**English curriculum at NWPS**

Our aim at Nunnery is to nurture and enthuse a love of words, written, read and spoken.

We value reading, not only as a life skill but as a way of opening up children’s minds and experiences. Opening a book can take a child to faraway lands, step back in time, meet interesting characters, the list of wonderful opportunities is limitless. Reading books increases knowledge and gives the opportunity to learn new things and explore new ideas. We want children to develop a love of books, to make reading fun and pleasurable. We aim to surround children in books and the experience of reading and to nurture and encourage this both in school and at home. Our desire is to create life-long readers.



But English isn’t just reading. Our aim is to give children opportunities to express themselves through both the written and spoken word. We aim for our children to become active listeners, who are confident at talking to others and in a range of situations. Children are given opportunities to write for many different purposes, in many different genres and across the whole curriculum. We value the importance of creativity, expression and imagination, alongside the acquisition of grammar, punctuation and spelling skills.

What does the teaching of English look like in our school?

In our school we make use of a range of well researched and effective approaches and programmes for key aspects of the English curriculum which ensure consistency in the approach and language used whilst still allowing teachers to take advantage of cross-curricula opportunities and cater to our children’s’ different learning styles and needs. Teachers and adults working within school are all aware of which children are in need of additional support to secure their reading and writing skills for whatever reason and plan appropriate provision to meet their needs. There are high aspirations for all learners to succeed regardless of their background.

Great importance is placed upon the value of reading aloud to the children and the teachers treasure diving into a book with their class. Sharing a book allows for the modelling of expressive and fluent reading. Children are great mimickers, and begin to embellish their own reading with increased expression. As teachers we can also model, through our voice, the pacing and tension of a story. Leaving the story at just the right moment, initiates cries of ‘no, don’t stop’ and ‘why do you always leave on a cliff-hanger?’ Daily class story or novel time encourages a love of reading and a passion for stories. During story time, discussion comes alive and comprehension skills are developed. The class story time is an ideal time to provide an opportunity to expose our children to challenging texts that they wouldn’t choose for themselves and in so doing helps to enrich their vocabulary development. But most importantly, shared reading of a class novel or story for the youngest children promotes a love of reading and helps to bring stories alive!



Throughout the school, the school’s home learning policy reflects the importance placed on reading. Children are expected to read regularly at home with an adult and to share the pleasures of sharing a good book. Regular meetings and open days are used to support parents in this important aspect of their child’s education. Children in KS2 are able to choose reading books from the school library and class/year group book areas. This reading at home is monitored weekly by class teachers.

**Progression of Reading**

**Learning to Read from the start – Phonics and Early Reading in EYFS & KS1:**

Early Reading development is underpinned by children developing secure skills in

* Decoding (phonics)
* Language Comprehension- speaking and listening and vocabulary development.

Both of these areas are prioritised from the start at Nunnery Wood Primary School with detailed individual assessments being made by teachers of children’s starting points and used to guide planning and teaching that has the highest expectations for children’s progress and attainment underpinned by the understanding of the importance of learning to read as soon as possible.

Phonics teaching begins from the earliest days that children are in school with a focus on pre-reading / phonic skills alongside an early introduction to letter – sound correspondences using the Jolly Phonics programme. Sharing stories and joining in with stories, rhymes and songs ae also an embedded part of daily practise from Reception to Year 2 to promote a love and enjoyment of reading as well as providing opportunities to develop important early communication and language skills. Each classroom has a well organised and resourced reading area / book corner that children are able to use as part of daily classroom practise.

**Daily whole class Phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1 follow the progression of the Jolly Phonics programme** with children introduced to the 42 most common sounds in English by the end of their first term in school. In the Spring and Summer terms the Jolly Phonics progression continues to be followed with the introduction of the most common alternative spellings for vowel sounds in ‘sound families.’ In every session children revisit previous knowledge and skills, practise skills of segmenting and blending to be able to hear sounds in words and read words as practising reading and writing simple words and sentences. ‘Tricky Words’ are also taught following the Jolly Phonics progression alongside the introduction of correct letter formation for both capital and lower case letters. Phonic and tricky word cards are sent home to enable parents to support their child’s learning.

