



English Policy

Aims & Objectives

At Rainbow Forge we recognise the crucial importance of studying the English language. Improved performance at reading, writing and spoken language will enable our pupils to express their thoughts and ideas more fluently, accurately and, ultimately, to their greater satisfaction. This will also help them to deal more successfully with other curriculum subjects, while enriching their lives beyond school. The teaching and learning of language skills have a high priority in our school and where possible the wider curriculum and ICT are as tools. Our overarching aim for English is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

We aim for our pupils to:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate

At Rainbow Forge, we encourage all children to become independent learners and be confident in all strands of learning. The children will be given opportunities to speak in a variety of contexts and learn to listen to and value the views of others.

Approach

1. Spoken Language

Spoken language is a key aspect in pupils' development across the whole curriculum, it underpins the development of reading and writing. Pupils are taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently using Standard English. Where necessary, children's spoken language is repeated back to them correctly through teacher modelling.

They are given the opportunities to:

- develop the skills to justify ideas with reasons
- ask questions to check understanding



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- develop vocabulary and build knowledge
- negotiate
- evaluate and build on the ideas of others
- select the appropriate register for effective communication.

Through the wider curriculum pupils are taught to give well-structured descriptions and explanations and develop their understanding through speculating, hypothesising and exploring ideas. This will enable them to clarify their thinking as well as organise their ideas for writing.

2. Reading

The school places a strong emphasis on the development of reading.

The principles upon which we base our teaching of reading begin with a love of books. We aim to produce fluent readers who enjoy reading and discussing a range of texts and can answer questions about a text confidently. We highly promote reading for pleasure and encourage children to widen the genre of their reading, seeing books as a source of enjoyment as well as information.

This begins with the youngest children in EYFS. In FS1 children develop a love for reading by asking and answering questions about a story or a large picture stimulus. This is then further explored in provision through role play, puppets, story sacks etc. Guided reading sessions take place towards the spring and summer terms in FS1 and the focus on the books relates to the sounds (phonics) the children are learning, as well as a focus on answering comprehension questions.

Daily Guided Reading sessions are taught in FS2-Y4, at least four times a week. Each week focuses on a particular reading skill which is explicitly taught and modelled by the adult (e.g retrieval, inference, sequencing, summarising). Children then have two follow up sessions in which they practice this skill with a TA or independently. In the final session all children complete a comprehension test. Teachers then QLA the test which informs future planning.

Guided reading books are sent home daily for children to share with parents in the evening. All children are expected to read every day at home. In FS2 and Y1 the children usually keep their book for two weeks to encourage them to practice reading tricky and common exception words on sight and improve their fluency. Home reading is monitored thoroughly. Class teachers record when each child has read at home. Phase leaders monitor these recordings and identify target children. They will make contact with the parents and explain that the expectation is they will have read every night the following week. The class teacher is also informed so the TA can catch them up with in-school reading sessions too.

Additionally, the lowest 20% of the cohort will receive extra daily reading session from the TA, focused solely on fluency.

In Y5 and Y6 children who are not reading at age-related expectations will still receive guided reading sessions.

Y5 and 6 have daily book study sessions which focus on a high-quality text which they can delve deeper into. They will follow a 5-day process in which they will explicitly teach and model the following skills: summary, retrieval, inference, word meaning/authors use of language, 3 mark questions/explain/justify. Once the teacher has modelled they will then answer a question as a class, a question with a partner and some questions independently. Their book study book will also get sent home daily as part of the daily home reading expectation.



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Y1-4 will have a book study session once a week which follows the same format as Y5/6 but they will focus on just one skill a week. All skills will be covered over a half term.

Reading has two dimensions – word reading and comprehension.

Word Reading:

Children are taught to be skilled word readers which involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. To support this we teach phonics as one of the first stages of reading for beginners (i.e. unskilled readers).

Phonics – using a variety of interactive methods, phonics is taught using the ‘Letters and Sounds’ scheme. In EYFS and KS1 children have a daily discrete phonics lesson of 20 – 30 minutes. Usually, the children are not grouped in ability as phonics lessons are either differentiated based on the words they are exposed to or the sentences they read/write, or there are phonics interventions in place.

These phonic sessions:

- set up processes for identifying letters.
- allow children to acquire a store of essential phonic rules, processes to link graphemes to phonemes and blend phonemes into words.
- help establish a store of familiar words that are recognised immediately on sight and linked to their meanings.
- develop children’s vocabulary by exposing them to a range of unfamiliar words and addressing their meaning.

Phonics is monitored throughout the year, with FS1, FS2, Year 1 and children in Year 2, who did not pass the phonics screen in Year 1, completing a practice phonics screen every half term. Staff QLA the screen and use this data to inform next steps within their planning and teaching. This planning is monitored by the phonics lead.

Comprehension:

Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. We develop children’s comprehension skills through a book study approach, planning opportunities for pupils to experience high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction. We encourage all pupils to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum.

We use texts which challenge the children’s vocabulary, allowing them to encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. We model good reading through using strategies such as read aloud-think aloud, mirroring the strategies used by competent readers. We also call on the children to use their background knowledge to make links to texts and hypothesise about, and justify, what may happen and why.



