



LATCHMERE
ACADEMY TRUST

English Policy

Status	Curriculum
Review Cycle	Annual
Date written/ last review	September 2024
Date of next review	October 2025

NB: Throughout this document Latchmere Academy Trust may be abbreviated to "LAT"

The purpose of this document

The purpose of this policy is to reflect the Trust's values and philosophy in relation to the teaching and learning of English and set out the framework within which teaching and learning takes place. It provides guidance on planning, teaching and assessment. This document has been prepared by the English Subject Leaders in consultation with staff. It has been produced for all teaching staff, teaching assistants, school governors, parents, the LEA and OFSTED.

Intent

Here at The Latchmere Academy Trust, we have a passion for high quality teaching and learning of English. We believe that every child can succeed in reading and writing, and we aim to instil this belief in the children themselves. We aim to deliver high quality teaching which takes different learning styles into account, and to support and encourage all children to achieve their full potential. We strive to cultivate a real enjoyment of oracy, reading and writing

Our aim is to enable children to become confident and skilled in all aspects of English. We aim to help children to develop a love of the English language through the spoken and written word. We believe that through speaking and listening, reading and writing, children develop their powers of imagination, originality, creativity and reflection. Using language skilfully empowers children to communicate creatively and imaginatively, as well as allowing them to engage with the world at large.

Fundamentally, it is our intention that children leave school as lifelong learners with a desire to read and write with enjoyment for the rest of their lives. The provision will prepare the children for the next stage of their education.

Our English curriculum has the 2014 National Curriculum at its heart. We have made ambitious choices for our reading texts and writing opportunities. We have carefully planned the knowledge and skills the children will gain in every year group.

Overall aims for English learning and teaching

We strive for children to become fully literate. By the age of 11, we aim for every child to be able to:

- Speak clearly and audibly with confidence and control, showing awareness of the listener
- Develop and use a wide range of vocabulary, understanding appropriate use in different contexts
- Listen to others with respect, focus and understanding, responding appropriately
- Use role play and drama to explore characterisation, events, themes and issues
- Enjoy reading a variety of books and other text for both pleasure and purpose
- Use a variety of reading strategies to become fluent readers of fiction, poetry and non-fiction texts
- Use knowledge of phonics, spelling conventions and sight vocabulary to spell accurately
- Understand the grammatical features of their writing
- Utilise their grammatical knowledge to alter the effect of their writing
- Have fluent and legible cursive handwriting
- Have an interest in words and their meanings and an ever-growing vocabulary
- Read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding
- Know, understand and be able to write in a range of fiction, poetry and non-fiction genres
- Plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing for presentation

- Become an analytical reader, able to evaluate and justify their preferences
- Through discussion, drama, reading and writing, develop their powers of imagination, creativity and reflection.

Implementation

Reading

Reading for Pleasure

Reading for pleasure is prioritised in the school. Every class has a well-stocked book corner with time-tabled slots for reading for pleasure. Every corridor has a reading display to motivate and prioritise reading too. Each year group, alongside their core reading provision, has allocated authors to explore. This ensures the children leave their primary education with a tome of knowledge about authors and books, both classical and modern, which will give the children an understanding and appreciation of their literary heritage. We celebrate National Poetry Day, World Book Day and run additional events to create as much exposure to reading as possible.

Shared Reading

Shared reading is a whole class activity using a common text. Teachers may use shared reading to focus on the following: comprehension; specific language features, such as word and spelling patterns; the layout and purpose of a text and the structure and organisation of sentences. During shared reading, the teacher may choose texts that are slightly more challenging than pupils might read independently. This is because the teacher is able to support the reading and discuss the text in more detail. This is an important opportunity to enthuse about texts and share the joy of reading as a class. This aspect is part of our 'read to' provision

Guided Reading

Guided reading takes place as a whole class and may last about twenty minutes, or more in UKS2 Year Groups. Teachers use this as an opportunity to teach fluency, comprehension skills, summarising texts and writing precis, evaluating texts, analysing fact and opinion and making predictions. Discussion is inherent to the pedagogy of lessons. This is part of our 'read with' provision.

