

Ladywood Primary School



English Policy
September 2025

Intent:

At Ladywood Primary School we help children develop skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate creatively with the world at large, through spoken and written language, whilst helping each child to reach their full potential. We help children to enjoy and appreciate literature in its rich and full variety. We know that children need to learn to read as fluently as possible and be motivated to continue reading in order to access the curriculum and therefore improve overall outcomes and life chances.

We intend for children to leave our school being fluent and competent readers with an enthusiasm and love of books and a strong motivation to read for a variety of purposes.

At Ladywood, our children read widely, often and for pleasure. We provide high quality literature as a key to motivating children to read and to instil a love of books. Children talk regularly about books and are engaged in high quality back and forth interactions with skilled staff. Having had access to a wide range of text types, genres and authors, children make informed opinions, express preferences and are able to decipher and answer confidently the range of question types.

We equip our children with the phonic knowledge and skills they need to become fluent readers using the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme. We want our children to use and apply their phonic skills when reading and writing independently.

We want our children to be able to write with grammatical accuracy and be able to apply spelling patterns correctly. When writing, our children use a neat handwriting style and have high expectations with regards to the presentation of their work. We want our children to write with confidence and accuracy for a variety of purposes and audiences whilst developing their own individual flair.

We expose our children to a wide range of vocabulary in order to broaden their experience of language and words. Ambitious vocabulary is taught explicitly and we expect this to be applied in everyday situations. We expose our children to a wide range of vocabulary so they are able to decipher new and impressive words and then use them when speaking both formally and informally. Our robust approach to vocabulary involves directly explaining the meanings of new words along with thought-provoking, playful and interactive follow-up.

By the time children leave our school, we expect them to communicate through speaking and listening, reading and writing, with confidence, fluency and understanding in a range of situations. We make every effort to foster an

enjoyment of literature through a quality text and rich literature diet with the very best books.

Our children apply the skills acquired to all areas of the curriculum.

These aims are embedded across our Phonics teaching using Read Write Inc, English lessons, spelling, grammar and handwriting lessons and the teaching in the wider curriculum. We have a rigorous and well organised English curriculum, which provides many purposeful opportunities for reading, writing and discussion based around a quality, thought-provoking and interesting text.

Texts are progressively sequenced from FS2 to Year 6 and include new and bold themes which reflect the diverse and ever-changing world we live in. Outlined below are the ways in which we implement all aspects of the English Curriculum.

Spoken Language

We encourage our pupils to speak clearly and confidently and to articulate their views and opinions. We teach children that they need to express themselves orally in an appropriate and respectful way, matching their style and response to audience and purpose. Children are taught to respect the views of others and to be supportive of the achievements of others. Children are taught to select the appropriate register for effective communication. All children are encouraged to ask questions in order to develop their understanding and knowledge.

Ways in which we support this include:

- **Class discussion / debates** - children are taught to justify ideas with reason and negotiate. Children can express their opinions and ideas and can also talk about their own experience and recount events
- **School Council** - children begin to understand the democratic process. Two children are voted to represent their class. School council meets regularly throughout the term to plan events and discuss matters arising. The representatives give feedback to the rest of the class and answer any questions that may arise. All children are encouraged to raise any issues which they would like addressing via the school council
- **Use of Talk Partners** - talk partners are used in every class to encourage children to speculate, hypothesise, think out loud and share ideas. Children are encouraged to TTYP (Talk To Your Partner) to explore topics being discussed, embed vocabulary and explore the meaning of new words
- **Talk for Drafting Ideas and Writing** - is an opportunity for children to organise their ideas prior to writing. It is time where children can develop their vocabulary, knowledge and plan their writing

- **Peer and self-editing** – an opportunity for children to respectfully discuss their own work and that of others and to suggest edits for improvement
- **School Assemblies / Performances / Time to Shine** – children present their ideas to a larger audience and become confident when speaking in front of others. It is also an opportunity for children to showcase their talents
- **Whole Class Participation** – talk in all lessons is modelled and promoted. Children are encouraged to share their thoughts and views with others and are expected to respond courteously when commenting on the opinions of others

Vocabulary Development

The promotion of a language and vocabulary rich curriculum is at the heart of everything that we do. Developing the experiences, language and vocabulary of our children is a key driver for our teaching and learning. Developing pupils' use of vocabulary, is key in opening access to a wider range of words when writing and for them to understand and comprehend more challenging texts efficiently.

