



# **Literacy Policy**

**2025-2026**

## **School Vision**

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

## **Intent**

Within English children will be able to

- ability to articulate ideas, develop understanding and engage with others through spoken language, listening and communicating
- read accurately with fluency and understanding
- read widely for pleasure and have a love of books
- write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences
- to develop a cursive, legible and joined handwriting style

## **Implementation**

Staff will:

- plan directly from the National Curriculum (Y1-6) and use the progression papers to meet the needs of all pupils including those with SEND. Nursery and Reception will cover the educational programs within the Early Years Framework 2025, with guidance from Development Matters
- deliver well- paced, engaging lessons through Quality First Teaching, drawing upon the principles of Rosenshine, Voice 21 and the Primary Writing Project
- promote reading and writing skills across the curriculum
- provide time for pupils to read, write for a range of purposes and audiences, as well as take part in discussion
- ensure grammar, spelling and handwriting expectations are consistent across the school
- use a range of assessment approaches including verbal feedback, written feedback and think pink

## **Impact**

The impact of a clear and consistent approach to the teaching of Literacy is:

- all lessons are well planned, delivered and resourced
- staff have strong subject knowledge, a clear understanding of expectations and a consistent approach to the teaching of Literacy

**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
- begin to read and write independently and with enthusiasm
- 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
- read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them
- explore the use of language.

### **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.

Units are planned across the year to make the most of cross curricular links/visits and visitors into school. Within units the teaching sequence of reading, speaking and listening, analysis and writing is followed, the phases within units are used as a guide and are altered according to the needs of the class at that time.

Planning is completed in units on a common planning format (within key stages 1 and 2) which highlights shared learning, independent learning, plenary and assessment criteria. Planning is completed 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.

The role of the TA is to support the teacher in the teaching and learning of the lesson.

Children are given extensive opportunities to enjoy and explore books from entry into Nursery. Home reading books are provided from Reception onwards and directly linked to the RWI programme. Reception and KS1 children read weekly with either the teacher or an additional adult/volunteer. KS2 children read once a fortnight unless they need additional support. On-going class novel /picture books/poetry and non-fiction are shared and enjoyed regularly with the class.

The English curriculum is delivered within a stimulating, language-rich environment where live marking/verbal feedback is incorporated into lessons to promote quality learning through which children are motivated to achieve success. English is taught in a variety of ways including: modelling, scaffolding, explanation, targeted questioning, initiating and guiding exploration, discussing and challenging ideas generated by the children, listening and responding to children in a sensitive and supporting manner, discussing and evaluating children's successes. In addition, teachers and children will have a clear understanding of the objectives being taught and will share the success criteria at the beginning of lessons and will reflect upon them within the lesson and again at the end, plan for well-paced lessons which drive learning forward, using quality texts for teaching as their basis, consider the opportunities for developing English skills across the curriculum, be mindful of the literacy needs of the child in all subject areas, and differentiate questions and activities to allow all children access. All children in our school will have full access to English on a daily basis. Any additional support or intervention that is required will take place either during the independent session of the hour, allowing the child to

benefit from the rich-literacy environment, or at other times during the school day as appropriate.

### **APPROACHES TO WRITING**

Mark Making is encouraged in a wide range of areas in the EYFS learning environment, using variety of tools and resources matched to the children's physical development needs. Activities to develop children's gross and fine motor skills are completed daily to support writing development. Children are 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.

Writing is part of the teaching sequence which also involves reading and speaking and listening. Children will study and annotate non-fiction texts and have opportunities to analyse it before they are asked to write in that genre. Teachers use the units alongside the progression papers and support for writing materials to ensure that children are working at age appropriate levels and including the correct features of the text. North East Primary Consortium assessments have been adapted are used to assess children's writing and to highlight areas for development for individual children.

Within literacy, writing will involve whole class work which will eventually lead to an independent piece of writing from the child. Throughout the planning and writing stages there will be evidence of a tool box (this forms the success criteria of a unit of work), model of the text being taught and analysed, story mapping or boxing up, imitation and innovation as well as teacher modelling and class discussions. Classes will show the stages of their whole class work through flip chart paper which will be displayed in the classroom for children to refer to – this is work that has been completed as a whole class and therefore will not always be evident in books. Key vocabulary maybe present as well as green house words. Within some lessons, the use of videos will contribute to stimulus for the children and discussions. Some units of work lend themselves to more of a reading focus within Literacy when classes are studying longer class novels, especially in UKS2 – this will lead to more short burst writing activities which cover a variety of genres.

