



Staniland Academy **English Policy**

Our Core Curriculum Intent

'Here at Staniland Academy, we are whole heartedly committed to creating an inclusive curriculum where every child has the opportunity to grow and flourish into a compassionate, resilient and responsible learners. Having high aspirations to be successful in life in any chosen community.'

Our philosophy will ensure that your child becomes immersed and part of a supportive learning community where a sense of ambition and self-esteem is nurtured, allowing your child to thrive and flourish.'

1 Rationale

At Staniland Academy, we understand that English is both a subject in its own right and a medium for teaching the wider curriculum. 'Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects' (pg.11, National Curriculum). With this in mind, we strive to advance pupils' language development and communication; ability to listen with understanding and for all pupils to progress in the skills of reading and writing. It is essential that our approach to teaching phonics and reading is accessible to all learners, regardless of background.

2 Aims and Objectives

2.1 Our English Curriculum develops pupils' ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes and across a wide range of experiences and text types. Pupils are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as of non-fiction and media texts. Pupils use their knowledge, skills and understanding of the spoken language across a range of situations.

2.2 Our objectives in the teaching of English are:

- to provide a well-planned and resourced curriculum
- to ensure that objectives set for pupils are clear, realistic and obtainable
- to provide purposeful and real experiences to develop English skills
- to encourage the use of discussion, debate and drama, to explore ideas
- to enable pupils to speak clearly and audibly, and to take account of their listeners
- to encourage pupils to listen with concentration, in order to identify the main points of what they have heard

- to be role-models for pupils on how to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands, taking into account the correct use of Standard English
- to develop pupils' love of reading, encouraging pupils to read for enjoyment
- to help pupils to become confident, independent readers, through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text-level knowledge
- to develop enthusiastic and reflective readers, through contact with challenging and substantial texts
- to teach pupils to adapt their writing depending upon context, purpose and audience
- to encourage accurate and meaningful writing, be it narrative or non-fiction
- to improve the planning, drafting and editing of their written work
- to enable pupils to apply their knowledge and understanding across the curriculum

3. Teaching and Learning Style

- 3.1 At Staniland Academy we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our English lessons. Our principal aim is to develop all pupils' knowledge, skills, and understanding of the English Curriculum. We do this through daily lessons, guided group and independent activities, which leads to extended writing at the end of a unit. Opportunities for talk and collaboration are planned for, in order for pupils to embed and enhance their learning. English lessons follow the themed curriculum as much as possible, and the Academy has invested in a wide range of exciting texts to support and stimulate learning. Pupils are encouraged to apply the skills of English across all areas of the curriculum.
- 3.2 In EYFS and Year 1, phonics is given a dedicated daily time outside the English lesson and is delivered through the 'Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised' programme. Year 2 and in Key Stage 2, spelling strategies are taught weekly following the Spelling Shed programme. Children needing Keep-up or Rapid Catch up or additional phonics will follow the Little Wandle programme of support. Some children will also receive intervention for spelling through extra Spelling Shed intervention, precision teaching or PiXL therapies.
- 3.3. Reading Practice is taught as a separate session outside of the English lesson. In Reading Practice, the skills of reading are developed focusing on decoding, prosody and reading comprehension. Pupils are challenged upon their understanding of whole texts at word, sentence and whole text level. The use of ICT encourages the development of reading, as pupils use laptops, and iPads as part of their reading in both Key Stages and the Foundation Stage. In upper KS1 and KS2 the use of Accelerated Reader Quizzes are used to support the suitability of text for pupils and to develop our pupil's comprehension skills.
- 3.4 In all classes, children have a wide range of abilities, and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all pupils by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons, we do it through adaptations, while in others, we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use teaching assistants as well as making lessons accessible for all to support pupils' learning, and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