We use back and forth conversations in all classes, with adults engaging children in high-quality dialogue and exchanges. Adults help children to articulate their ideas by scaffolding, modelling and extending the use of language and vocabulary. New words are introduced in all lessons and the meanings of these are explored and discussed. Vocabulary is well planned and sequenced in all English lessons and in the wider curriculum.

Stories are a rich source of language. We use authors and texts which entice children into reading and which elicit an emotional response. Through listening to repeated readings and talking about what they have heard, the children have multiple exposures to the vocabulary and the language of stories.



Reading

Developing a love of reading is a key priority at our school. At Ladywood we teach our pupils to read by using the Read Write Inc programme. In FS2 and KS1, pupils participate in a daily phonics lesson in which pupils are taught the synthetic sounds and how to blend and segment. 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 who follow Read Write Inc. Fresh Start

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 letters using correct formation
- Spell quickly and easily by segmenting the sounds in words

We group pupils homogeneously in RWInc. 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 FS2, we emphasise the alphabetic code. Children rapidly learn sounds and the letter or groups of letters they need to represent them. Simple mnemonics help them to grasp this quickly. This is especially useful for pupils at risk of making slower progress. 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. Decodable books which are matched to phonic ability are read first in school. These books are then taken home in order for children to develop and practise their reading fluency. The decodable books that are matched to our RWI programme are stored separately. This is to allow teachers to select from them, both for the children's reading in class and to take home.

Reading fluency, comprehension, stamina and enjoyment is developed through:

Decoding and encoding are taught through our systematic synthetic phonics programme - RWInc. Language comprehension and composition are developed by talking, listening to and talking about stories, and by learning poetry and songs.

- **Read Write Inc Phonics** - a daily phonic session takes place following in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. *See Early Reading and Phonics policy*

- **Whole Class Read to focus on comprehension skills** – all children in Year 2 (depending upon the completion of RWInc.) and KS2 take part in a whole class reading session. These sessions teach a range of skills and techniques using quality texts, which enable children to comprehend the meaning of what they read and develop their understanding of the vocabulary used by authors. Developing the range of comprehension skills, reading stamina and a love of books is the key focus of these sessions. Children are taught how to answer a range of question types to develop comprehension skills: vocabulary exploration, infer and deduce, predict, explain, retrieve, sequence and summarise
- **Home Reading** – all children are expected to read at home and take-home reading books. In FS2 and KS1 children take home a decodable reading book which is matched to their phonic abilities. Upon completion of RWI, children then take home an age and challenge appropriate book from their class book corner in order to develop a pleasure, stamina and motivation to read. We encourage parents to read regularly with their child and to comment in their reading diary. Children read regularly to their adults in school and comments are made in the diary. Regular communication with our parents ensures that a strong partnership of support is in place
- **School Library** – all children visit the school library each week and choose a book to read for pleasure. Staff spend time in the library with children, sharing books and reading stories
- **Reading Areas** – all classes have a quality reading area with age – appropriate reading for pleasure books and subject specific books. All classes have a wide range of text types, both fiction and non-fiction. Reading areas are well organised, all books are easily accessible with a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Every book corner is like a mini-library – a place for children to browse books, revisit the ones that have been read to them and borrow books to read or retell at home. There are books that feature well-known characters or are new and tempting – 'old and gold' or 'new and bold'
- **Pupil Voice** – we encourage children to share their opinions about books, poetry and authors. Children know that we value their opinions and know that these can differ from others. We encourage children to justify their opinions and we model how to debate courteously and respectfully. We like to hear about book recommendations and encourage children to bring into school any good finds that they wish to share with their peers and adults
- **Poetry, rhymes and songs** – the predictability of rhymes and songs helps children to memorise newly acquired words and phrases. Children learn poetry and songs gradually by using 'call and response'. Children

pick up the rhythm and gain awareness and control of their voices. This also heightens children's awareness of individual sounds within words through alliteration, assonance and rhyme. Children say poems and rhymes together and once confident perform these to others

- **Curriculum Links** - reading skills are applied across all curriculum areas and teachers plan reading links and books to their class topics
- **Class Story** - a session takes place at the end of each day in every class with a carefully chosen text. Children listen and enjoy a story being read to them by their class teacher. We aim to choose the right books that engage the listener emotionally and which support all children to thrive

Writing

Ensuring that children are competent writers is a key priority at Ladywood. At Ladywood, pupils learn to write in a range of ways and for different purposes including narratives, explanations, descriptions, comparisons, summaries and for informative purposes. Writing, grammar and spelling skills for each year group are taught through a text-based approach. In EYFS and Year 1 spelling patterns, letter formation and common exception words are predominantly taught through the RWInc programme. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 there is an additional spelling and handwriting lesson and grammar lesson in KS2 where specific skills and objectives are taught.

