



# English

## **Speaking and Listening**

“The way we communicate with others and with ourselves ultimately determines the quality of our lives.” (Tony Robbins)

At Tweedmouth Prior Park First School our intention is for children to:

- Express their opinions, articulate feelings and listen to and respond appropriately in a range of situations.
- Participate with different groups of children to present ideas with confidence, valuing the views of others.
- Speak audibly and confidently before an audience (for example when leading class and whole-school worship; when performing in school plays).

Approaches to teaching and learning encourage pupils to voice their ideas in small group and class discussions, as we recognise that sharing and explaining concepts with peers enhances learning. Staff model the use of higher level vocabulary within their speech and expanding children’s vocabulary is a key focus from EYFS and beyond. Subject specific vocabulary is embedded across the curriculum, through teacher modelling, in context. Contextual learning helps children to understand new words and supports them in including them in their work. Children are also assessed in Reception using the NELI programme and gaps addressed accordingly.

Guided Reading sessions encourage pupils to explore unfamiliar vocabulary and expand their knowledge of words. Staff model correct grammar in speech and encourage children to reflect this in their use of spoken and written language. Children are given the chance to orally rehearse ideas for writing regularly.

Drama is used across the curriculum to explore and engage children in their learning. This gives children the chance to embed vocabulary in shared activities. Each class is given the opportunity to perform in assemblies and at least once a year in a concert.

Children in the Early Years perform a nativity play each Christmas; Years 1, 2, 3 and 4 also perform at end of term productions.

## Reading

In Tweedmouth Prior Park First School, we teach reading in a variety of engaging ways. In every year group, the children are given multiple opportunities throughout the week to hear stories and books read aloud and to read with a teacher or teaching assistant. We work very hard to ensure each and every child leaves our school with a great love of reading and strong reading skills to help them in their everyday lives.

‘Teach a child to read and keep that child reading and we will change everything.’  
Jeanette Winterson

In the early years, children are exposed to books and print all throughout the classroom and have daily opportunities to listen to stories, explore books and nursery rhymes and be read with as they develop their phonic knowledge. As their phonics skills become more secure in Reception and Key Stage 1, children are asked to read daily at home to a parent or carer as part of their home learning. All children take part in a daily phonics lesson where their reading knowledge and comprehension skills are developed. Children are given multiple opportunities to read with the class teacher or teaching assistant.

In Key Stage 2, reading lessons focus more on fluency and comprehension skills. The children are still asked to read daily at home as part of their home learning and continue to have frequent opportunities to work with their teachers and teaching assistants at school to further develop their reading skills.

At Tweedmouth Prior Park First School we follow the Read, Write Inc. reading scheme until a child becomes a fluent reader. We ensure that children learn to read at their own pace and that they remain engaged and challenged throughout the process of learning to read. Read Write Inc. Phonics, fidelity is a vital component of the phonics programme.

- Read Write Inc. Phonics will be used for the teaching of reading only
- All staff must be trained in order to have the necessary expertise to teach Read Write Inc. Phonics
- RWInc. Lessons must be taught daily and fluid groupings will be determined by ability as a result of regular and robust assessment – children with most difficulties are taught by highly skilled practitioners (bottom 20%)
- Every lesson must follow the steps outlined in the RWInc. Phonics handbook
- It is imperative that practitioners work in partnership with parents to enable them to have an understanding of the RWInc. Phonics programme, and how they can use

aspects of it in their home learning environment, to support their child's learning in phonics

- The sequence of reading books shows a cumulative progression in phonics knowledge that is matched closely to the schools structured phonics programme. A phonics approach will be continued into KS2, if necessary, with children who have not passed the KS1 phonics screening. The children then move from the Read Write Inc. scheme to a Rising Stars, usually at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2. Here the children focus on reading with fluency, pace and understanding. Our priority is to nurture a love of reading through story and information books that children will really want to read and share with their parents.

Children are assessed regularly so we can make sure every child is receiving the right level of teaching. A reminder: while your child may seem to find a certain book band easy in terms of the word reading skills it demands, their comprehension skills may still need developing at that level and therefore the class teacher may wait to move them up to the next level.

### Reading across the curriculum

Across the curriculum, pupils will have the opportunity to read non-fiction articles and texts relating to each subject area. This will broaden their understanding of the world around them and introduce them to key vocabulary needed to become fluent readers. Core texts are selected to immerse pupils in high quality children's literature that develops and expands vocabulary. It should be clear from initial entry into the school and throughout, that reading is nurtured and promoted. Environments should reflect a love of reading which is at the heart of our school.

### Fluency

Fluency has been one of our priorities as it is that bridge between word recognition and comprehension. Fluency is sometimes confused as being how quickly a child can read a piece, rate is important but fluency is also about prosody, accuracy and that all important reading for meaning. We deliberately teach and allow time to practice fluency. The fluency element of the cycle requires the adult to read the text aloud to expertly model fluency in action. This also means that children who would ordinarily struggle to decode the aspirational text, still have the chance to access it. These children are often excellent comprehenders of oral language and we can still grow this - language comprehension is not wholly dependent on word recognition.