Individual Reading

This is part of our 'read independently' provision.

In Nursery, children are encouraged to share books with adults as part of everyday Nursery practice.

Reception and Key Stage 1: Reception and Year 1 children are allocated individual reading books based upon their phonic knowledge and understanding, using the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds decodable reader system. All books are phonetically decodable and teaching staff are able to select and change books, which are appropriate for the children's stage of learning and phonic knowledge. Children's phonic and tricky word knowledge is assessed regularly to see if they are ready to move onto the next reader, to ensure the continued progression of their phonic skills. When teachers are moving children to the next reader, they use a running record which includes phonic and tricky word assessments to see if children recognise the sounds and tricky words found in books in the band. Teachers will also read the new book with the child, to see if they can blend the sounds they know,

and will ask them differentiated comprehension questions to assess their understanding of the story. R and Year 1 children also take home a sharing book to allow for breadth of reading.

Year 2 children are allocated individual reading books based on the decodable reader system. Children are regularly assessed against these reading levels and move onto the next stage as appropriate. Year 2 children also take home a sharing book to allow for breadth of reading.

Key Stage 2: Children have opportunities during the school day to read independently a novel or non-fiction book of their own choice. These may be chosen from the class library, the main library or brought from home. Non-fluent readers and children requiring phonics teaching will continue to use the decodable reader system and are given additional provision in order to make rapid progress.

Please also reference the phonics policy which outlines our approach and fidelity to a government validated programme.

Home/School Reading Records/Journals

We value the home-school partnership and know that our children greatly benefit from the practical support that parents give by hearing reading both in school and at home. With this in mind, home/school diaries or 'Reading Records/Journals' are used to record and comment on children's reading.

- In Reception and Key Stage 1, the focus is on dialogue between parents and teachers, commenting on the child's reading skills, areas for development, motivation and other relevant information. The teaching staff comment on the child's reading in three areas: decoding, prosody and comprehension in line with the expectations of the phonics programme.
- In Key Stage 2, the children are increasingly encouraged to take responsibility for recording their reading and enter into this written dialogue. Expectation of dialogue is increased throughout the school.
- In lower Key Stage 2, there is a high emphasis on verbal dialogue between the teacher and child on the child's progress. The children are encouraged to comment on their reading at school in a written format. The children are asked to identify vocabulary which might be unfamiliar to them and explore the meaning.
- In upper Key Stage 2, the children are reading more independently, the teacher will encourage a more critical and reflective dialogue. The children are encouraged to recognise different focus areas of reading and should develop their comments to link with each strand over the course of the year. Increasingly, a more in-depth comment is encouraged and a sustained dialogue will take place between the teacher and child. In year 6, the children write longer analytical paragraphs linked to their reading.
- At all times, parents are encouraged and welcomed to respond in the reading record.

School Libraries

We are continuing to develop and enhance the facilities in the school library. Year 6 monitors have the responsibility of maintaining up keep of the library by making sure books are in the correct places, mending books and updating posters. These librarians are all responsible for thinking of book-based competitions over the year.

Writing

Our aim is for all children to become creative, confident and independent writers who are able to apply their skills appropriately in different contexts.

Handwriting and transcriptional skills:

To ensure early independence in basic writing:

- Activities which help develop gross and fine motor skills are introduced in the Nursery and extended in the Reception year
- Reception children will be taught to print.
- In Year 1, letter formation is taught using print then a joined handwriting style.
- In Year 2, children are taught to join their letters using a joined handwriting style
- In KS2, there are three handwriting sessions per week focusing on a fluent, joined style.
- Handwriting and presentation are an important focus throughout the school. Allocated time is given to teach these important skills.

For further information, please see the school's Handwriting Policy.