We encourage our pupils to be grammatically correct and to use accurate spelling and punctuation. In EYFS and KS1 children apply the phonic skills they have been taught into their own writing. In Key Stage 2, pupils are expected to have developed the stamina and skills to write at length. We recognise that transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas in speech and writing) are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods.

Ways in which we support this include:

- **Read Write Inc. Phonic Lessons** - a daily lesson takes place in EYFS and KS1 following the RWI programme - *See Early Reading and Phonic Policy.*
- **KS1 Spellings** - spellings are sent home each week; these are a mixture of the phonics being taught and the common exception words. *We use Spelling Shed to support the teaching and learning of spellings.*
- **KS2 Spellings** - spellings are practised each day and sent home at the start of each week. *We use Spelling Shed to support the teaching and learning of spellings.*

- **English lesson** – a daily lesson takes place in every class in which a quality text is used to 'hook' children into their writing. Writing, grammar and spelling skills for each year group are taught through a text-based approach
- **Grammar lesson** – the skills of grammar are taught through a text-based approach, which gives purpose and meaning to the objective being taught. A separate grammar lesson takes place in KS2, in which specific skills are taught, rehearsed and consolidated
- **Handwriting and Presentation** – children in the early years are taught correct letter formation using the RWInc. mnemonics. Children from Year 2 onwards have a handwriting lesson in which specifics of size, joins and presentation are taught and rehearsed – *see Handwriting policy*. Children are encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work and produce high quality pieces
- **Genre** – In KS2 children are exposed to a wide range of different genre in each year group and the skills needed to write for a range of purposes and audiences. The formality, tone and correct register is modelled and explained by the teacher and through whole class discussion.
- **Talk for writing, planning and drafting** – an opportunity for children to share ideas, extend vocabulary and plan their work ahead of writing takes place in each year group. Children are encouraged to compose and rehearse sentences orally, ahead of writing.
- **Role-play and drama** – we use role play and drama to reflect on how a character might think, feel and behave at key moments and explore motives and intentions. Children are asked to write in role in order to develop a deeper understanding of these and to use an increasing range of grammar and vocabulary skills.
- **Self and peer assessment** – children are encouraged to self and peer assess their own and others' writing and suggest improvements that can be made.
- **Curriculum Links** – children are expected to apply their writing skills to all areas of the curriculum. Teachers plan for links to be made to their topic or study focus.

Impact

Reading, writing and vocabulary development are a high priority and are at the heart of our school community. As a result, we have children who are enthusiastic readers and writers who can apply their skills across the curriculum. Children can articulate their learning, using an extended range of vocabulary and are courteous when discussing their opinions and the opinions of others.

Children have a love of reading, a respect for books and authors and enjoy sharing their ideas. Children's written work is of a high quality and showcases the different genres taught in each year. Children's writing is grammatically correct and spelling rules are applied.

Assessment at Ladywood - Assessment is a check to see if pupils have acquired the knowledge set out in the intent.

- Children are assessed on entering the school in EYFS and throughout the Foundation Stage by using quality interactions between adults and children, contributions from home and half termly class teacher assessments
- At the end of EYFS judgements are made as to whether each child is at an emerging (1) or expected (2) level in each of the early learning goals. Strong transition arrangements between EYFS and Year 1, ensure that all information is shared to ensure a smooth transition into KS1. This information is also shared with parents
- Every 5 weeks RWInc phonic assessments take place in FS2, KS1 and for any pupils in KS2 who are receiving phonics teaching. These ensure all children are making expected progress and any slower progress is quickly addressed and additional support is provided
- In Year 1 all children have a Phonics Screening Check in the summer term. This check is carried out again in Year 2 in the summer term for any children who did not pass in Year 1. The results of these are shared with parents
- Teachers use the English curriculum intent and year group tracker documents (long term and medium-term intent) to make judgements each half term on whether pupils are on track, working at greater depth or working towards the year group objectives
- **Pupil Voice** and book looks are a key element in assessing the impact of what has been taught. Teachers and English leaders talk to pupils about their learning and look at their work to establish what they know, remember and can do
- Individual flight paths from EYFS to the current point are used to monitor progress and attainment
- Pupil progress meetings each term with the Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher (and Inclusion Manager where needed), provide opportunities to discuss individual flight paths and cohort progress and attainment
- Analysis of assessment data is used to set individual and whole school targets. Individual targets are shared with children and parents. These are regularly reviewed and next steps of learning identified