Children identified as not on track with the progression of Jolly Phonics programme are quickly identified and additional targeted small group, intervention and 1:1 work with an adult takes place to provide support, enable identified children to acquire these early reading skills and to close any gaps in attainment.

Children in Reception also read books matched to their stage of phonic skill with adults as part of a guided reading session at least once a week as well as opportunities to read 1:1 with adults. Children take home at least one phonic book that they are able to tackle to read and become fluent with over the course of a week alongside two reading for pleasure books. This system continues for the allocation of reading books as children move on into KS1.

In **Year 1** Phonics teaching continues following the progression of Jolly Phonics and using all information passed on from Reception teachers to ensure teaching is planned at the appropriate level of challenge for children from the beginning of the year. Daily sessions continue to use the Jolly Phonics initially and progress to use Jolly Grammar resources, following the programme progression, as the year progresses. Reading is also taught as a simplified ‘layered approach’ in small guided groups each day with children reading books matched to their phonic skills and development. As in Reception, children identified as not on track with the progression of Jolly Phonics programme are quickly identified and additional targeted small group, intervention and 1:1 work with an adult takes place to provide support, enable identified children to acquire these early reading skills and to close any gaps in attainment. Home learning activities are sent home weekly with a phonics / spelling pattern focus as well as letter formation guidance and practise. A reading reward system for regular reading at home is also in place with the allocation of reading books for home balancing matched decodable books for children to read themselves and reading for pleasure story books to share with an adult.

Year 1 all children will undertake the Statutory Phonics Screening Check in mid-June each year. Those not reaching the pass mark will retake the screening check in June of Year 2.

In **Year 2** a daily whole class ‘Jolly Grammar’ lesson of 20-30 minutes is taught following the ‘Jolly Grammar’ progression with a focus on children developing their knowledge of spelling patterns, punctuation and grammar. Alongside this specific children who have gaps in their phonic knowledge also have daily phonic sessions following the Jolly Phonics programme but specifically focused to address their ‘gaps’ in learning and key skills needed. Regular assessment enable teachers to continue to identify children who are not on track so that additional targeted small group, intervention and 1:1 work with an adult takes place to provide appropriate support and target the closing of gaps in learning.

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Alongside daily phonics and reading session in KS1 English lessons follow a ‘Talk for Writing’ format whereby children are immersed in text and grammatical features of a text which they read, act, recite and learn to help them innovate for their own writing. Each year group has a chosen high quality story linked to their theme for each planned unit of work. The impact of this method on the enjoyment and quality of writing achieved by all children is very positive, links between being a good reader and becoming a good writer are stressed and begin to be embedded from the earliest opportunity. Specific punctuation and grammar skills from the Jolly Grammar programme, that build on Jolly Phonics, are built into English lessons to provide context and purpose for children’s learning rather than acquiring knowledge in isolation. Most of the children leaving KS1 have a sound grasp of phonics, grammar, sentence construction and different text types.

**Key Stage 2**

From Year 3 onwards the focus for the teaching of reading is whole class teaching. This is done outside of the everyday English lesson using a ‘layered approach’. This method of teaching reading skills, builds upon the use of Talk for Writing that is used in KS1. The ‘layered approach’ ensures that all children have the opportunity to access high quality, challenging texts, in a supportive environment. This approach is used three times a week, to support the development of both reading fluency and comprehension skills. Texts are carefully chosen to relate to the theme that is being taught in the daily English lesson (for example in English they may be learning how to write descriptive poetry and so a poem that uses figurative language will be used in the reading session) or be linked to the curriculum theme for that term (for example, a class studying Ancient Greece, could be reading a Greek myth) The idea is to immerse children in a particulary genre and to highlight the links between being an effective writer and reading. We strongly believe that good readers, develop into good writers. This approach also allows children to appreciate the links between reading and all others areas of the school curriculum.