Whole class shared writing:

Teachers use shared writing as a key strategy in order to model and teach writing skills.

- Text-types read in class are used as models for writing
- Pupils are encouraged to share ideas and compose verbally before writing
- Teachers explicitly share and discuss success criteria with children
- Through shared writing, teachers model and teach the processes of thinking, planning and composing as well as applying punctuation and grammar.

Group guided writing:

Guided writing groups are mini writers' workshops in which all children's contributions are valued. Emphasis is on applying writing skills, resulting in improved independent writing and consolidation of targets.

Teachers:

- Encourage and stimulate children's interest in literature through drama activities, poetry and stories;
- Value and recognise children's efforts by displaying high-quality work in the classroom, showing excellent written work in assemblies and including pieces of writing in the weekly newsletter;
- Offer positive incentives to children in recognition of their efforts (stars, stamps, team points, quality marks; teacher praise and peer praise; showing work to the head teacher);
- Further children's learning by writing comments and targets in their English books;
- Teach children how to use punctuation (capital letters, full stops, question marks, commas and speech marks; and as they progress through the school, more advanced punctuation such as brackets, hyphens, colons and semicolons). The school's 'sentence-writing challenges', which take place throughout the school are a particularly important element of this which uses processes of spaced-retrieval to practise and hone technical skills.
- Teach, by example, and in class and group activities, the rules of grammar and syntax;

- Help children learn how to proof-read their work, as well as its significance in the writing process;
- Model how to vary writing to suit audience and purpose.

Spoken Language

Our aim is that all children will become effective and reflective oral communicators. They will have the ability to interact, confidently, sensitively and competently, with a wide range of peers and adults within a wide range of situations.

We acknowledge that “Speaking and Listening” is fundamental to the thinking process. It is therefore a prominent feature in all learning and teaching across the curriculum.

We believe that children need to verbalise their thinking in order to fully understand their learning and only then are fully able to apply that learning in written form.

We adhere to the National Curriculum 2014 guidelines to ensure appropriate progression:

- Beginning with initial emphasis on one-to-one interactions
- Increasingly effective interactions with groups of peers
- Larger group discussions, presentations to class/year/whole school
- Public Speaking
- Performing texts aloud from memory

Our children are given opportunities to:

- Discuss their work
- Express feelings and opinions
- Ask and answer questions
- Give and respond to instructions
- Recall experiences, real and imaginary
- Describe events, processes and observations
- Comment on what other people say
- Argue a case
- Explain ideas and respond to the ideas of others
- Predict with reasons what may happen
- Listen actively and recall messages or reports from others
- Read aloud, recite a poem learnt
- Act out stories or scenes from books, or create their own
- Use role play to explore other characters/people’s thoughts and motivations
- Present and make up dialogue for puppet shows
- Learn how words can evoke feelings
- Take part in performances
- Listen to each other and to adults giving detailed explanations and presentations (reading aloud, describing how a model works, through recordings on video or tape)
- Develop debating skills and presenting a reasoned argument.

Teachers:

- Recognise what the child already knows about spoken language in order to extend their language development
- Respect and show interest in what the child has to say
- Discuss activities they are engaged in and help them to articulate what they are trying to say - encourage, suggest and challenge what they are doing
- Provide support through explanation and interpretation
- Provide models of new language and extend vocabulary
- Ask open-ended questions
- Provide opportunities for collaborative group work and paired work
- Ensure that children have the opportunity to participate in a range of drama activities, in the classroom at hall times and performances.
- Recognise the importance and value of “home languages”, in developing children’s confidence in their own communication skills
- Provide opportunities for public speaking and debate
- Provide opportunities for performance of texts and poetry from memory

Our classrooms provide a stimulating and challenging environment within which the child can become actively involved in creative learning situations which will encourage the use of language.

