



QUEENSWAY SCHOOL

ENGLISH & LITERACY POLICY

At Queensway School we believe that Literacy and communication are key life skills and that through the English curriculum we should help children develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively with the world at large, through spoken and written language. We also intend to help children enjoy and appreciate literature and its rich variety.

Aims

At Queensway School we strive for the children to become a 'Primary Literate Pupil'. By the age of 11 in readiness for a child's next steps at secondary school we aim for a child to be able to:

- Read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding, using a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct.
- Understand the sound and spelling system and use it to read and spell correctly.
- Have an interest in books and read for enjoyment and be able to talk about their preferences and opinions.
- Have an interest in words, their meanings, developing a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms.
- Know, understand and be able to write a range of genres in fiction and poetry.
- Understand, use and be able to write a range of non-fiction texts.
- Plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing.
- Have fluent and legible handwriting.
- Articulate their ideas with confidence and respond respectfully to the thoughts of others.
- Speak with grammatical accuracy.

Leadership of English

The leadership of the curriculum area is split into four roles: a phonics leader, a reading leader, a leader to promote the love of reading and a writing leader; this ensures specialisms and talents are assigned to each area. The leaders work closely together to deliver high quality leadership of English overall.

The role of the Leader

The leader of each area needs to have a passion for and be a champion of the area of the curriculum within the school. They need to ensure that they continue to develop their own understanding and expertise, keeping up with any new initiatives. To lead the area and achieve maximum impact, leaders will regularly complete these tasks:

- Book scrutinies
- Planning scrutinies
- Lesson observations
- Moderation at assessment points
- Working alongside staff with focus groups of children
- Supporting staff with planning
- Leading Booster sessions for identified groups of children where needed

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- Ensuring that the appropriate support is in place where issues have been identified in progress or attainment.
 - Delivering CPD to teachers and TAs in an environment where all staff are valued and feel confident to share their own ideas and experiences.
 - Liaising with subject leaders to ensure that all aspects of English are being applied across the curriculum.
 - Managing the English budget.
 - Feeding back to staff from Partnership meetings or CPD they have attended.
 - Analysing data at the 3 assessment points and any interim assessment points.
 - Writing reports for the Quality of Education meeting of Governors.
 - Organising additional reading or writing days/events/ competitions.
 - Keeping abreast of external assessments and moderation for Foundation Stage, end of Key stage 1 and end of Key stage 2.
 - Sharing and signposting teachers to high quality resources.
 - Celebrating children's achievements with them.

Teaching and Learning

Teachers use the school's progression of skills documents for reading and writing – these are based on the 2014 National Curriculum.

Speaking and Listening

At Queensway School, we believe that speaking and listening form the foundations of all learning in English. Proficiency in spoken language and communication is vital for developing the vocabulary needed for reading and writing across the curriculum. In Foundation Stage and KS1, children learn a bank of stories which they can retell as an initial oral experience of the text type, appropriate key vocabulary and writing style. In formal and informal situations, throughout the day, we create and encourage opportunities for meaningful reciprocal conversation, discussion and talk around learning. Questioning forms the basis of our teaching across the curriculum, and we strongly encourage children to be inquisitive and to share their thoughts confidently in a supportive environment.

We provide a language-rich environment where adults talk with the children throughout the day, engaging them in high-quality dialogue so that they can:

- Articulate what they know and understand.
- Develop their knowledge across all areas of learning, using the vocabulary they need to support learning.

These back-and-forth interactions involve the adult:

- Thinking out loud, modelling new language for the children.
- Paying close attention to what the children say.
- Rephrasing and extending what the children say.
- Validating the children's attempts at using new vocabulary and grammar by rephrasing what children say if necessary.
- Asking closed and open questions.
- Answering the children's questions.
- Explaining why things happen.
- Providing models of accurate grammar.
- Extending children's vocabulary and explaining new words.

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- Teaching and modelling strategies to decode new vocabulary.
 - Helping children to articulate ideas in well-formed sentences.

Adults show children what good listening looks like and reinforce good listening with praise and examples. They support children to articulate their answers in well-formed sentences by scaffolding, extending, and developing their ideas. Children practice their skills of listening to, talking with a talk partner and giving feedback to the group.

Additionally:

- Pupils have the opportunity to respond to stories, poems and rhymes.
- Pupils participate in discussions and debates with and to different audiences (e.g. talking partners, group, and class discussions/debates).
- Pupils are encouraged to respond orally to different stimuli (e.g. radio, television, visiting speakers, music, film).
- Pupils discuss and evaluate their own work with peers and adults.
- Pupils take part in a wide range of drama activities to explore and deepen understanding (e.g. role play, hot seating, freeze framing).

