



WALBOTTLE VILLAGE PRIMARY ENGLISH AND LITERACY POLICY

School Vision

Our vision for Valour Academy is that all children will feel loved, happy and safe.

We will provide each child with many and varied opportunities to develop their character to feel accepted; to develop a sense of belonging; to be driven and resilient and to be inspired and be inspiring.

Updated September 2025

Aims

We aim to develop pupils' abilities within an integrated programme of Speaking & Listening, Reading & Writing. Pupils will be given opportunities to interrelate the requirements of English within a broad and balanced approach to the teaching of English across the curriculum, with opportunities to consolidate and reinforce taught literacy skills. We use the 'Primary Writing Project' (PWP) approach across school which follows the principals of 'Talk4writing' (T4W).

At Walbottle Village Primary School, we strive for children to be a 'Primary Literate Pupil'. We aim for a child to be able to:

- read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding, orchestrating a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct.
- have an interest in books and read for enjoyment
- have an interest in words, their meanings; developing a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms.
- understand a range of text types and genres – be able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the situation and context.
- be developing the powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.
- have a suitable technical vocabulary to articulate their responses.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum (2013) and the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (updated July 2025). Guidance is taken from the Reading Framework (2023) and Writing Framework (2025) to ensure expectations for the teaching of reading and writing is met.

In the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) children should be given opportunities to:

- speak and listen and represent ideas in their activities;
- use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum;
- become immersed in an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication.

At Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2), children should learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They should begin to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They should use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.

At Key Stage Two (Years 3-6), children should learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They should read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They should explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works.

SUBJECT ORGANISATION

The English Curriculum is delivered using the National Curriculum. The Early learning Goals are followed to ensure continuity and progression from the Early Years Foundation Stage through to the National Curriculum. Pupil provision is related to attainment not age.

Planning is done in units on a common planning format (within key stages 1 and 2) which highlights shared learning, independent learning, guided learning, plenary and assessment criteria. Planning is done in advance but will be altered as the unit progresses depending on whether the children need further support or are making better than expected progress. In line with the PWP, planning follows a 3i framework and follows 3 main stages: imitation (a model text and features of a text are learnt orally and internalised using T4W. Reading as a reader and as a writer takes place in this stage); innovation (reading and analysis of a model text is applied to writing through thorough modelling and scaffolding planning and writing); independent application (children apply the skills learnt throughout the unit to produce an independent piece of writing). All units begin with a cold write to assess learning and prior knowledge and all units conclude with a hot write so progress can be measured and future learning needs planned for.

The role of all adults in the classroom (teacher, teaching assistant, supporting adults) will be planned for in both independent and shared sessions of literacy, highlighting who needs help at various points and with what.

Long term plans for literacy are in place to ensure curriculum coverage across a year, a key stage and across school.

PHONICS

Early Years and Key Stage 1 teach phonics in ability groups following the Read, Write, Inc programme.

Our pupils learn to read and write effectively and quickly using the Read Write Inc. Phonics Programme. They progress onto Read Write Inc. Literacy and Language and Read Write Inc. Spelling once they can read with accuracy and speed.

Read Write Inc. Phonics

The programme is for:

- Pupils in Year R to Year 2 who are learning to read and write
- Any pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 who need to catch up rapidly
- Struggling readers in Years 5 and 6 follow Read Write Inc. intervention programme

In Read Write Inc. Phonics pupils:

- Decode letter-sound correspondences quickly and effortlessly, using their phonic knowledge and skills
- Read common exception words on sight

- Understand what they read
- Read aloud with fluency and expression
- Write confidently, with a strong focus on vocabulary and grammar
- Spell quickly and easily by segmenting the sounds in words
- Acquire good handwriting.

In addition, we teach pupils to work effectively with a partner to explain and consolidate what they are learning. This provides the teacher with opportunities to assess learning and to pick up on difficulties, such as pupils' poor articulation, or problems with blending or alphabetic code knowledge.