We ensure there are:

- Areas where children can experiment, investigate and try things out by themselves or with others
- Opportunities for a wide range of collaborative activities
- Opportunities for drama, improvisation and performances of various kinds including role-play activities, puppet theatres and opportunities to take part in class assemblies and school plays. Also, the opportunity to respond to drama children have watched, as well as that in which they have participated
- Cross-curricular opportunities for language work, e.g. in describing and discussing a science investigation
- Opportunities for growing things/observing/looking at and touching artefacts/natural phenomena
- Book areas stocked with a wide range of literature and reference materials, including poetry songs and rhymes, and that children have opportunities to discuss these with their teacher and their peers
- Opportunities to use a wide range of resources and audio-visual aids to assist learning
- Opportunities to use computing to support English activities and to use computing as an information source and communication exchange
- Opportunities to draft and redraft longer pieces of written work on the computer
- Quiet reading times in the classroom when children can practise their reading skills by reading to themselves or aloud to a teacher, another adult or a friend

Spelling

Good spelling is important in writing because it eases communication and understanding, creates a good impression, frees the writer to be more expressive and ultimately improves the quality of written work. Good spelling is not automatic and it needs to be systematically taught and learned. We employ a range of strategies in order to help children to become good at spelling:

- We emphasise the importance of spelling words correctly at the same time as valuing and encouraging children's attempts at spelling. Children are encouraged to 'have a go' and use sounding out strategies as their primary approach to spelling new words;
- The key spelling strategy is phonic decoding. Through the teaching of phonics, the teaching of reading and spelling words is taught and applied alongside each from Foundation Stage onwards. (Ref Letters and Sounds document);
- Good spellers employ a broad range of strategies, including phonics, skills morphology (use of prefix/suffix), recognition, grammatical awareness and adaptation of existing knowledge. Our teaching of spelling encourages the development of these strategies;
- Sight vocabulary of tricky words is achieved through contextualised experience (shared and guided reading and writing), backed up with learning strategies such as visualisation of words, pattern-spotting and 'look-say-write-check';
- The investigative approach is employed to enable children to "discover" spelling conventions.
- Pictures, mnemonics and games are used to help with the learning of "tricky" spellings;
- Children may use personal dictionaries or word cards in which they can write words they use in their own writing;
- Marking is used as a significant strategy to assess and improve spelling. Teachers correct spellings as appropriate for the child's level and the piece of work in hand and are given time and opportunity to revise misspelled words.
- Assessment of spelling takes place through assessing the extent to which they can apply learned words and spell in the context of their own writing;
- Specific spellings/spelling rules are learnt in accordance with the 2014 National Curriculum.

We teach children to:

- Write each letter of the alphabet
- Discriminate different letter sounds within a word
- Write common letter strings
- Spell words with common prefixes and inflectional endings
- Identify rhyming words
- Develop visual and oral acuity to enable them to relate the written word to its spoken sound
- Learn spellings by using a range of identifiable methods, eg missing vowels, building word pyramids
- Use visual imagery to relate the word to its spoken sound
- Identify and recall the common spelling structures
- Remember the exceptions to accepted spelling patterns
- Check the accuracy of their spelling by using word banks and dictionaries

Teachers will provide children with a variety of learning experiences to develop awareness of spelling patterns and to teach and consolidate spellings. These will include the following: classroom displays,

word banks of words in family groups or in letter clusters, spelling lists of words which do not follow rules, spelling lists of frequently used words, handwriting practice which uses sounds and words children are learning to spell, word-searches, crossword puzzles, anagrams and commercially-produced dictionaries. From years 2 – 6, spelling rules will be taught on Mondays, and short lessons - alongside small quizzes - will follow on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. The aim of this process is to assist the pupils to learn the rules of words as well as giving them 'low stakes' revision assessments to improve consolidation of both rules and words.

Additional aspects of English

Computing and Visual English

- Work begun in English lessons may be extended and developed during computing;
- The interactive whiteboard provides an opportunity to model writing and share good resources;
- Further visual stimuli used to support and enhance the teaching and learning of English includes: Story Spinner, Literacy Shed, Pobble 365; Smartboard and PowerPoint Presentations; images and video clips.

