

English Curriculum Intent

Rationale

In our curriculum, the development of the pupils' spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary are integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium/tool to learn and express oneself. Fluency in the English language provides access to the whole curriculum and is an essential foundation for success in all subjects. The knowledge and skills in our English curriculum are sequenced and designed to ensure continuity and progression. The English curriculum is taught to be remembered, not merely encountered. Children feel empowered through acquiring knowledge and making connections between the different parts of their learning.

We achieve this through understanding the cognitive science of the working memory and the power of retrieval. We understand that for knowledge to be stored in the children's long-term memory, we need to build on it, retrieve it and form wide and deep schemas. This is achieved in a variety of ways including knowledge organisers, low stakes testing, repeated practise and spaced retrieval.

Spoken language

Our pupils are taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently using Standard English. They learn to justify ideas with reasons and use discussions to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas. We believe that one of the core focuses for developing pupils knowledge in English is the acquisition of new vocabulary. Pupils are encouraged to ask questions to check understanding and build knowledge. They negotiate and evaluate, and build on the ideas of others. They will select the appropriate register for effective communication and they will become competent in the art of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debates. They are taught to give well-structured descriptions and explanations and develop their understanding through speculating, hypothesising and exploring ideas. Consequently, this will enable them to clarify their thinking as well as organise their ideas for writing.

Phonics and Early Reading

At Highcliffe we understand the importance of a firm foundation in phonics to enable all our children to acquire the knowledge to become confident and independent readers and writers. From our Early Years Foundation Stage, we use the DfE validated synthetic, systematic programme, Anima Phonics. This rigorous programme ensures curriculum coverage to enable all children to develop an in-depth knowledge of phonics to be successful readers and writers.

Our Early Reading scheme is fully decodable which enables all children to access texts at their phonic ability. We aim to ensure that children apply their phonic knowledge across all areas of the curriculum in both reading and writing.



	Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
Reception	Phase 2 and 3	Phase 4	Phase 5a
Year 1	Phase 5b	Phase 5c	Phase 6a
Year 2	Phase 6b	Phase 6c	Phase 6d

Reading

‘Reading is such a powerful force for good that it can change people’s lives.’

The Reading Agency

At Highcliffe Primary School, we use reading to expand our children’s horizons, build their creativity and imagination as well as teach them new knowledge and skills. We strive to ensure every child can read fluently and with confidence by the time they leave primary education. We recognise that reading improves children’s empathy and understanding of the world they live in. It connects them to new cultures and communities. It improves their future prospects and contributes to positive mental health and wellbeing. Our passion is to find a book, author or text type for every child and for every child to see themselves as ‘a reader’. Through the delivery of our reading curriculum, we hope to create a reading culture where children’s enthusiasm for reading creates lifelong readers who choose to read for pleasure and to develop their personal knowledge and understanding. Reading matters to everyone because of the economic impacts it has within society but also as an individual.

Our reading curriculum focusses on two dimensions;

- Language Comprehension (both when listening and when reading).
We put importance on talk and stories to develop vocabulary and language.
- Word Reading
We strive to ensure children are able to read and write fluently.

We achieve this through our delivery of Book Talk by Jane Considine. Book Talk is delivered from Year 1 – 6 and it's a whole class approach to teaching reading, thus ensuring every child is engaged in meaningful learning. At its core, Book Talk focusses on improving the skills of reading such as comprehension, retrieval and evidencing using the text. The children communicate in pairs or groups to discuss their texts, and the use of stem sentences and high utility words adds depth and clarity to their answers. Whole texts or extracts (fiction, non-fiction and poetry) can be explored through Book Talk, allowing us to introduce the children to a feast of literature!

Comprehension

We teach discreet comprehension lessons to support our book talk sessions. Our pupils are taught the acronym VIPERS to support the recall of the 6 reading domains. They are the key areas which we feel children need to know and understand in order to improve their comprehension of texts. We use these domains to ensure that teachers ask and pupils are familiar with a range of questions. They allow the teacher to track the type of questions asked and the pupil's responses to these which allows for targeted questioning afterwards.