### **PHONICS – READ, WRITE, INC PROGRAMME**

Our children learn to read and write effectively across Early Years and Key Stage 1 using the Read, Write, Inc phonics programme. Children in KS2 who have not reached blue level yet will continue to receive phonics lessons and a RWI book to take home.

We assess all pupils following Read Write Inc. *Phonics* using the Sound and Word Entry Assessment. We use this data to assign them to either *Read Write Inc.*

Phonics or *Read Write Inc* Spelling. This gives us a very good indication of how well they are making progress relative to their starting points. We do this for all pupils, whenever they join us, so we can track all of them effectively, including those eligible for the pupil premium.

For those on the *Read Write Inc*. Phonics programme, we record their starting date and entry point on the tracker to monitor the rate at which they are making progress. We can also easily identify those who joined the programme later.

Nursery children focus on sound awareness and rhymes with Fred (RWI resource) in autumn and spring term. In summer term, children who are confident with their sound awareness skills will begin RWI for Nursery. From Reception to Year 2 children work within ability groups that are defined by their performance on RWI phonic assessments (Reception children are grouped by the end of Autumn 1). Children are re-assessed every 6 weeks throughout the year and re-grouped accordingly. Lessons take place daily from 20-60 minutes. Children who have still not completed the *Read Write Inc* programme from years 3 upwards will have additional phonics assessments and interventions.

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.

### **APPROACHES TO READING**

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.

### **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.

Role play areas are used in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 to enhance children's speaking and listening skills. The role play areas are changed every half

term to link in with class topics and are being developed to incorporate outside areas.

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. There is a strong emphasis on sound awareness skills in Nursery which is used to support early reading in Reception. Every class has a visual timetable which the children 'read' every morning – alongside picture cues. Stories are read to children at home time.

Shared reading takes place during literacy lessons to enhance children's enjoyment of reading. During these sessions, extracts and longer texts are used to teach children reading skills such as decoding and comprehension strategies. Shared reading texts are challenging for the children so that year group objectives can be met. Work within the lesson will be related to the texts used during shared reading.

Guided reading sessions take place with a small group of children along with an adult. During this time, children read challenging texts while the teachers have specific learning objectives which will be taught or consolidated. Guided reading texts will be used to practise decoding skills during EYFS (one at red dittie Read write inc level) and Key Stage 1, while in Key Stage 2 the focus will move to comprehension skills and deeper understanding of the texts through questioning.

In KS2 children have streamed reading sessions/deeper reading where texts are analysed and questions are answered and generated. Streamed reading takes place in smaller groups with a range of teachers and TA's on a weekly basis whereas deeper reading is as a whole class.

All classes have Greenhouse Words which are words the children have learnt through deeper reading, streamed reading, reading of texts or general conversations. These words will lend themselves to be included in a range of subjects.

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 from reception will be given a Read, Write, Inc book for home that matches their phonics ability. Once children have reached grey level then they move onto our banded books at white or gold level to focus on comprehension skills. Children work through the bands at their own pace and progression.

Home readers are used to consolidate children's learning. Children are encouraged to read their book at home three times. Once for decoding, secondly for comprehension and thirdly for fluency and expression. Parents have the opportunity to comment on their child's progress in communication books.

## **THE USE OF ICT**

Opportunities to use ICT to support teaching and learning in Literacy will be planned for and used as appropriate. Programmes such as Literacy Shed alongside film clips, radio commentaries, internet and music are used to enhance children's learning.

## **ASSESSMENT AND TARGET SETTING**

Work will be assessed in line with the Assessment Policy. In addition to this, assessment will be used to confirm judgements made through the use of the North East Primary Consortium assessments. 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.

## **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. More able children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided. Small groups of children will be selected to work with teaching assistants or teacher to work on areas for development.

## **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 English through:

Monitoring and evaluating English:-

- pupil progress – this is done using the pupil tracker and follow up progress meetings
- audits of planning and work which take place twice a year as well as pupil voice. 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
- staff meetings

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

Parents are encouraged to read and write with their children. Home/school reading diaries are used to aid communication. Parents of younger children are invited into school to receive Surestart book packs and to hear how they can help their children to develop reading skills. Parents are sent phonics videos to practice at home via Dojo.

## **Spelling**

At Beech Hill Primary School, we encourage our pupils to think and write creatively, be adventurous with their use of language and to write with clear purpose and for pleasure.

In order for these aims to be realised, it is essential that our pupils learn to spell accurately. Children who can spell feel confident and are able to write with enjoyment. We want our pupils to be equipped with a range of strategies for learning spelling and to be able to apply their strategies when spelling words in their independent writing. Our pupils to enjoy exploring and investigating the patterns and contradictions of the English language and we encourage them to take delight in what they discover.

