



English Policy

2026-27

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1. Aims

This policy aims to set out:

- Our approach to teaching, monitoring and assessing English, literacy and reading knowledge and skills
- How we will make sure our provision for the teaching of English, literacy and reading is of consistently high quality

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy reflects the requirements and expectations set out in the:

- [National Curriculum programmes of study for English](#)
- [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice 2014](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Reading framework 2023](#)

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The head teacher is responsible for:

- Building a team of expert teachers who know and understand the processes that underpin learning to read and write
- Providing teachers with the appropriate training and resources so that they can competently deliver the English curriculum
- Creating a stimulating school environment where pupils are exposed to different types of reading material, such as through displays, books and other classroom resources
- Promoting a culture of reading for pleasure at the core of the curriculum
- Developing links with organisations such as school and public library services, reading charities and others
- Involving parents and families in supporting their children’s reading

Our English coordinators are Miss R Harris (Reading) and Miss H Meyers (Writing). Mrs. R Spencer (DHT) leads on phonics and oversees the work of the English coordinators. They are responsible for providing leadership and management for English and literacy to secure:

- High-quality teaching and subject knowledge of staff
- A coherently planned and sequenced English curriculum where pupils are taught to read from the beginning in reception
- A rigorous programme that includes well-conceived and structured resources for teaching phonics
- A programme of reading aloud to all pupils from reception to Year 6
- Consistent assessment and accurate teacher judgements within English and literacy
- Effective use of resources
- Supporting in planning and delivering targeted interventions

4. Phonics: Sounds-Write

As a school, we are committed to using the Sounds-Write approach to assist our children to learn to read, write and spell independently with accuracy, understanding and confidence.

Sounds-Write has four key concepts that must be followed. These are:

1. Letters are symbols or spellings that represent sounds from left to right, across the page.
2. A sound can be spelt with 1, 2, 3 or 4 letters.
3. The same sound can be spelt in more than one way.
4. Many spellings can represent more than one sound.

Reception children are the Initial Code (units 1-11). Following on from this the children in KS1 are taught from the Extended Code: Year 1 (Units 1-26) Year 2 (Units 27- 49).

Planning

Planning for phonics is separate from English planning and all lessons will be planned by a fully trained Sounds-Write practitioner, following the programme with fidelity. Phonics is taught through discrete phonic sessions, regular reading and writing sessions and through embedding the phonics by linking it with other curriculum subjects throughout the school day.

Planning includes nonsense words to determine how well children can blend and segment phonetically.

Buzz words are taught during the phonics session. All staff ensure children are given sufficient exposure to the letter sound correspondences that will be presented to them in the Year 1 phonics screening assessment. Children are matched to an appropriate book (Dandelion Readers) that match their level and correspond with the code they are learning.

Assessments

On-going formative assessment will be used by the class teacher and teaching assistants to determine how successful the children have been in the three key skills of Sounds-Write which are:

- Blending
- Segmenting
- Phoneme manipulation

Teachers will assess phonics understanding on a half termly basis, using the individual Sounds-Write assessment sheet and whole class tracking. This information will be analysed and used to determine which children may need to join a

phonics intervention. The bottom 20% (at least) of learners will have interventions as necessary to ensure that the children make good progress.

Timetabling

Discrete phonics sessions in class will be timetabled and taught daily from Reception through to Year 2. The expectation is that phonics is taught for a minimum of 20 minutes daily in Reception- Year 2 (and into KS2 as needed).

Expectations for Home Learning

Across the EYFS and Key Stage One classes, parents are encouraged to read daily with their child. Regular reading at home should enable the children to use segmenting and blending techniques learnt in phonics sessions. Books will be sent home which correspond with the sounds being taught in class.

5. Reading

Intent

At St Luke's, our aim is to deliver an exciting, innovative Reading curriculum which has an emphasis on Phonics, Early Reading and Reading for Pleasure, in order to enable and empower our children's written and oral communication and creativity.

We aim to provide children with a literacy-rich environment, high quality texts and inspiring learning opportunities, which will help them to:

- Gain a life-long enjoyment of reading and books
- Read accurately, fluently and with understanding
- Apply a knowledge of structured synthetic phonics in order to decode unfamiliar words with increasing accuracy and speed
- Be able to read with expression, clarity and confidence
- Develop a good linguistic knowledge of vocabulary and grammar
- Read and respond to a wide range of different types of texts
- Develop a deeper level of emotional intelligence and empathy
- Read fluently, and with confidence, in any subject in their forthcoming secondary education

Implementation

The table below shows the range of reading teaching opportunities and experiences that children take part in throughout school.

Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Sounds Write Phonics daily						
	Small group reading lessons three/four times per week					
Individual Reading (depending on ability)						
		Whole-Class reading lessons three-four times per week				
Reading for Pleasure/Story Time Daily 3:00pm for 15 minutes						
Class Readers						
Phonics/Reading Interventions (where needed)						

6. Reading – Reception and Key Stage 1

Decoding (D) x Language Comprehension (LC) = Reading Comprehension (RC)

‘The Simple View of Reading formula’ Gough & Tunmer 1986

Synthetic Phonics has been proven to be effective in teaching decoding to read as long as the programme is followed with rigour and fidelity.

‘The use of a systematic synthetic phonics programme was shown to give children a flying start with their reading, writing and spelling, it was effective for catch-up, it reduced special educational needs across the schools and it enabled higher numbers of children to transfer to their secondary schools well equipped to access the curriculum. Children were reading more fluently which encouraged a love of books.’

‘The Effects of a Systematic Synthetic Phonics Programme on Reading, Writing and Spelling’ Marlynne Grant, 2014

Decodable Books (Dandelion)

Children practise early reading with fully decodable books that:

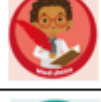
- are matched to phonic knowledge and which do not require use of alternative strategies
- are matched to ‘Sounds-Write’ Phonics. Staff allocate books according to the Sounds Write Phonics Phase children are working at
- are decodable at the child’s current level and not mixed with non-decodable books for independent reading
- include a small number of ‘buzz words’ which have been taught

In the spring term Year 1 pupils begin formal guided reading lessons 4 times per week.

7. Whole class Reading –Key Stage 2

Children in KS2 have a wide variety of books to choose from to read. For KS2 children who may still struggle with decoding, reading books are still closely matched to their phonic ability. KS2 children read weekly with support staff using a book that matches their reading level. Depending on the needs of the child, they will read weekly, twice weekly, three times weekly or daily. This promotes and teaches fluency, oracy and word reading. Support staff, with teachers guidance and support, orally question the children on the book they are reading to monitor comprehension skills.

KS2 children take part in whole class reading sessions, four times per week, led by the class teacher. The same text is read for the whole week, with a focus on a specific content domain from the English National Curriculum. As the year progresses, children are exposed to a wider range of content domains, as well as being taught a range of reading skills.

Reading Skill	Graphic	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Retrieve		Main focus	Must be secure	Retrieval from text not directly above	Continue with retrieval		
Infer		More able can begin to infer if ready	Make a simple inference	Begin to justify an inference- some 2-mark questions broken down into two parts Example a) How does she feel? b) Why? (1mark each)	Merge into one question. Example How does she feel? Can you explain why? (2marks)	3-mark questions when more able are ready.	Impression tables 3-mark questions.
Define (Word Meaning)		Word meaning	Word meaning	Word meaning	Word meaning	Word meaning	Word meaning
Sequence (KS1) Summarise (KS2)	 	Language of sequencing Beginning; Middle; End	Sequencing	Sequencing and introduction to summarising	Summarising	Continue with summarising	
Predict		Discuss simple predictions	Make simple predictions	Make sensible predictions using evidence, with scaffolding	Make sensible predictions with evidence	Focus teaching in English/introducing texts	Focus teaching in English/introducing texts
Relationship (Narrative Content)						Introduce relationship	Continue with relationship
Explore (Word Choice)				Introduce exploration	Secure exploration	Continue with exploration	
Compare					Introduce comparison	Secure comparison	Continue with comparison

Whole Class Reading in Years 2-6 follows the following sequence:

Day 1 Pre-Read and Vocabulary

Text Introduction

Pupils attempt to read the text independently and teacher then reads

Discussion Points

Vocabulary activity and focus

Day 2 Guided Read and Teacher Modelling

Paired read

Reading skill- teacher modelling and discussion

Day 3 Comprehension- Skill focus questions

Day 4 Comprehension 'Mix It Up' questions

Focus on a range of reading skills

8. Writing

Writing is taught using a bespoke writing curriculum developed with the support of Literacy specialists. Through the use of a quality texts and media such as short films, we teach children to infer, understand and use high-level vocabulary and a range of punctuation. Each text is purposefully selected in order to promote a love of reading, engagement and high-quality writing from each child and to fit with our wider school curriculum. We ensure that each year group is taught the explicit grammar, punctuation and spelling objectives required for that age group.

Writing is celebrated across the school with high quality displays along with sharing successes for the children in our celebration assemblies through our 'Writer of the Week' award.

