

The English Curriculum at Hunsley Primary

Our English curriculum aims to give children the necessary skills, knowledge and experiences, to ensure that language and literature become meaningful to our children. The curriculum supports them in understanding contexts of culture and society through experiencing a wide range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry texts. We recognise that our children join us in EYFS with a desire to express themselves with spoken language and language development, which begins with talk, is central to all learning. Therefore, speaking and listening is a fundamental part of our curriculum from day one, supporting learnings in expressing ideas, feelings, in respecting others and empathising with them.

Our English teaching places the learner at the heart of the planning, teaching and learning process. It will help our pupils become better speakers, listeners, readers, writers and thinkers. Built into this are metacognition skills, where the teachers in our school model their thinking, articulating their thought processes as well as demonstrating reading and writing approaches. This in turn develops independent learners, who have the necessary strategies to hand. Within our English Curriculum, each unit incorporates both reading and writing opportunities and includes exploring and analysing high quality model texts, investigating the key features of a genre, looking closely at key vocabulary and planning, drafting and editing a written piece. In EYFS and Key Stage 1, this is done with a big focus on oral retelling, imitation, and innovation of quality texts, using strategies such as text and story mapping. In Key Stage 2, children begin to plan and write with more independence, identifying what makes good writing from high quality texts or extracts and choosing a planning technique which is appropriate for them. They have practise support with feedback which is gradually reduced to encourage independence.

Our English curriculum also involves standalone reading activities to further build on children's understanding of a text and use of vocabulary. In EYFS and Year 1, this involves one to one weekly reading, daily story time, and whole class guided reading. In Year 2 and Key Stage 2, children engage in shared reading activities three times a week which includes whole class reading through a variety of shared, guided or independent reading strategies, analysing vocabulary used, discussion related to the text and articulating their understanding of what has been read. Children spend time exploring a variety of texts to discover meaning, create inferences and develop an understanding about what they are reading. As a school we also aim to provide a culture where reading for pleasure is promoted and celebrated. We do this through extra opportunities such as reading buddies, word of the week, use of the library, home reading challenges, story clubs, book swaps and the specific allocation of 'reading for pleasure' time in our weekly plans.

Key threshold concepts



- Our children are confident speakers and listeners, who understand the difference between formal and informal situations and can use their skills across a range of activities.
- Our children can have the skills to enable them to read: good phonic knowledge to decode unknown words, sight reading of known words, a range of comprehension skills to understand what they have read.
- Our children can compose a range of texts: understanding the features needed, make their writing interesting for the reader using a range of devices, drafting and re-drafting to improve their writing, editing and checking for errors.
- Our children are good spellers: understanding how words are created, applying their spelling knowledge and having a range of strategies to draw on to help them spell unknown words.
- Our children know how to form and join letters; developing their own handwriting style and writing with fluency, speed and legibility.
- Our children know the difference between fiction and non-fiction texts. They understand how the six fiction features (settings, suspense, characterisation, dialogue, description, openings and endings) are used when writing stories. They know the features of the six types of non-fiction text (instructions, recount, discussion, explanation, persuasion and information), and use these accurately in their writing.
- Our children will recognise the difference between poems, poetry, rhymes and verse, having been exposed to a range of forms, and will understand that poetry existed long before poems and long before people could write. They will have a simple introduction to the oral tradition of verse that is memorised and passed down from one generation to the next.
- The children will also understand poetry as an art form – both a written, literary art of language and storytelling; an aural, sound art of repetition, syllables, meter and rhyme; and a visual, concrete art, shaped into stanzas and structures. They will learn the musicality of poetry, from its lyricism to its rhythms, and the imaginative, dramatic tensions of poetry in its use of form, leading to an emotional or sensual response. The purpose of poetry will be made clear: to entertain, provoke, challenge, move – funny, heart-breaking, persuasive. Finally, they will consider again and again the meaning created by the reader when considering a poem through the devices a poet.