We group pupils homogeneously, according to their progress in reading rather than their writing. This is because it is known that pupils' progress in writing will lag behind progress in reading, especially for those whose motor skills are less well developed.

In Year R we emphasise the alphabetic code. The pupils rapidly learn sounds and the letter or groups of letters they need to represent them. This learning is consolidated daily. Pupils have frequent practice in reading high frequency words with irregular spellings – common exception words.

We make sure that pupils read books that are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and the common exception words. This is so that, early on, they experience success and gain confidence that they are readers. Re-reading and discussing these books with the teacher supports their increasingly fluent decoding.

Alongside this, the teachers read a wide range of stories, poetry and non-fiction to pupils; they are soon able to read these texts for themselves.

Embedding the alphabetic code early on means that pupils quickly learn to write simple words and sentences. We encourage them to compose each sentence aloud until they are confident to write independently. We make sure they write every day.

Pupils write at the level of their spelling knowledge. The quality of the vocabulary they use in their writing reflects the language they have heard in the books the teacher has read to them; they have also discussed what the words mean.

Our aim is for pupils to complete the phonics programme as quickly as possible. The sooner they complete it, the sooner they will be able to choose books to read at their own interest and comprehension level. Children in Upper KS2 who have not completed the phonics programme part participate in the Read, Write, Inc intervention programme.

APPROACHES TO SPEAKING AND LISTENING

The four Strands of Speaking and Listening: Speaking; Listening; Group Discussion and Interaction; and Drama permeate the whole curriculum. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise reading and writing standards. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life within literacy and all other areas of the curriculum. In addition to specifically planned opportunities for speaking and listening, by internalising and orally learning texts, children participate in speaking and listening opportunities daily within literacy lessons.

Role play areas are used in Foundation Stage and Year 1 to enhance children's speaking and listening skills.

Speaking and listening is used within units of work in readiness for writing and to help children clarify their own thinking across the school. It is planned for specifically within every unit of work and is progressive across the school. Speaking and listening skills are taught before they are applied in meaningful activities and situations.

APPROACHES TO READING

Children in Foundation Stage are immersed in print. Stories are read to children every home time and story sacks provide an enhanced learning experience for children.

We follow the Read, Write, Inc. (to match to the children's phonics knowledge) and Oxford "Project X" books (for children who have completed the phonics programme) for home reading books. All classrooms and the school library also include a varied library area featuring fiction and non-fiction books by a vast range of authors.

Shared reading is taught discretely through a reading lesson taught daily for 30 minutes to enhance children's enjoyment of reading and to develop their reading skills. During these sessions, extracts and longer texts are used to teach children reading skills such as decoding and comprehension strategies. These sessions include two sessions of class reading and two sessions of focussed activities linked to the text. We use the DERIC skills for teaching reading skills (Decoding, Explain, Retrieve, Interpret, Choice (author language choice)). Shared reading texts are challenging for the children so that year group objectives can be met. A reading spine is in place to ensure progression of texts and that books are of appropriate challenge. Reading skills are also taught through literacy lessons, as model texts and extracts are used.

Independent reading consolidates learning which has taken place during shared and guided sessions. The children may read a book of their choice or be directed by the teacher to follow up taught skills using a familiar text or one which the child can read confidently. Children across school read frequently with adults in school. In EYFS and KS1, every child is read with 1:1 a minimum of three times per week. In KS2, the children working below age related expectations read 1:1 with an adult three times per week to ensure they develop their confidence, accuracy and fluency in reading.

Home readers are used to consolidate children's learning. Those still on books from the reading scheme will take home books from the appropriate level so that they can read confidently and share the book with someone at home. Home readers are changed on a regular basis with parents having the opportunity to comment on their child's progress in communication books or older children/more confident readers who read independently may complete a post-reading activity.

Across school, there is an end of day story time delivered by the class teacher. This enables the children to listen to high quality reading being modelled, listen a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry and discuss high quality texts.