Inclusion

- We ensure that all pupils have equal access to the English curriculum, irrespective of race or gender;
- Boys and girls have equal access to reading resources and we provide a range of books suitable for both: staff are responsible for buying suitable reading books for their classroom and these are checked for race, class, gender and ability, and stereotypes in terms of text or illustrations. We encourage children to read a variety of authors that represent classic and modern texts, and also authors from other social and ethnic backgrounds (see recommended reading lists for each year group)
- Every child should be given the opportunity to reach their full potential using appropriately adapted or scaffolded work;
- Adapted teaching is not based on the amount of work a pupil is expected to complete; rather, it is used to ensure that each child is supported and challenged as necessary;
- The teaching staff plan for and respond to the need of pupils with EAL and SEND in order to help all pupils to succeed.

Intervention strategies

- Reading with an adult 1:1
- 'Keep Up' group which focuses on securing the phonics and takes place on a daily basis. 'Catch up' where sounds missed over a longer period and revised.
- Rapid Catch Up
- Year 6 interventions with an additional teacher

Planning

- The long-term plan for the school follows the 2014 National Curriculum;
- Medium-term plans give an overview of how English is taught across each term;
- Weekly short-term plans indicate the objectives, and how these will be taught, including differentiation and support needed;
- Weekly short-term planning is undertaken by year groups, modified and reviewed at year group meetings;
- It is each teacher's responsibility to plan for English during the term;
- Where possible, links with other subjects are used to give greater meaning and depth to children's learning experiences.

Assessment for Learning and Feedback

We use continual formative and summative assessment in order to understand to what extent children have achieved their learning intention(s), identify strengths and those areas to target in future teaching.

See Marking and Feedback Policy

Summative Assessment

English is assessed as part of "Baseline" assessment at the beginning of Reception, and also at the end of Reception within the EYFS profile. English assessments are also carried out with SATs in Years 2 and 6. Teacher assessed independent writing tasks are used by the teacher to assess writing in each term. These are moderated within year teams, between year groups and across the Latchmere Academy Trust throughout the year. For further information on this, please see the Assessment Policy.

The statutory Phonic Screening takes place at the end of Year 1. The children who do not achieve the pass mark are given additional support in Year 2 and are then screened again at the end of the year.

Formative assessment

Ongoing formative assessment is continually being used by teachers to assess teaching and learning in the classroom. Valuable examples of this are:

- Classroom observations
- Classroom discussion (with the whole class, small groups or individuals)
- Teacher notes and annotations of planning, noting children who either did not meet expected learning objectives or those that exceeded them
- Children's self-assessment in the form of reflective comments in their book or as a dialogue with the teacher
- Marking a piece of written work with 'what went well', as appropriate, and a target for improvement.

For further information, see the marking and feedback policy.

Monitoring

- All monitoring and evaluation supports school improvement and development in learning and teaching;
- English books are reviewed regularly by the English leaders and SLT;

- Planning is monitored by the YGLs in their year group. Overall continuity and progression within, and between, year groups is monitored by the English leaders;
- Observations of teaching and learning are conducted by the head teacher and the deputy head teachers;
- Analysis of results is done by year groups, fed back and discussed with the English leaders, the head teacher and the deputy head teachers. Action plans are based on these discussions;
- Children's progress is tracked by teachers;
- Pupil progress is reported to parents twice a year through parents' consultations and also through Records of Achievement (ROA) written annually in the summer term;
- Assessment is undertaken in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and Key Stage 1 and 2 SATS each year to highlight areas of strength and weakness and to identify points for action. Whole school targets are formulated as a result of this process.

Impact

Due to the intent and implementation, we expect pupils to develop detailed knowledge and skills in English and to produce standards of work which evidence that they achieve well. The impact of our curriculum will be that the pupils are ready for the next stage of their education.

This policy was reviewed in September 2024.