VIPERS stands for:

Vocabulary

InfERENCE

Prediction

Explanation

Retrieval

Sequence/Summarise

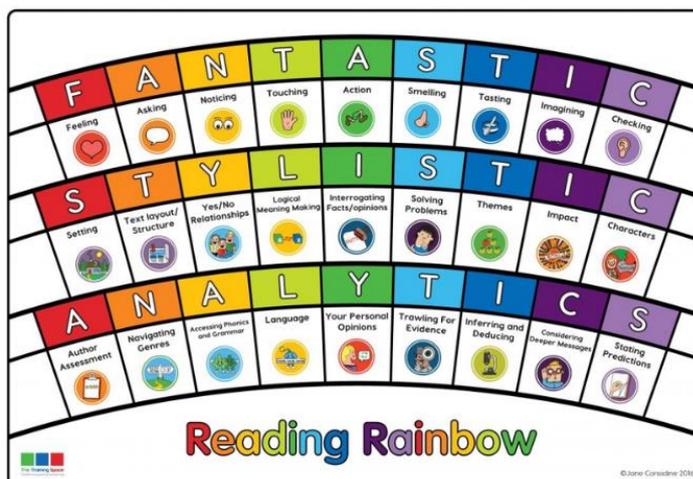
We use Book Talk to develop the children's social and literacy skills. Book Talk develops this through children reading aloud together and engaging in two-way communication. The children have the opportunity to improve and apply their speaking and listening skills.

The children's reading journey begins in the early years through the explicit teaching of phonics (using Letters and Sounds). This supports the children in sounding out unfamiliar words and pronouncing unfamiliar words with confidence. The books they take home are closely matched to their phonics ability but whilst they learn to word-read they will also continue to listen to and enjoy a wide range of stories that are read to them.

'There is no set of reading skills that grow steadily more challenging. Instead, the same broad skills and competencies are applied to texts that gradually increase in challenge.'



Each year group develops the children’s skills through the careful selection of more challenging texts to improve the children’s comprehension, speedy decoding and word recognition. The children’s comprehension skills draw on linguistic knowledge, particularly vocabulary and grammar. This is explored in Book Talk through the ‘lenses’ and the depth in which a text is explored. Book Talk enables our teachers and pupils to have high quality discussions which link to other areas of learning such as grammar. Through reading widely, the children’s vocabulary is developed because they encounter words they would rarely use in everyday speech. Book Talk introduces children to high utility words which can be applied across the curriculum in other subject areas.



Teaching through a text

Reading and writing cannot be taught in a vacuum. We give our pupils the opportunity to practise and develop as readers and writers by reading texts that will inspire them to write. The texts selected in our curriculum have been carefully chosen to serve different purposes, depending on how they will be used within the curriculum. Some of the texts are our core texts e.g. they are explored through Book Talk, studied for their grammatical features and used to inspire writing. Others have been selected to support the core text e.g. non-fiction texts used to research a historical or geographical aspect of the story. There are also books that the children have chosen to read themselves, purely for pleasure. Furthermore, reading in subjects other than English provides an excellent opportunity for children to put into practise what they have learnt. We particularly use reading widely across the curriculum to help with their vocabulary development.

All pupils are 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.

‘The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more than you learn, the more places you’ll go.’

Dr Seuss

Reading for pleasure

‘Children who read for pleasure are likely to do significantly better at school than their peers, making greater progress in mathematics, development of vocabulary and spelling.’

Sullivan & Brown, Social inequalities in cognitive scores at age 16: The role of reading, 2013

We understand the importance of children reading and also being read to. Therefore, each class builds in independent reading time, allowing the children to visit our school library and make their own choices, to

follow their own interests and to build their reading stamina. We provide our children with the opportunity to read with no other purpose than for reading itself. Our staff are encouraged to read children's literature in order to advise children, make recommendations and broaden their palate as a reader.

