

Lancaster Lane Statement for English

At Lancaster Lane, we ensure our teaching and learning of English is purposeful, engaging and encourages the children to become enthusiastic learners within this core subject area. We provide varied learning opportunities which link to other areas of the curriculum, allowing the key skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening to be embedded and applied across all subjects and in the real world. Reading is at the heart of everything we do. We strongly believe that good reading skills open the doors to children becoming effective oral and written communicators who can express themselves eloquently. English is not only important as a subject on its own, but as a medium to accessing the whole curriculum and society in general. Through stimulating and meaningful contexts, we strive to equip our children with the necessary skills needed to grow and succeed confidently and utilise these in the wider world.

Knowledge and Skills

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.

Our Reception children follow statements in 'Communication and Language' and Literacy areas of the Early Learning Goals to develop their skills in English.

- Communication and Language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations
- Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest

Years 1 - 6 follow the National Curriculum objectives set out in the Key Learning Indicators of Performance (KLIPs) document. From this, we have created an exciting English curriculum with the aim that children of all abilities progress through the content at the same pace. Differentiation is achieved through providing additional support and challenge, encouraging children's individuality and allowing them to reach their potential. For the majority of lessons, children are taught in mixed ability groups, exposing them to a high level of vocabulary and texts to ensure no child is limited to what they can achieve and expectations remain high for all.

Reading

At Lancaster Lane, we want to instil a love of reading and promote reading for pleasure throughout the school. Daily story times are timetabled into every day where the teacher reads a quality text to their class for enjoyment. In EYFS and KS1, reading skills are taught through daily guided reading sessions. Here, texts are explored in small, adult led groups based on the children's needs and abilities and will also incorporate learning from their phonics sessions.

In KS2, reading is taught using whole class sessions and guided group work. Whole class reading exposes all children to a range of high quality text types, questioning and discussions. Children are given the opportunity to hear modelled reading, explore vocabulary and complete comprehension tasks. Guided group work provides opportunities for the children to focus on key reading skills, target areas for improvement, listen to their peers and have quality time with an adult.

Reading is the first stage of the writing process and underpins all of our English units. Approximately 2-3 weeks are dedicated to reading response and reading analysis at the start of each writing topic to ensure the children have a deep understanding of the vocabulary and structure of a text type.

Phonics - Throughout Early Years and KS1, phonics is delivered in line with Letters and Sounds. Pupils take part in interactive lessons every day and are grouped according to their needs. Pupils sit an assessment at the end of Year 1 in phonics. For children who do not meet the expected standard, phonics intervention sessions as well as their daily phonics lessons will take place in Year 2. They will then re-sit the phonics assessment at the end of Year 2. If a child does not pass the phonics screening in Year 1 or Year 2, teachers throughout their Key Stage 2 journey are made aware of this to ensure they are accessing further reading support to enable them to be successful readers.

Writing

In our school, the process of writing is conducted through different phases using strategies from the Talk 4 Writing approach. The children explore a model text through read and response activities, exploring and developing vocabulary, emerging them into the text type in preparation for writing.

Vocabulary - Vocabulary is considered to be a valuable tool for children in our school and we aim to expose children to new and exciting vocabulary in all areas of study. Children are given opportunities to fully understand new words across the curriculum through a range of strategies including definition, synonym and context activities. This gives them the confidence to use vocabulary correctly in their writing.

Spelling - From Years 2 - 6, spelling is taught using No Nonsense Spelling alongside an online learning platform called Spelling Shed. Objectives are covered using a variety of strategies which children are free to choose and adopt the best methods that work for them. Spelling Shed allows children to practise their spellings interactively through the use of both independent and group online games which they can play in school and at home.

Scaffolded writing - Scaffolded writing allows teachers to model high quality writing to the children. Pupils will observe the process of writing such as structuring sentences, including key grammar skills and editing at the point of writing. This valuable part of the writing process also allows the children to contribute their own ideas and see how to develop these in writing. Throughout this stage, the children receive effective feedback to inform their future writing. This could be providing challenge or identifying areas of support.