APPROACHES TO WRITING

Emergent writing is encouraged in EYFS with children being given lots of opportunities to write for meaning (e.g. taking orders in the role play area). Children in Nursery and Reception are encouraged to mark make/ write their own name from entry into school. 'Floor books' are used throughout FS to model writing/ diagrams/ thought processes. As children develop, they are encouraged to contribute to the ideas and add their own to the book. Children story map and tell stories through pictures, symbols and key words as part of the T4W approach.

Every classroom in FS has a writing/ mark making area which has a wide range of equipment and tools. Alongside a writing opportunity in every area of the classroom, a 'fiddlers' area' encourages children to undertake activities which develop fine motor skills (e.g. tweezers, chop sticks and wind up toys.)

Writing is part of the teaching sequence which also involves reading and speaking and listening. Children will be immersed in a text type and have opportunities to analyse it and orally memorise a text (internalisation of a text through story maps and actions) before they are asked to write in that genre. Narrative structures, as well as the six non-fiction text types

are taught in units. Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. They will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through literacy lessons to other areas of the curriculum at least once a term.

Handwriting is taught weekly, through discrete sessions. The requirements for handwriting teaching are specified in the handwriting policy.

Spelling is taught using the Read, Write, Inc spelling programme. Read Write Inc. Spelling is for: Pupils in Year 2 to Year 6 who can read with accuracy (they recognise the alternative graphemes for sounds). Further information can be found in the Read, Write Inc policy.

Discrete grammar/punctuation teaching takes place for an hour per week in Years 1-6. A long term “place value” of grammar and punctuation is in place and followed in year groups.

Assessment grids relevant to the revised National Curriculum (2013) are used to assess children’s writing and reading and to highlight areas for development for individual children (see Assessment policy). In Year 2 and Year 6, the interim frameworks are used to support the assessment of reading and writing. In Year 2 and Year 6, SATs assessment papers are used as part of the summative assessment process for reading and GPS (grammar, punctuation and spelling). Grammarsaurus assessment papers are used for GPS in years 1,3,4 and 5 and headstart papers are used for reading.

THE USE OF ICT

Opportunities to use ICT to support teaching and learning in Literacy will be planned for and used as appropriate. Both laptops and ipads, are used in literacy learning.

ASSESSMENT AND TARGET SETTING

Work will be assessed in line with the Assessment Policy. In addition to formative assessment, termly summative assessments will take place, using reading and GPS test papers (grammarsaurus, Headstart) and cold/hot writes. In Year 2 and Year 6, past SATs papers are used for summative assessments and end of year assessments take place through formal testing. Assessment grids will be used to make a judgement based on the findings in both reading test papers and cold/hot writes. Following data collection, specific children will be targeted in order that suitable interventions can take place to ensure that they make progress with their writing. At the end of key stages, teacher assessment still takes place to go alongside SATs results.

INCLUSION

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment. Gifted children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided. Small groups of children will be selected to work with teaching assistants to work on areas for development. More able children are highlighted on a register, differentiated activities will be planned and more able teacher targets children in certain year groups to work with in small groups on activities that focus on “mastery”.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

SOCIAL COHESION

All children have the opportunity to read books and stories from other cultures and enjoy a wide range of languages and dialects in order to develop their own style. Cross curricular writing links ensure that children have opportunities to write to a variety of audiences for different purposes, these may include people and businesses within the wider community and abroad.

ROLE OF SUBJECT LEADER:

The Subject Leader is responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in Literacy through:

Monitoring and evaluating Literacy:-

- pupil progress – this is done using the pupil tracker and follow up progress meetings
- audits of planning and work which take place annually. All audits are followed up with feedback to individual teachers
- lesson observations
- Taking the lead in policy development
- Auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD
- Purchasing and organising resources
- Keeping up to date with recent literacy developments

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are encouraged to read and write with their children. Home/ school reading diaries are used to aid communication.

CONCLUSION:

This policy also needs to be in line with other school policies and therefore should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

Assessment and Record Keeping

Responding to pupils' work / Feedback / Marking policy

Special Educational Needs Policy

ICT Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

RWI policy

Handwriting policy