4 English Curriculum Planning

- 4.1 English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the 2014 English National Curriculum as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English following the requirements in EYFS, KS1 and KS2.
- 4.2 We carry out the curriculum planning in English using a long-term and medium-term plan to create adaptive weekly lessons with accessible slides. The National Curriculum for English details what we teach in the long-term. Our yearly teaching programme identifies the key objectives in English that we teach to each year. Genres are set out to ensure children are exposed to a range of writing opportunities across each year. In reading practice, planning stems from the National Curriculum and in line with the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme decoding, prosody and then using the reading dogs for reading comprehension.
- 4.3 Our medium-term plans are linked to the themed-curriculum overviews where possible, which take place every half-term/ term. Teachers meet with the English Leads to discuss which key texts will be used and what opportunities for writing will take place. Through these meetings, the English Leads monitor that the range of text types through the use of our Academy reading spine, ensuring they are sufficiently being taught and that key-skills are pitched accurately.
- 4.4 Class teachers complete a weekly planning and resources for the teaching of English. These contains the focus for Spelling, Handwriting, Writing, Reading Practice and Comprehension. At EYFS and Key Stage 1, the planning for the teaching of Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised is created as part of the programme and this is followed with absolute fidelity. This lists the specific learning intentions and success criteria for each lesson and gives details of how the lessons are to be taught. It also includes details of what each group of children will be learning. These are monitored by the Senior Leadership Team on a termly basis.
- 4.5 The English planning builds upon the pupils' prior learning. All children of all abilities are given the opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding, and there is an increasing challenge for the children as they move up through the Academy.

5 The Foundation Stage

In the Foundation Stage, we relate the English aspects of the pupils' work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals, which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. We give all children the opportunity to experience a rich language environment to develop talk and communication skills in a widening range of situations. Children are encouraged to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and extend their vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore words and texts, to enjoy them, to learn about them, and to use them in various situations.

6 Spoken Language

The Academy acknowledges the importance of speaking and listening and that it is the foundation for all future development. We believe that pupils should be taught from an early age to elaborate sentences as required. Opportunities are given for the development of spoken language in the classroom through drama, 'talk for writing', 'response partner work' and group work.

The Academy aims to help pupils to:

- use a growing vocabulary with increasing fluency to gain competence, confidence and pleasure in the use of language
- speak in a variety of forms for different audiences, purposes and situations
- reflect upon their speech, as used in different circumstances, and to make appropriate choices
- develop the conventions of conversation, debate, discussion and performance
- talk in a group situation, listening to the contribution of others, taking turns and responding appropriately
- develop correct use of grammatical speech
- acquire good listening skills, attentive listening, recalling and evaluating what they hear
- develop good thinking skills

7 Phonics and Early Reading

7.1 Intent

At Staniland, we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Reception and follow the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* progression, which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school.

As a result, all our children can tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. At Staniland, we also model the application of phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum. We have a strong focus on language development for our children because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

Comprehension

We value reading as a crucial life skill. By the time children leave us, we aim for confident readers who regularly enjoy reading for pleasure. Our readers are equipped with the tools to tackle unfamiliar vocabulary. We encourage our children to see themselves as readers for both pleasure and purpose.

We believe teaching every child to read is so important, we have a Reading Leaders who drive the early reading programme in our school. They are highly skilled at teaching phonics and reading; they monitor and support our reading team, so everyone teaches confidently using the Little Wandle Scheme.

7. 2 Implementation

Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1

- We teach phonics for 30 minutes a day. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible. Each Friday, we review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers.
- Children make a strong start in Reception: teaching begins in Week 2 of the Autumn term.
- We follow the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised expectations of progress*:
 - Children in Reception are taught to read and spell words using Phase 2 and 3 GPCs, and words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with fluency and accuracy.
 - Children in Year 1 review Phases 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs with fluency and accuracy.

Daily Keep-up lessons ensure every child learns to read

- Any child who needs additional practice has daily Keep-up support, taught by a fully trained adult. Keep-up lessons match the structure of class teaching, and use the same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition, so that every child secures their learning.
- We timetable daily phonics lessons for any child in Year 2 and above who is not fully fluent at reading or has not passed the Phonics screening check. These children urgently need to catch up, so the gap between themselves and their peers does not widen. We use the Rapid Catch-up assessments to identify the gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach to these using the Rapid Catch-up resources – at pace.
- These short, sharp lessons last 15-20 minutes daily and have been designed to ensure children quickly catch up to age-related expectations in reading.

Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions three times a week

- We teach children to read through reading practice sessions three times a week. These:
 - are taught by a fully trained adult to small groups of approximately six children
 - use books matched to the children's secure phonic knowledge using the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments and book matching grids on pages 11–20 of 'Application of phonics to reading'.
 - are monitored by the class teacher, who rotates and works with each group on a regular basis.
- Each reading practice session has a clear focus, so that the demands of the session do not overload the children's working memory. The reading practice sessions have been designed to focus on three key reading skills:
 - decoding
 - prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
 - comprehension: teaching children to understand the text.
- In Reception these sessions start in Week 4. Children who are not yet decoding have daily additional blending practice in small groups, so that they quickly learn to blend and can begin to read books.
- In Years 2 and 3, we continue to teach reading in this way for any children who still need to practise reading with decodable books.

Home reading

- The decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family.

- Reading for pleasure books also go home for parents to share and read to children. We share the research behind the importance and impact of sharing quality children's books with parents.
- We use the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* parents' resources to engage our families and share information about phonics, the benefits of sharing books, how children learn to blend and other aspects of our provision, both online and through workshops.

Ensuring consistency and pace of progress

- Every teacher in our school has been trained to teach reading, so we have the same expectations of progress. We all use the same language, routines and resources to teach children to read so that we lower children's cognitive load.
- Weekly content grids map each element of new learning to each day, week and term for the duration of the programme.
- Lesson templates, Prompt cards and 'How to' videos ensure teachers all have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson.
- The Reading Leaders and SLT use the Audit and Prompt cards to regularly monitor and observe teaching; they use the summative data to identify children who need additional support and gaps in learning.

Ensuring reading for pleasure

'Reading for pleasure is the single most important indicator of a child's success.' (OECD 2002)

'The will influences the skill and vice versa.' (OECD 2010)

We value reading for pleasure highly and work hard as a school to grow our Reading for Pleasure pedagogy.

- We read to children every day. We choose these books carefully as we want children to experience a wide range of books, including books that reflect the children at Staniland and our local community as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.
- Every classroom has a book area that encourages a love for reading. We curate these books and talk about them to entice children to read a wide range of books.
- In Reception, children have access to a library every day in their free flow time and the books are continually refreshed.
- Children from Year 2 up benefit from a regular timetabled slot at the school library.
- Children from Reception onwards have a home reading record. The parent/carer records comments to share with the adults in school and the adults will write in this on a regular basis to ensure communication between home and school.
- As the children progress through the school, they are encouraged to write their own comments and keep a list of the books/authors that they have read.
- Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events (book fairs, author visits and workshops, national events etc).

7.3 Impact

Assessment

Assessment is used to monitor progress and to identify any child needing additional support as soon as they need it.

- **Assessment for learning** is used:
 - daily within class to identify children needing Keep-up support
 - weekly in the Review lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings.
- **Summative assessment** for Reception and Year 1 is used:
 - every six weeks to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support and to plan the Keep-up support that they need.
 - by SLT and scrutinised through the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessment tracker, to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.
- **Fluency assessments** measure children's accuracy and reading speed in short one-minute assessments. They are used:
 - in Year 1, when children are reading the Phase 5 set 3, 4 and 5 books
 - with children following the Rapid Catch-up programme in Years 2 to 6, when they are reading the Phase 5 set 3, 4 and 5 books
 - to assess when children are ready to exit their programme. For Year 1 children, this is when they read the final fluency assessment at 60–70+ words per minute. Older children can exit the Rapid Catch-up programme when they read the final fluency assessment at 90+ words per minute. At these levels, children should have sufficient fluency to tackle any book at age-related expectations. After exiting their programme, children do not need to read any more fully decodable books.
- The **Rapid Catch-up assessment** is used
 - with any child new to the school in Year 2 and above to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and plan and provide appropriate extra teaching.

Statutory assessment

- Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics screening check. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.

Ongoing assessment for catch-up

- Children in Year 2 to 6 are assessed through:
 - the Rapid Catch-up initial assessment to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and plan appropriate teaching.
 - the Rapid Catch-up summative assessments to assess progress and inform teaching.
 - the Rapid Catch-up fluency assessments when children are reading the Phase 5 set 3, 4 and 5 books for age 7+.
- The fluency assessments measure children's accuracy and reading speed in short one-minute assessments. They also assess when children are ready to exit the Rapid Catch-up programme, which is when they read the final fluency assessment at 90+ words per minute.