We also ensure that all children are read to by their class teacher. This might be from a whole class novel which does not have to be related to their topic. We use this to broaden their horizons, introduce fiction and non-fiction and enable them to encounter books that they might struggle to access on their own. For many children, if they aren't introduced to rich texts in school, they won't ever meet them. Listening to stories supports vocabulary development and improves knowledge. It is an opportunity for a teacher to model the skills of reading and for the children to see it is an enjoyable activity.



We want our School to be a place where children are read to, enjoy, discuss and work with high quality books. The 'Reading Spine' is a core of books that create a living library inside a child's mind. It is a store of classics and essential reads that help children engage at a deeper level and enter the world of the story. We have provided a mix of 'Pie Corbett Reading Spine' as well as the Recommended Reads for each year group in our Classrooms so that children have access to these high-

quality texts. These books are additional to the books we use as our 'Key Texts' in our English lessons and they are reading for pleasure with the whole class.

Reading and wellbeing

'Children with above expected reading skills are three times more likely to have high levels of mental wellbeing than their peers with below expected reading skills (40.3% vs 13.1%)'

National Literacy Trust

As a school, we also recognise that there are strong links between reading for pleasure and positive mental health and wellbeing. We use texts to teach children about emotional wellbeing, which has also been linked to non-cognitive skills, such as resilience, grit, self-esteem, confidence and motivation. Higher levels of mental wellbeing and life satisfaction impact on academic achievement. Fiction helps to increase pupil's empathy, social skills, and inter-personal understandings. When our children engage deeply with characters and scenarios, they get a better understanding of our shared humanity and common struggles. Thus, we encourage children to read as a way to relax and take pleasure in their free time.

Metacognition

At Highcliffe we put high importance on metacognition and pupils who think about their thinking as they read. This ability to think about their thinking is critical for monitoring comprehension and fixing it when it breaks down. We support our readers in monitoring their own thoughts while they are reading. They are able to ask themselves questions while they are reading to confirm their understanding. They think ahead and predict, and they often form mental images as they connect with the text.

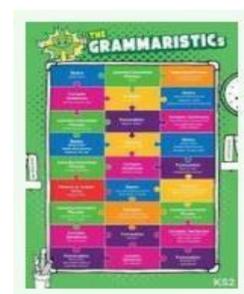
Writing

At Highcliffe Primary Academy, writing is an integral part of our curriculum. All children from Foundation Stage to Year 6 use teaching techniques from ***The Write Stuff***, by Jane Considine. This brings clarity to the mechanics of the teaching of writing. The approach follows a method called '**sentence stacking**'. Sentence stacking refers to the fact that sentences are grouped together chronologically, and are organised to engage children with short, intensive moments of learning that they can apply immediately to their writing. An individual lesson is based on a sentence model, broken into three separate chunks:

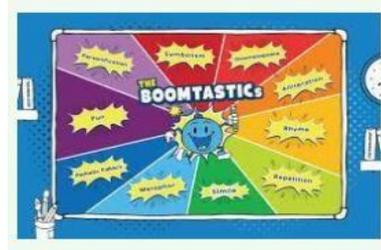
- 1. Initiate section** – a stimulus to capture the children's imagination and set up a sentence
- 2. Model section** – the teacher close models a sentence that outlines clear writing features and techniques
- 3. Enable section** – the children write their sentence following the model

The Write Stuff method is used for all writing, and it reinforces writing techniques through the use of three different 'zones' as follows:

The **Fantastics** offer 9 lenses with which to structure ideas and target children's thinking. This supports children in developing variety in their writing by focussing on the vocabulary used, initiating ideas, provoking thoughts and igniting imaginations.