Reading

Word reading

In the early stages of reading, the focus of teaching is the systematic development of phonic knowledge and the application of this in reading. Learning and application of phonics are inseparable and linked together through reading and writing. Children's knowledge of the alphabetic code (how letters or groups of letters represent the sounds of the language) supports their reading and writing.

Language comprehension

At Queensway, we provide a language-rich environment where adults engage with high quality back-and-forth dialogue with the children. This forms the foundations for language and cognitive development. Children's understanding of what they are reading is essential for deeper learning to take place. For planning and teaching, teachers focus on the content domains (as set out in the National Curriculum) for each key stage. Our progression of skills document and Integris are linked with these domains. In Key stage 2 the domains are taught through the "VIPERS" questioning strategy.

Children at Queensway are provided with wide experiences of stories, poetry, songs and rhymes, non-fiction texts and discussion which all provide opportunities for vocabulary development as well as for word reading and comprehension skills to develop.

For the children in Foundation Stage and KS1, as well as for those children in KS2 who are learning the alphabetic code through phonics lessons, teachers carefully select decodable books for the children to read during guided reading, 1:1 reading sessions in school and for reading at home. These texts are closely matched to their developing phonic knowledge so that they can apply their learning, read independently and feel like successful readers.

For the teaching of reading in KS2, teachers use a variety of books and texts; this could include books from a reading scheme, magazines, newspaper articles, web pages, fiction and non-fiction books. We do not follow a particular reading scheme but use a variety of books from different sources, selecting the most suitable. Guided Reading texts are linked to the genre that the children are writing, differentiated and chosen carefully to fulfil the learning outcomes.

Every year group has a recommended list of books to read at home that are for children who are less confident, children who are confident and children who are very confident. These can be found on the class pages on the school website and are given to parents at each parents' evening.

At Queensway we will ensure:

- New vocabulary is regularly introduced, repeated and consolidated in different contexts.
- Pupils are read to daily to promote reading for pleasure, use of expression, sustained listening and discussion. Texts are chosen carefully with the needs of the children in mind, to introduce new vocabulary and a range of text types and genres are covered.
- Pupils will have an opportunity to enjoy a book for pleasure independently every day.
- Pupils will read to develop research and study skills across the curriculum.
- Pupils will read a wide range of fiction and non-fiction, including media and ICT texts and texts from a variety of cultures and traditions.
- Pupils will be taught to be discriminating readers, be able to understand layers of meaning (inference) and make a critical response to what they read.
- Pupils will explore meanings of text using drama strategies.
- Pupils will be able to read on-screen texts.
- Teachers will use a range of strategies for the teaching of reading such as Shared, Guided and Independent reading as well as systematic phonics teaching in FS, KS1 and where appropriate in KS2.
- Pupils will be given opportunities to explore the links between reading and writing.
- A balance of guided reading and 1:1 reading will be used to support children to become independent readers. The balance is determined by the needs of the pupils.
- Blue Reading Record Books are used to record reading sessions with the next steps written each time to support progress. The Blue Reading Record moves into the next year group with the child through the school.
- All children are encouraged to be involved in daily reading at home (Please see the school's Homework policy for detailed guidance.) Books can be changed daily at the children's request, and this is monitored by teachers. The books are changed by staff in KS1. A home-reading diary is kept for each child in Key Stage One and in years Three and Four.
- Children in FS and KS1 (who are learning the alphabetic code through daily phonics lessons) are given books that closely match their developing phonic knowledge so that they can apply their learning, read independently and feel like successful readers.

Developing a love of reading

At Queensway, we strive to make sure that children become engaged with reading from the beginning.

- The school has a designated curriculum leader for 'reading for pleasure'.
- Reward schemes in KS1 and 2 are used to promote reading at home.
- Each class makes library visits at least twice in a school year and the school promotes the library's summer reading challenge.
- There is an annual book fair at the school, and we are involved in World Book Day.
- Each class has a designated book area.
- We ensure that there is at least one author visit every year.
- Class timetables include time where the teacher reads to the children – this will be fiction and non-fiction texts.
- Adults encourage children to share books they have enjoyed with their peers and teachers recommend authors and books to children.

- The leaders of English use Twitter, publishers' websites and book competitions to keep abreast of new releases and any activities that promote the love of reading.
- We have a reading trophy that is awarded three times a year.

Writing

Foundation Stage

Transcription (spelling and handwriting)

In Foundation Stage the focus of writing initially is giving meaning to marks and then moves on to letter formation and the application of phonics. Opportunities for early mark making and writing is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. Writing is taught in two ways - through literacy and phonics lessons that have a specific focus and through "continuous provision" where children write independently using a variety of media with activities linked to a theme or personal interests. In the Foundation Stage, there is continuous provision for mark making and writing both inside the classroom and in the outside learning area. (e.g., use of writing in role play areas, writing labels for information, free story writing and sand writing).