8 Reading

8.1 The Academy uses the following to enhance the teaching of reading:

- Collins Big Cat
- Project X Guided Reading Sets
- Range of interesting and stimulating texts
- Accelerated Reader
- PiXL Vocabulary (Vocabulary focus)

8.2 The Academy aims to help children to:

- gain mastery of the basic mechanical skills of reading and to develop this through the use of progressively more challenging texts, so that each child achieves the highest level of reading attainment
- develop and use appropriately, the higher order reading skills (using the reading dogs that are directly linked to the reading content domains as references for both staff and the children) styles and strategies which contribute to the overall comprehension of texts, both fiction and non-fiction
- express themselves creatively through the study of literature and poetry
- read with accuracy, fluency and the use of expression (prosody)
- develop a love of literature and become a willing, independent and thoughtful reader
- understand the value of information texts as an aid to make critical judgements
- understand and value other cultures through literature and develop knowledge of the world

9 Writing

At Staniland Academy, we know that confidence and competence, in using the written word, effectively affects performance in all areas of learning and living. We recognise the need to raise pupils' attainment in writing.

9.1 To be effective writers, children need to do the following:

- possess a wide range of rich vocabulary, that enables them to articulate, recount and represent all facets of their experience; to construct narrative, to formulate sensible and coherent argument, to elaborate, be imaginative, to ask for answers, to speculate and hypothesise
- possess phonological awareness, including the ability to identify and reproduce rhyme and rhythm
- have confidence in themselves as writers
- gain mastery of reading, as this is an essential element when developing writing skills
- develop skills and strategies that make for consistent spellers
- to have an understanding of what writing is about; that it conveys messages, that it serves a purpose
- possess the capacity to form comfortably and confidently the letters of the alphabet
- to have had a rich literacy experience of listening to fiction, poems and non-fiction texts
- acquire the dictation skills to support writing – punctuation and grammar, and to know that spoken language is different from written language

9.2 The Academy aims to:

- help children gain important speaking skills which are necessary to develop as a writer
- enable children to become proficient readers as soon as possible, as reading and writing skills are dependent on each other
- provide opportunities for children to explore and develop knowledge of the wide range of functions and formats of the written form and help them to make appropriate choices in vocabulary and style according to the intended purpose and audience
- use the broad and balanced curriculum to support English
- encourage children to read back their writing to themselves, to a partner or to adults
- ensure children write for a variety of purposes and audiences so that they see a worthwhile purpose for writing, using written texts as models for their own writing
- promote editing and redrafting on a realistic basis, relating to the year group writing criteria
- ensure children see that writing can be fun and that they experience praise and constructive criticism so that they gain confidence in themselves as writers
- encourage children to write as a reader and for the audience, using the 'language of books'

10 Punctuation and Grammar

At Staniland Academy, we know the importance of teaching punctuation and grammar and recognise the need to raise the attainment in these areas. As such, Key Stage 1 and 2 incorporate the teaching of spelling and grammar into weekly English lessons and allow for a follow up session 'out of context'.

10.1 The Academy uses a range of approaches to:

- be investigative, reflective and encourage curiosity, interest and respect for all forms of language
- value children's previous knowledge, both implicit and explicit, and build on this
- address structures and pattern at word, sentence and text level
- relate directly to the way in which language choices can be made to tailor a text to the audience and purpose
- establish positive attitudes and guide children towards a greater understanding of how the English language system works and why
- follow the National Curriculum

11. Spelling

At Staniland Academy, we teach spellings through the support of the Spelling Shed programme using a variety of strategies:

- listening and pronunciation skills
- phonological skills, rhyme and structures of phonics linked to handwriting
- multi-sensory – looking – saying – listening – doing
- spelling rules
- mnemonics as a memory aid
- focus on the visual shapes of words – identifying roots; looking for words within words; grouping words according to spelling patterns; making connections between graphically related words
- identifying and highlighting high frequency words in a variety of texts

- use spelling lessons to pupils' growing understanding of grammar
- investigating etymology (study of origins of words)
- games to encourage skill

12 Handwriting

At Staniland Academy, we believe that teaching handwriting is extremely important as it aids writing for all areas of the curriculum. The Academy aims ultimately for pupils to develop a fast, flowing, attractive, legible, cursive, personal hand and to achieve this we are aware of the need for a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting across the whole curriculum and key stages, which follows our handwriting policy.