### Reading for pleasure

Reading is at the heart of everything we do. Alongside the daily structured teaching of reading, time must be allocated daily for staff and children to come together to share and enjoy books and engage in 'book talk'. It is therefore important that staff share their knowledge and actively read children's literature themselves in order to share books that will interest their pupils.

### Story time

Every child across the school will enjoy a daily story time session. This will be from a different book to the one studied in reading lessons. This is meant to be a special and enjoyable time and a range of text types and genres should be used (picture books, poetry, non-fiction).

### How You Can Help

1. The single most important thing you can do to help your child progress in their word reading and comprehension skills, and develop a life-long love of reading, is to **read stories and books to them as often as possible**. A bedtime story routine isn't just a nightly calming technique for your little one; it also gives them an excellent opportunity to look at possibly new words and sentences with your support, develop their questioning and comprehension skills and spark their imaginations. Any spare moments you find to read to your children is time well spent investing in their academic achievement.
2. Make sure you **know what the reading home learning expectations are** for your child's year group. As a school we have high expectations for daily reading to be completed with an adult at home. Ask your child's class teacher what the expectations are and how you can help them develop their word reading and comprehension skills at your earliest opportunity.
3. Ensure you know **what your child's reading strengths and weaknesses are** by staying in contact with your child's class teacher and hearing your child read daily. Is there a particular phonics sound they find difficult to remember? Do they find it tricky to remember certain words and have to keep sounding them out each time? Do they find it difficult to retell a story in order, or predict what might happen next in a book? Give your child a little bit of extra help to develop these areas.

## **Writing**

The National Curriculum for English states that all children should leave primary school able to, "write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences." At Prior Park first School, we have organised our English curriculum to ensure that pupils have every opportunity of achieving this.

We firmly believe that literacy is an essential skill to enable students to read, write and communicate as experts in every subject across the curriculum. These skills are vital to make sense of the world around us. As such, the better we are at these skills the more successful we can expect to be in life. We recognise that improving literacy can have an impact on children's self-esteem, motivation, behaviour and attainment.

We believe that reading, and particularly reading for pleasure, has a direct impact on cognitive and social communicative development. It has been shown to improve health and wellbeing, as well as improving compassion and empathy for others. Our aim is to develop every child's potential to the point where they are reading at, or above, their chronological age.

At Tweedmouth Prior Park First School we

- Celebrate reading for enjoyment
- Explicitly teach vocabulary appropriate to each subject area
- Use effective strategies to support comprehension and vocabulary acquisition
- Promote classroom talk to enable quality written work
- Provide intervention where needed

Research is at the heart of everything we do and we are constantly scrutinizing our practice to see if it can be improved.

### **Our approach to the teaching of writing**

As it is a core subject, English is taught daily in each class. Lessons are planned so that they build on each other in small, sequential steps, ensuring that children fully understand and develop the skills they are being taught.

We use a predominantly 'book based' approach to teaching English. We have carefully chosen a range of high quality and engaging texts for each year group and these are used as a basis for teaching the skills outlined in the National Curriculum. We may also use the Read Write Inc. Literacy and Language scheme for certain areas of English. Teachers use these books and resources to give the children plenty of opportunities to write stories, reviews, reports, letters, diary entries and many other writing genres.

### **Grammar, punctuation and spelling**

Grammar and Punctuation skills are taught in English lessons and follow the objectives in the National Curriculum. Children will learn about word types, tenses, punctuation and sentence construction. When pupils are familiar with a concept, they are given opportunities to apply this in pieces of writing.

Spelling in Key Stage 1 is taught mostly through their daily phonics lessons, but also in some English lessons. Children will investigate spelling patterns and be taught specific spelling rules. As well as this, the spelling of High Frequency Words is also taught.

In Key Stage 2, spelling is taught in discrete spelling lessons following the Read, Write Inc. spelling programme. A different spelling rule is taught each week and children are given opportunities throughout the week to practise this. In addition, the

spelling of High Frequency Words continues to be taught, alongside the National Curriculum Word Lists for each year group.

## **Handwriting**

We expect all children to take pride in their handwriting and general presentation of their work. Handwriting is taught throughout the school and we use the 'Nelson' handwriting scheme to teach handwriting.

In Early Years, children learn to hold a pencil correctly, make marks and follow patterns. In Reception they will also begin to learn correct letter formation.

In Key Stage 1, letter formation is developed further with the aim that all children are joining by the end of Year 2.

In Key Stage 2, specific joins are taught and pupils are expected to increase the speed, accuracy and legibility of their writing.

We expect pupils to use the basic skills of writing that they have previously been taught, in all pieces of writing that they do (not just in English lessons).

## **How you can help at home**

- Early years and KS1 – encourage children to hold their pencil correctly. Have a look at the document below to see how they can do this. Fine motor exercises are also great for encouraging strength and mobility, which help with holding a pencil. Suggested activities can be accessed below.
- Encourage children to write neatly on lined paper using a pencil. This really helps with good presentation of work.
- Look at the 'Every Time We Write' expectations below for your child's year group and encourage them to follow this when writing at home. Use the word lists to help with spelling.
- When you listen to your child read, talk about new vocabulary and encourage them to use new words in any writing or Home Learning tasks that they do.
- Practise spellings at home – little and often is best.