the data being centrally recorded through SIMS.
- Writing judgements will be based on both testing in Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling and on evidence of writing through children's work in both English and across the curriculum. The Herts for Learning Teacher Assessment Frameworks will be used to support these judgements, with relevant assessment data being recorded using SIMS.

- Class teachers will use assessment data to evaluate progress and identify areas to focus on moving forward. This data is also used by the subject leaders and the senior leadership team to analyse and monitor achievement and progress across the school. This in turn may shape whole-school priorities within English.
- At the end of Key Stage 1, the children will complete statutory assessment tests in Reading and Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling. The class teachers will then use these to inform their teacher assessments of the children in reading and writing.
- At the end of Key Stage 2, the children complete statutory assessment tests in Reading and in Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling. Teachers will use writing evidence from across the curriculum to assess children's writing.