13 Contribution of English to Teaching in other Curriculum Areas

The skills that children develop in English are linked to, and applied in, every subject of our curriculum. The pupils' skills in reading, writing and spoken language enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work at Academy.

13.1 Mathematics

The teaching of English contributes significantly to pupils' mathematical understanding, in a variety of ways. Children in the Foundation Stage develop their understanding of number, pattern, shape and space by talking about these matters with adults and other children and singing number songs and rhymes. Children in Key Stage 1 meet stories and rhymes that involve counting and sequencing. Children in Key Stage 2 are encouraged to read and interpret problems, in order to identify the mathematics involved. Through problem-solving and reasoning problems, they explain and present their work to others to communicate mathematically using precise mathematical language.

13.2 Science

English also contributes to the teaching of Science through a range of speaking and listening activities that are used to discuss theories and predictions as well as contributing to and leading investigations. Children work scientifically and they develop their scientific knowledge of different topics throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. In Foundation Stage, the children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world around them and in their environment. In all lessons of Science, scientific vocabulary is at the forefront to the knowledge gained and is then applied through a range of skills, which is then recorded in a range of genres.

13.3 Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship

English contributes to the teaching of PSHE and citizenship by encouraging children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues. Planned activities within the classroom also encourage children to work together and to respect each other's views.

13.4 Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

The teaching of English develops skills through which our children can offer critical responses to the moral questions they meet in their work. Their understanding and appreciation of a range of texts bring them into contact with their own literary heritage and with texts from a diverse range of cultures. The organisation of our lessons allows children to work together and gives them the chance to discuss their ideas.

13.5 Other subjects

Throughout our curriculum, English will be used by the children to help communicate their knowledge through speaking and listening activities, reading and engaging with subject specific texts and the construction of different texts. These will help to develop their use of tier 3 (subject specific) vocabulary and embed their newly acquired knowledge, to promote their memory and retention; ensuring their knowledge is secure. ICT is also used to promote, enhance and support the teaching of English at word, sentence and text levels as well as being used to publish and present work.

14 English and Inclusion

At Staniland Academy, we teach English to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. English forms part of the Academy curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our English teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this through making the learning accessible for all. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels.

15 Assessment for Learning

- 15.1 Ongoing assessment of English is completed on the Reading and Writing assessment grids, which informs more summative assessments on Insight and PiXL. Formative assessments made regularly help plan future lessons and to fill any gaps in learning. Feedback is given to help guide pupils' progress following the marking policy. Pupils are also encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own work.
- 15.2 Internal moderation and cluster moderation takes place across the Trust termly to verify teacher judgements. The English Lead keeps samples of children's moderated work in a portfolio. This demonstrates what the expected level of achievement is in English in each year of the Academy. Exemplification materials produced by the STA and DfE are used to consolidate judgements, especially in Year 6.
- 15.3 Staff are keen to improve their subject knowledge and the subject leaders take an active role in disseminating best practice and making recommendations through CPD for staff development.

16 Monitoring and Review

- 16.1 The leadership of the English curriculum is the responsibility of the subject leaders, who:
- supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping them informed about current developments in English and by providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject
 - provides an action plan linked to the Academy Development Plan to the Headteacher and provides regular updates to the Senior Leadership Team evaluating strengths and weaknesses in English and identifying areas for further improvement

- uses specially allocated regular management time to review evidence of the pupils' work, and to observe English lessons across the Academy
- will provide guidance and support on the implementation of policy
- will stay up to date on developments
- will ensure staff are aware of resources that may support the teaching of English
- will monitor implementation and planning
- will monitor the standards in books
- will liaise with outside agencies and other English Leaders
- will moderate the assessment of reading and writing.