### **Aims of Teaching Spelling**

First and foremost, our pupils are given opportunities to explore and investigate the English language and its patterns through speaking and listening. As pupils move through our key stages, they develop, consolidate and secure the skills needed to read, share, enjoy and interpret a wide variety of literature. Our pupils learn to handwrite fluently and apply their spelling, grammar and punctuation skills to a variety of purposes in a range of thematic, cross-curricular contexts. Our pupils are encouraged to think creatively, to be adventurous with their use of language and to write with clear purpose.

When spelling, our pupils:

- use their phonic skills effectively when blending phonemes for reading and when segmenting phonemes for spelling
- have an interest in words, their meanings and their origins, developing a growing vocabulary both for speaking and writing
- write with confidence and creativity, while developing the skills to self-edit, correct and improve
- be imaginative, creative and challenge themselves

## **Approaches to spelling**

The whole school follows the Read Write Inc programme which is a phonic based approach. Our phonics teaching makes strong links between blending for reading, segmenting for spelling and handwriting. We encourage all of our pupils to apply their phonic knowledge when spelling.

In addition to RWI, each year group have additional spellings which will be learnt on a weekly basis and tested by the class teacher in context. These are phonic based and also include the statutory spellings as set out in the National Curriculum.

By the end of Year 1, it is our expectation that the vast majority of our pupils will be secure at spelling Phase 5 words. Pupils who do not secure Phase 5 by the end of Year 1 are given additional support and intervention.

## **Strategies for Learning Spellings**

KS1 are following spelling through RWInc and KS2 are using Spelling Shed to learn their weekly spellings and use a variety of strategies:

- Look, say, cover, write, check
- Trace, copy and replicate (then check)
- Segmentation strategy
- Quickwrite
- Drawing around the word to show the shape
- Drawing an image around the word
- Words without vowels
- Pyramid words
- Rainbow writing
- Memorable 'silly sentences'
- Clapping and counting syllables
- Etymology

Our pupils are also given regular spelling practice opportunities during registration, through access to displays of weekly spellings, cross curricular word banks. The school uses Spelling Shed to support children's learning of spellings outside of school and children are given opportunities to access Spelling Shed as part of their weekly Grammar lessons.

## **Approaches to Teaching and Supporting Spelling**

Our focus on teaching spelling embraces the knowledge of spelling conventions, patterns and rules. Moreover, we promote the *learning* of spellings, through the use of multi-sensory strategies, including combining the teaching of spelling and handwriting. Our teaching of spelling includes common exception words, high frequency words, statutory words and personal and topic spelling.

Our pupils use Spelling Shed which provides the opportunity for pupils to practise their learning, play online games with peers and enables us to share our pupils' learning with their parents. The etymology of words is taught in specific spelling sessions where the children get to understand how words have developed.

Our pupils are taught challenging age-related content and it is our expectation that the vast majority of our pupils will achieve age-related expectations at the end of each year and key stage. Where pupils have fallen behind their peers and cannot access age related content, class teachers will differentiate the curriculum/spelling lists to ensure those pupils are able to progress, succeed and catch up.

As well as weekly spellings, each classroom has non-negotiable spellings clearly displayed to support children's spellings in lessons.

The school hosts a Spelling Bee in the Spring Term to raise the profile of the importance of spelling with the children.

### **Assessment**

Our assessments enable us to quickly identify individuals or groups of pupils who are falling below age related expectations. Steps are immediately identified to improve the attainment and progress of these pupils. Our current suite of intervention programmes includes:

- Small group Phonics
- Individual Phonics programme

### **Dictionaries**

Our pupils are taught explicitly how to use a dictionary in order to investigate word meaning, origins and spellings. We currently use four different editions of the Oxford English Dictionary. This ensure that our pupils make progress in their dictionary skills from EYFS through to Year 6 and beyond.

EYFS and Year 1 Oxford First Dictionary  
Year 2 Oxford Junior Illustrated Dictionary  
Year 3 and Year 4 Oxford Primary Dictionary

Year 5 and 6 Oxford School Dictionary/Thesaurus

### **Marking and Feedback**

In addition, we place a strong focus on spelling in all marking and feedback. During the marking of written work, up to three misspellings of high frequency/non-negotiable words are identified. When returning to look at feedback, our pupils are

asked to practise each correct spelling three times as part of 'Think Pink'. Class teachers ensure that common misspellings from a prior year group are revisited and learned with utmost urgency when misconceptions are identified.

**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