The **Grammaristics** focus on the importance of accurate grammar where tools are taught and used immediately to help children develop fascination around language so that they can manipulate and carefully structure words into sentences



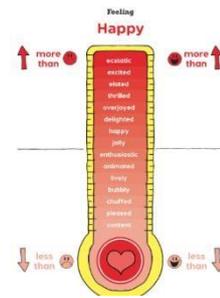
The **Boomtastics** focus on the art of writing, using a range of literary devices and techniques to make careful choices, playing with language to add flair to our writing and achieve various intentional impacts on our reader, painting vivid pictures through our word choices.

It is our intention that pupils develop a clear understanding and knowledge of the writing process in order to establish themselves as an author in their own right. The lenses are introduced to pupils in line with the National Curriculum for each Key Stage and year group. These are revisited several times throughout each academic year and across key stages. They are presented in a range of different texts and applied to a range of different genres. This allows children to retrieve and use prior learning, but to add to it each time that the lens is revisited. Metacognitive strategies are used by teachers to ensure that this knowledge becomes 'sticky knowledge' and that pupils gain confidence in using it in their independent writing. Pupils are taken on a writing journey which builds their knowledge of writing for context and purpose, allows the opportunities for the children to explore a variety of genres, planning, drafting and re-drafting their writing. In order to establish this, pupils will develop their knowledge of genre features, audience, language and effective composition.



Vocabulary

Acquisition of language is of vital importance for us at Highcliffe, and throughout all of our writing we intend to support children with widening their vocabulary beyond what they may use naturally. We achieve this through the use of vocabulary journals, shades of meaning and focusing the sentences intent. Vocabulary is spoken about in the classroom to help grow children's knowledge and encouragement is given for children to attempt, then to accurately use, new vocabulary in their writing.



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Book-Led Curriculum Approach to Writing

At Highcliffe, we believe that writing is strengthened by instilling a love for reading within our pupils. We value the importance of reading to supplement writing, providing a purpose and a context to writing. We believe that pupils who are provided a reason for writing demonstrate flair and effective writing composition, leading to high quality outcomes. English curriculum is taught by studying high -quality texts, which are linked to the year group topic, and writing opportunities are derived from this. Each week, the children are taught to develop an understanding and greater knowledge of the texts through reading comprehension - exploring the key themes, events, and plot of the texts being studied. From this element of the curriculum, pupils are taught the grammar from the National Curriculum which is taught to correspond to the genres being written as part of the writing process. Children are then supported in how to apply the grammatical content taught in identifying features of a high- quality modelled text, before progressing to plan, write and re-draft a written piece which is fit for purpose and audience.

It is our intention that the children will develop their mastery approach to writing by using their skills and transfer these to write in other curriculum subjects. A topic -based curriculum allows all students to see writing in a variety of subjects and through different mediums. In addition, children are taught to explore, practice, and then compose towards the 'destination' pieces of writing (Mike Cain, Teaching for Mastery in Writing, 2018).

At Highcliffe children are encouraged to take pride in their work with all of them working towards shared goals of authorship and ownership whereby they produce pieces of writing which they are proud of and have the audience and purpose at the for front of their writing design. In some cases, children send their work to authors, and their audiences so that they also see the value and purpose to their efforts thus creating an ethos of ambition.

Spelling

Years 3 to 6 implement our spelling programme, **No Nonsense Spelling**. This programme focuses on the teaching of spelling, which embraces knowledge of spelling conventions – patterns and rules; but integral to the teaching is the opportunity to promote the learning of spellings, including statutory words, common exceptions and personal spellings. Through the **No Nonsense** approach, children develop knowledge of spellings though an efficient system which scaffolds the explicit teaching of spelling. At Highcliffe it is our intent that children learn and use their knowledge of spelling across the curriculum.

Handwriting

At Highcliffe we understand the importance of good handwriting skills in order for children to become fluent writers. From Early Years there is a focus on developing good fine motor control which leads to successful writers. We use the Nelson Handwriting scheme through Oxford Owl. Nelson Handwriting is a whole-school programme designed to help all children develop a confident, legible and personal handwriting style and meet higher curriculum expectations.