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Reading also feeds pupils' imagination and opens up a treasure-house of wonder and joy for curious young minds – each class has a class read which the teacher reads regularly, modelling good reading and promotes a love for reading and books.

Throughout the curriculum, children are engaged and actively participate in shared, guided and independent reading.

3. Writing

The development of writing begins with our youngest children. In EYFS children are given many opportunities to mark make using a range of tools including pencils. They develop the skill of discussing and explaining the marks they have made and within continuous provision are given many opportunities to be independent writers by writing lists, captions, recipes, letters etc. The children are encouraged to speak in sentences and this is modelled by all staff.

As they enter FS2 and are confident and proficient at verbally speaking in sentences the children write about things that interested them and events of personal experience. There is a focus on writing a simple sentence with the letters clear written using full stops, finger spaces and capital letters. Children are then challenged to extend their sentences write have planned opportunities to write in all areas of the classroom. It is also vital in EYFS that children see staff as writers and modelled writing of some type occurs daily.

Children are introduced to writing for a range of purposes and audiences across the curriculum. Skills are taught and developed during the literacy lesson where pupils are taught how to take notes to plan their ideas; teacher then model how to transform notes/planning into coherent writing; finally, children are given the opportunity to edit and evaluate their work. There is a great emphasis on oral rehearsal and a Talk for Writing approach is often used.

When developing opportunities to write across the curriculum, the expectation of the quality and content of the writing remains consistent, regardless of the lesson in which the writing is being produced in; pupils are given a real purpose for writing.

Opportunities are given for independent work, as well as more structured guided writing sessions. Teachers model good quality writing through shared writing.

Grammar & Spelling

Grammar is taught using the Active English approach from Y1 (although FS2 can introduce it in the summer term). This is usually the first fifteen minutes of each English session and focuses on the identification, understanding and application of grammatical and language features in a fun and active way. It also allows teachers to ensure children are being exposed, and reading, high quality texts, full of rich vocabulary. If it is a 'recap' session then Year 1 often do this through their phonics lessons.

Spelling is taught following the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage and the National Curriculum guidelines. We teach spellings through a discrete lesson once a week and then practice daily within morning work. The spelling lesson has an explicit 'teach' section that looks at rules and strategies to learn how to spell the week's words. This includes phonology, graphology, orthography, morphology and etymology of words. Teacher's also explicitly teach children strategies that will help when attempting spellings. Teachers use and model these strategies within other lessons in the curriculum. Staff use spellings in context, ensuring children can use them within a sentence. Staff



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also have a bank of games for children to use when practicing their spellings. All children from Y1 onwards have a weekly spelling test. Words are tested in dictated sentences, again using the word in context.

Handwriting

Handwriting is taught through the scheme 'Teach Children Handwriting'. It is taught on a regular basis with emphasis being placed on the teaching of handwriting not simply its practice.

EYFS concentrates on **getting children ready for handwriting** by:

- Building the gross and fine motor skills needed for handwriting through structured games and activities
- Building the spatial awareness, visual and motor memory skills needed through non-pencil and pencil activities
- Supporting the children through the developmental pencil grip stages; including hand dominance identification
- Developing the children's ability to correctly push and pull the pencil to be able to form letters correctly, firstly through pre-handwriting patterns and then single letter formation

Key Stage 1 concentrates on **learning to handwriting** by:

- Continuing to build the gross and refine the fine motor skills through handwriting warm up exercises and PE warm up and cool down activities;
- Supporting the children through the developmental pencil grip stages so that they can comfortably hold the pencil in a tripod pencil grip;
- Reinforcing the correct sitting position and teaching the correct position, tilt and movement of the writing paper;
- Refining the handwriting letter size and teaching the joining of letters to form words.

Key Stage 2 concentrates on **refining handwriting skills** by:

- Continuing to build the gross and refine the fine motor skills through handwriting warm up exercises and PE warm up and cool down activities;
- Revisiting sitting correctly, pencil grip and paper position and tilt if necessary;
- Refining the handwriting letter size and teaching the joining of letters to form words;
- Building speed and fluidity using dictation activities and sentences.

Inclusion

Through differentiation and the support of Teaching Assistants, all children will receive high quality teaching and appropriate support in order for every child to reach their full potential. Children may receive additional support if necessary outside of the English lessons through interventions such as Lexia, Switched On Reading & Writing and vocabulary building sessions.

Display

Classrooms should have displays and English learning walls which:

- Ask questions to promote thinking.
- Contain key vocabulary.
- Are an integral part of teaching
- Offer challenge



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- Celebrate children's achievement.

English Resources

Book banding is used for reading, pupils have a choice of books from within the band they are reading. As children become ready, they have a free choice of reading material. Children are encouraged to choose from a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry books.

Teachers hear children read regularly through individual or guided reading sessions.

Teaching assistants, students and volunteers also hear children read when possible.

Children are encouraged to read regularly at home using Bug Club, an online reading app or taking home book banded books from school.

Related policies:

- SEND
- Teaching and Learning
- Curriculum
- Behaviour
- Equalities
- Assessment
- Homework
- Marking & Feedback
- Presentation
- Early Years Foundation Stage