This information enables teachers to deliver an effective, inclusive and relevant curriculum which builds on prior attainment and meets the needs of pupils, providing

an appropriate level of challenge for all. Our systems ensure that all our pupils have the best possible outcomes throughout their time at Ladywood.

Pupils' work is moderated by teachers in staff meetings and a moderation file is kept to develop a consistency of levelling. Moderation also takes place with our local schools and the Local Authority.

Inclusion

All children receive quality first English teaching on a daily basis, and activities are differentiated accordingly. In addition, where identified pupils are considered to require targeted support, intervention programmes are implemented. Teachers plan programmes, following advice from other professionals when needed and monitor the impact of these on individual progress. This progress is also closely monitored by the SLT, Key Stage SENCO and the Inclusion Manager.

Children in Key Stage 2, who require additional support with phonics participate in additional Read Write Inc (Years 3 and 4) and Fresh Start (Years 5 and 6)

We make provision for all children to achieve at their stages of their development. Our curriculum is designed to be inclusive and accessible to all. Any additional language needs are referred to the appropriate body.

The Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher hold termly Pupil Progress meetings with Class Teachers where the attainment and progress of individual pupils, groups of pupils and the whole class is discussed. From these meetings, targets are set and procedures are put in place to ensure all pupils make at least expected progress across all year groups and Key Stages.

The Key Stage SENCO and Inclusion Manager also hold regular meetings with class teachers to discuss the provision and support for pupils with SEND. The use of provision and support identified is evaluated and advice from outside agencies and wider professionals is adhered to. Every effort is made to ensure all needs are catered for and progress towards individual targets is evident.

Parental/Community Links

We value parent involvement in children's development of English and promote a home school partnership by:

- **Sharing Information** - weekly newsletters, parent's evenings, school website and regular reports help to equip parents with up-to-date knowledge on what is being taught and advice on how to support at home

- **Read Write Inc Parent Leaflets and Information Talks** - these outline the teaching of synthetic phonics in school and ways to support at home
- **Regular Communication** - school staff and parents comment in individual reading diaries, talk regularly and share information regarding progress, enabling regular feedback to take place between home and school
- **Homework** - children take home reading books, phonic and spelling work and research homework linked to a specific topic. In EYFS children take home a 'Learning Journey' with a 'talk task' in for each week
- **Links with other schools** - we have links with local secondary schools to ensure smooth transition from KS2 to KS3. We also have links with our feeder playgroups and child minders to ensure a smooth and effective transition is in place when starting at Ladywood
- **School Website** - provides a platform for children to share work and information for parents. The English curriculum intent outlines in detail the knowledge, skills and vocabulary for each year group. There are also top tips on how to support at home and links to websites to support parents
- **Governor Links** - The Literacy Leader meets regularly with the designated governor in order to discuss progress against SDP priorities and any current issues around the subject
- **Parent Meetings** - Teachers report to parents twice a year at parent's evenings. Teachers share individual targets, progress and attainment in the parent meetings. Next steps in learning are also identified and ways in which parents can support at home are also discussed. There is also a written report to parents at the end of the year.

Monitoring and Evaluation

English is monitored by the Literacy Leaders, the Headteacher, Class Teachers and the School Governor. Having identified priorities, the Senior Leadership Team incorporates these into the School Development Plan. This forms a basis for any monitoring activities and will clearly identify when, who and what is to be monitored and how this will take place i.e. classroom observation, planning scrutiny, work sampling, assessment records etc.

Policy updated by S. McQuillan (Literacy Leader and Assistant Head) September 2025

Next Review Date: September 2026