Composition

Whilst in Foundation stage, children are actively encouraged and taught to articulate their ideas and structure them in speech, before writing. Teachers in Nursery and Reception use 'Tales Toolkit' to teach children how to orally create their own stories, including recently introduced vocabulary. In Reception classes, 'Talk For Writing' (developed by Pie Corbett) is also used, children are encouraged to learn the text; they are supported by using visual text maps and actions to help them internalise the text. The children use the text maps, teacher modelled writes and patterns of language that they have learned so that they can attempt to write parts or a whole text independently. Text maps, small world story scenes, puppets and Tales toolkit story telling bags are available for children to access independently in continuous provision. Staff will actively encourage children to retell or invent their own stories whilst using these resources and will scribe their ideas making time to share and celebrate their stories.

Key Stage One

Teachers continue to use the 'Talk For Writing' approach in the teaching of writing. In Year one there is always an innovation stage to the writing process so that the children can work on applying the features with more independence. In addition to this innovation, teachers provide opportunities for using the children's knowledge of a genre and its features through cross-curricular writing. Children are encouraged to apply their phonic knowledge and the grammar teaching.

To aid the transition from Year one to Year two, at the beginning of the year writing is taught in a similar way with text maps, learning of the text, actions and teacher modelled write. From Term Four, the children may not learn a text, but still work from a modelled text. As the year progresses, the modelled write is used less to meet the requirements for the end of Key Stage One writing assessments. Children are encouraged to apply their phonic knowledge and the grammar teaching.

Key Stage Two

In years three to six, all teachers use a combination of modelled writing, shared writing and guided writing to support the teaching of writing skills. Writing is often linked to the class topic, but could be linked to Science, an author style or a particular text. Children will always be encouraged to discuss the audience and the purpose of the writing. The structure of a module of work would start with text exploration (including work in guided reading), generating ideas (including word banks, grammar features, general features), planning the writing, writing and finally editing and redrafting as appropriate to the age and writing skills of the child. In year six, from term three, the teacher model will be used less and less to meet the requirements of the end of Key Stage Two writing assessments.

In addition, across the school:

- Pupils should be aware of the need to write legibly and use layout and space effectively to aid the reader.
- Pupils should be able to choose form and content to suit purpose and audience.
- Pupils should compose both on paper and on computer screen, using different formats and layouts to present work.
- Pupils should read examples of “good” writing in various forms and begin to recognise the criteria for such writing.
- Pupils should be given opportunities to write at length.

Grammar

- Pupils should be taught to write fluently and accurately, understanding how to use the main rules and conventions of written English, as outlined in the Appendices in the National Curriculum.
- Adults should provide direct and accurate modeling-both in the written and spoken forms.
- Pupils should be introduced to the grammatical functions of different types of words and punctuation and explore how sentences are constructed.
- The weekly timetable includes one lesson per week specifically designated as a “grammar lesson“. The aspect of grammar that the children are learning will be linked into the writing lessons specifically so that children can apply what they have learnt.
- Pupils will be encouraged to extend their knowledge through the close reading and discussion of carefully chosen examples from a range of text-types.
- In their writing pupils will be encouraged to draw on this understanding to develop a sense of style, experiment with the construction of complex sentences and restructure sentences for clarity and effect.

Phonics

At Queensway School, phonics is taught using a systematic approach. We use the Letters and Sounds programme alongside Jolly Phonics ensuring that lessons are focused, engaging and give the opportunity for practise and application.

Letters and Sounds is a phonics resource published by the Department for Education and Skills in 2007. It aims to provide a practical programme to teach children to read and write according to the principles of synthetic phonics. Currently, we use this document as a basis for our progression of teaching in EYFS and Key Stage One, ensuring that progression is in line with current good practice.

Sessions are based on the long-term plan (letters and sounds), medium term plan (by phase) and weekly plans (for each phonics group). In Foundation Stage and Key Stage One we stream for phonics across parallel classes to ensure the teaching is targeted to match the children’s developing phonic knowledge and

skills. We assess learning/progress termly and regroup the children based on their sound knowledge, high frequency word recognition, whole word reading and sentence reading. Adults are highly trained and there is a programme of CPD and support for all members of staff.

Spelling

Spelling is an integral part of the writing process. Pupils are taught the knowledge and skills they need to become independent spellers through the use of 'Letters and Sounds' and in FS and KS1 supported by a range of resources, including Jolly Phonics. As the children move into Phase 6 of 'Letters and Sounds' teachers plan and use resources from a range of resources including 'Support for spelling' and 'Spelling Pathways'.