Children identified as not on track with developing reading and writing skills are quickly identified and additional targeted small group, intervention and 1:1 work with an adult takes place to provide support, enable identified children to acquire these early reading skills and to close any gaps in attainment. Small group guided reading sessions are used as an intervention to support the struggling reader and occasionally one-to-one teaching time is used, according to a child’s individual needs. Regular assessment is used to track progress and identify gaps.

Reading skills are practised and consolidated in the daily English lesson and across the whole curriculum, e.g. presenting PowerPoints in computing and researching in science/history/geography. We believe that reading is a skill that should be developed in areas of the school curriculum.



Daily English lessons create opportunities for children to write for a range of purposes and audiences. Grammar, punctuation and spelling skills are taught within these lessons, allowing children to learn these skills in context. Just as teachers model reading, they model all the stages of writing, from planning to reviewing.

In addition, following a trial in Spring Term 2022 from the start of Summer Term 2022 the Jolly Grammar programme (following on from Jolly Phonics) is being used to teach Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar. One hour long Jolly Grammar lesson per week is taught from Year 4 upwards with the additional lesson split into three 20 minutes sessions during the week. Year 3 use the same model as Year 2 with 4 daily half an hour sessions fopr Jolly Grammar. The knowledge and skills from these lessons are also referenced, revisited and practised in the daily English session, as well as reinforced in cross-curricula writing.

Key Stage 2 writing sessions are taught in 2/3-week blocks. Beginning with the ’cold writing task’. This unaided writing task allows teachers to assess prior learning and is then used to identify skills and focus the teaching for that unit. A ‘hot writing task’, at the end of the unit, is used to assess learning. Children are encouraged to ‘active mark’ their writing with a learning partner; identifying their strengths and pinpoint targets for improvement. Great emphasis is placed upon giving children time to reflect upon and redraft their writing, making changes, correcting mistakes and improving. A three stage approach is used- proof-read (correct spellings and punctuation), revise (changing words for something better) and addition (add new words which improve the text)

**Enrichment**

In March 2022 our ‘100 Recommended Reads’ were launched on World Book Day with each year group having between 12 and 20 books recommended as key texts for their age group to read over the course of the year with the aim being for children to ‘collect’ all 100 by the time they leave Nunnery Wood Primary. Every child has a list that is checked and stamped weekly in their individual reading record. These titles and reviews by the children are displayed in classrooms and library areas.

As with Maths, we are always looking for ways to promote English, and enable children to engage in reading and writing in fun but challenging ways beyond the classroom. Reading and writing for pleasure, to help children see these skills not only as essential, but as life-long, enjoyable activities, is a top priority for our school. All children have at least an opportunity to visit our great local university library, The Hive in both EYFS. KS1 and KS2. We also hold regular English and Reading Open Mornings whereby our school community are invited to join the children in lots of fun activities and workshops to show how much we can learn and enjoy through reading and writing. We celebrate World Book Day with a Reading Week, including ‘cuddle up and read time’, which is always a great success.

Our school library areas are well organised and stocked with fiction and non-fiction books. We also have an active Library Council, involving children from all classes from Year 2 onwards having a voice on how we can improve reading and our library in school.

**Help at Home**

There are number of ways that children can carry on their English learning with adults at home. Listed below are a few suggestions that might be fun to try:

* Reading regularly is vitally important for young children but it needn’t be a chore, and indeed shouldn’t be – Share the reading using different voices for characters, act out a part of the story, read different texts – it can be anything with words!
* Do crosswords and wordsearches.
* Read and follow a recipe.
* Play word games to develop spelling and vocabulary skills, e.g. Boggle , Scrabble
* Make a shopping list and go shopping to get the items.
* Research a topic of interest and create a fact file/booklet.
* Play games and read the instructions or even write instructions for your own game for your family to play.
* Go sign hunting when out and about.
* Make posters and labels for the house.
* Read the news (First News is a great newspaper for KS2 children)
* Listen to audio stories and answer questions or draw a picture about it.

This list is by no means exhaustive!

The following websites may well also suggest further ideas:

**Useful Websites**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-english-programmes>

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/tips-and-advice/reading-tips/>

<https://www.lovereading4kids.co.uk/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>

<https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/english/>

<https://www.theschoolrun.com/how-english-teaching-has-changed>