Independent writing - Towards the end of a unit, the children plan their own independent piece of writing using different methods such as 'chunk the plot'. This piece of writing has no teacher input but children are expected to use vocabulary and grammar they have previously learnt throughout the unit to aid their work. Once completed, children are given the opportunity to edit and improve their writing independently. Writing produced at this stage aids teachers' assessment of the children.

Writing across the curriculum - We strive to give the children the opportunity to write for a variety of purposes and audiences to give their writing meaning. Setting high

expectations of written English across subjects demonstrates the importance of English to the children and makes it relatable to real life contexts in which the children may need to apply these skills in future life. Our curriculum ensures that cross-curricular writing is planned into every topic.

Handwriting - We believe that children should take pride in their work to raise self-esteem and strive for our pupils to write fluently and legibly by the end of KS2. Therefore, we set high expectations for handwriting and presentation across the curriculum. We teach cursive letter formation in accordance with the Flying with Phonics Scheme. From Reception class, children are given activities to help develop their gross and fine motor skills and are taught the correct pencil grip to start forming letters correctly. In Key Stage 1, the children begin to refine their letter formation and work on the relative sizing and positioning of letters. Once letter formation is mastered, children begin to join letters. Early in Key Stage Two, children practise the four basic joins as well as letter-strings. They work on equal spacing between joined letters. Later in Key Stage 2, children continue to refine their handwriting so that they write in a quick and fluent cursive style. They learn to adapt their handwriting according to purpose. If needed, intervention sessions are implemented to support children's difficulties with letter formation and joins. Although it is very important for teachers to model quality cursive handwriting, we also expose the children to a range of fonts on class displays as children will see different representations in the wider world around them.

Grammar and Punctuation - Grammar is taught in short bursts alongside the different phases of an English unit. Teachers choose grammar objectives best suited to the text type being taught with the expectation that these skills will be evident in the children's independent writing outcome. Some grammar and punctuation objectives may call for more explicit teaching and these will be taught discretely to ensure full understanding of the skill.

Enrichment and Local Area Opportunities

At Lancaster Lane, we aim to enhance our English curriculum through stimulating experiences both in school, and in our local area. We have adapted our school grounds to provide exciting learning opportunities such as building an outdoor classroom, an outdoor stage for performances/drama activities and a storytelling area.

We strive to provide opportunities for the children to apply their English skills in context, making it relatable and giving them a true purpose for writing. This appears in many forms: from hunting for dragons in our school field, to making clay pots before carrying out instructional writing. Furthermore, we are lucky to have great connections

in our local area to enrich our learning. Our children have been involved in writing a book for Lovell Homes, writing letters to our council and have had numerous author visits from the surrounding area. Wherever possible, we make use of our local area (local library, Cuerden Valley, duck pond and park) to support our writing across all subjects.

Our English curriculum is full of enrichment opportunities which promote a love of reading and writing. Every year, we hold a whole school themed Book Week where pupils are exposed to different genres and text types, listen to an array of stories, partner up with a reading buddy and take part in a variety of exciting activities to bring books to life. We have also had many pupils become published authors after participating in Young Writer competitions which we run regularly.

Monitoring / Evaluation / Assessment

Assessment of the teaching and learning of English is ongoing throughout the year as teachers are constantly making judgements with regards to progress in lessons allowing them to adapt provision accordingly. Children's misconceptions are addressed within lessons, where possible, to allow for immediate and meaningful feedback as well as the use of effective questioning to ascertain the children's understanding. Some children may receive further intervention to support them with aspects of the reading and/or writing.

In Reception class, the children are moderated at the end of the year against the reading and writing Early Learning Goals. During the year, phonics, reading and writing is assessed on a half term basis in order to set targets and next steps for the children.

From Years 1 - 6, English is assessed using the Key Learning Indicators of Performance (KLIPs) for both reading and writing. Children complete statutory assessments at the end of each Key Stage as well as the Year 1 phonics screening check. All of our assessment informs future planning and contributes towards the development of the subject. This ensures the delivery of English is to a high standard. Summative assessment is carried out at the end of each term and data from this is used to inform next steps for groups and individuals which are discussed further during Pupil Progress meetings. To ensure our teachers have secure judgments in the children's writing, regular moderation meetings within our own setting and our cluster schools are carried out to support teacher assessment in this area.

To be reviewed September 2022.