- Activities provided for the pupils should be differentiated appropriately to their learning style and ability.
- By phase 5 of 'Letters and Sounds' pupils should have an awareness of the 44 phonemes of spoken English, digraphs and trigraphs, and be beginning to know alternative pronunciations.
- Pupils will be encouraged to blend phonemes for reading and segment graphemes for writing.
- Spelling will be part of homework in years one to six; please refer to the school's homework policy for specific guidance.
- From Year 1 onwards, handwriting practice will be linked to spelling/phonics rules.
- There will be a clear expectation that pupils will apply their knowledge of spelling conventions in their written work.
- There is the expectation that pupils will use the common exception words (spelling lists as in the National curriculum document for years 1 and 2) and 'wow words' (spelling lists as in the National curriculum document for years 3-6) correctly in their writing.
- As their spelling confidence and awareness increases, pupils will be expected to check their own writing using dictionaries and the green pen for editing.

Handwriting

Handwriting is taught with reference to the National Curriculum objectives. All staff model the 'Nelson Handwriting' script on handwritten labels on displays, work on working walls, marking in children's books and writing on the board, the only exception for this is when teachers are modeling writing in an English lesson. Children are encouraged to implement their handwriting practice into their everyday writing.

Foundation Stage

In Nursery, children are encouraged to develop their gross and fine motor skills through activities such as messy play, including sand, paint and malleable materials, developmental movement sessions and yoga. Squiggle while you Wiggle and dough disco sessions forms part of our curriculum, which prepares the whole body to write using music as the inspiration and driver for practicing the rhythms and patterns of handwriting. By the end of Nursery, children who are physically ready are taught to form the letters in their name. Reception children continue to refine their fine motor skills through a range of sensory activities and letter formation is taught daily as part of the daily phonics sessions in a variety of ways including songs and actions.

Key Stage One

Handwriting is taught daily. For the purposes of practicing their letter formation, children have handwriting books. Children are taught the correct letter formation and how to hold a pencil correctly. When children have achieved a neat, legible hand and skilled letter formation they are introduced to the different joins. There is a weekly certificate awarded to hand writer of the week.

Key Stage Two

Handwriting may be taught in conjunction with spelling. It is taught once a week with the expectation that children's writing is consistently neat, legible, correctly joined and the appropriate size and is implemented in their writing. For the purposes of practising their letter formation, children have handwriting books. There is a weekly certificate awarded to hand writer of the week.

Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process and should be clearly linked to learning objectives:

- Learners are actively involved, through an explicit understanding of learning objectives, self-evaluation and target setting for personal improvement. (Assessment for Learning)
- Integris is used to track progression, analyse what has been achieved in relation to learning objectives, direct planning and set future targets.
- Regular marking in line with the school's marking policy offers pupils opportunities to reflect on their learning and make improvements.
- The Progression of skills for reading and writing, the writing genre map and the age-appropriate list of books are all used to ensure breadth of experience and learning.

Foundation Stage

At Queensway, our Foundation Stage comprises of a nursery and 2 Reception classes. All references to 'Foundation Stage' in this policy covers both these age groups.

A prime area of learning and development is communication and language (CL). Children are assessed against the two early learning goals at the end of Foundation Stage. (Revised 2021) These are: -

- Listening, Attention and Understanding
- Speaking

These basic skills are taught and developed with the youngest children and this continues into Year 1.

Literacy is a specific area of learning which is made up of three early learning goals: -

- Comprehension
- Word Reading
- Writing

Handwriting is taught in the Foundation Stage and assessed against two ELGs (early learning goal) 'Fine Motor' which is part of 'Physical Development' (PD). Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing- using the tripod grip in almost all cases." And also, against 'Writing' ELG "write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed".

Equal Opportunities

The full and effective participation and progression of all pupils should be achieved by:

- Acknowledging and valuing the variety of different experiences, interests, social and cultural backgrounds of pupils; using such differences constructively to raise confidence and self-esteem.

- Ensuring access to learning at an individual level, through differentiated teaching and learning strategies; planning should set high expectations and provide appropriate learning opportunities for pupils from all social backgrounds, ethnic groups and for those who are disabled.
- Providing texts from a range of cultures and which are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- Providing resources to support specific learning difficulties e.g. laptops, large print texts, Braille and taped materials.
- Appropriate Pupil Profiles and intervention programmes.
- Recognise that the role of the family is central in supporting the child's language development as a speaker, reader and writer.
- Families, pupils and teachers should be regularly informed of progress.
- Home-school contracts and homework policies should be linked to developing literacy at home.
- Teachers should provide guidance on what families can do to extend their child's competence in using spoken and written language. This many include parent workshops, shared lessons and information on the class blog and school website.

The needs of children in receipt of Pupil Premium, children who are identified as having English as an additional language and Most Able children are specifically identified in the weekly English plans.

The English Policy is intended as a framework of principles underlying effective teaching and learning. The English National Curriculum and the school's progression of skills document should be used to plan Schemes of Work in relation to these principles.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's homework policy and the assessment, marking and reporting policy.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Head Teacher and the Quality of Education Committee.

Chair of Quality of Education Date

Head Teacher Date