As well as teaching the national curriculum objectives, teachers are able to embed the skills throughout the year in cross curricular writing opportunities.

In Foundation Stage (Reception), emergent writing is encouraged through the use of different writing materials, including felt tipped pens, crayons, chalk, sand, magnetic letters, big brushes, water, paint and computers, as well as writing in all areas of learning, such as postcards, menus, invitations and labels. Alongside this, children take part in a range of activities to encourage and develop gross and fine motor skills necessary to write in a legible script.

Daily phonics lessons build their phonic and spelling knowledge to enable them to sound out words and spell high frequency words correctly. Teachers model writing skills and the use of phonics and spelling strategies in modelled and shared writing sessions, delivered as part of the daily English lesson.

'Focused writing' sessions are used to target specific needs of both groups and individuals. The sessions follow a modelled write by the class teacher and then pupils have the opportunity to independently write. These sessions run fortnightly with class sizes halved. All classes (1-6) use the same stimulus to write. Children also have opportunities to write at length in extended independent writing sessions at the end of a unit applying their taught skills to an unsupported piece of writing.

Each year group has a 'Progression in Skills' document, which gives detailed information about the genres and statutory requirements that they should be following. The documents show progression with genres across the year groups. Teachers will use the resources to plan daily English lessons that are differentiated and tailored to a class's needs.

Handwriting is a key area of focus within the curriculum and high standards of presentation are expected at all times. The cursive font is taught to children when they are ready to begin joining letters (usually Year 2). High expectations are promoted through the use of golden pencils and handwriting pen awards.

9. Responsive and Adaptive Teaching

We will adapt teaching where necessary to respond to the pupils needs and make sure that every pupil makes maximum progress in English and literacy, by:

- Recognising where some pupils need specific help with their English skills – for example, if they have dyslexia
- Providing resources such as phonics mats, writing frames, sentence starters and vocabulary banks to scaffold pupils' learning. Some pupils also have access to Wordshark which is an online platform to support a multi-sensory approach to the learning of spelling.
- Identifying pupils who would benefit from more support in an area of their English learning, and running small intervention groups for targeted support each week to aid their progress and attainment. We will monitor these closely to move pupils in and out of these groups as needed

- Making sure pupils who need it are extended through the use of additional, more demanding and open-ended tasks and planned challenges within each lesson

10. Monitoring, Assessment and Moderation

We will monitor the teaching and learning of English, literacy and reading in our school to make sure that all of our pupils make the best possible progress from their starting points.

School leaders will work alongside English leads to monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' learning through:

- Conducting learning walks
- Reviewing marking and feedback
- Half-termly pupil progress meetings and data tracking
- Gathering input from the school council and pupil voice
- Planning scrutinies
- Book scrutinies

Phonics

Formative assessment occurs in daily phonics sessions and children are given appropriate challenge at the correct phonics level. Children who are falling behind are quickly identified and interventions are put in place to ensure they catch up. Summative assessment, using the 'Sounds Write' assessment, is used half termly; this is used to inform planning and raise any concerns with senior leaders.

The lowest 20% (at least) of children are tracked using the same tracking grid and interventions are in place for these children. Phonics screening practice tests occur at the end each half term in Y1, for those pupils in Y2 who did not pass in Y1 and into Key Stage 2 as required. The results of these are discussed at Pupil Progress Update (PPU) meetings.

Assessment tracking is handed on to the next teacher when a child moves year groups.

Spelling

In Key Stage Two, pupils continue to use the Sounds-Write programme to learn and practise spellings. Where required, children will continue to revisit the phonics learning and in addition to this, the children explore the derivation of words looking at the etymology and morphology of words. Every week, pupils learn a set of words and follow a daily spelling starter to learn them, which links to the morphology and etymology of the words. The words come from previous Sounds-Write spelling patterns, academic word lists and also have the National Curriculum spellings interwoven into each year group's curriculum. There are also opportunities within the curriculum to re-visit previous year groups' spellings.

Reading

For reading, assessment takes many forms. Staff use ongoing, formative assessment strategies to monitor a child's progress in one-to-one, group and whole-class reading sessions. From Year 2 onwards children undertake assessment papers three times per year, to give a clear indication of the progress they have made and to identify their next steps.

For children who have not made expected progress, or who find reading difficult, a range of interventions take place in school, such as 1-1 reading, extra small group reading sessions and Phonics Interventions. Selected children also undertake additional CPG Reading Comprehension 1:1 with their class teacher as an additional intervention. Fluency Rubric tracking is undertaken for children in Key Stage 2 who have achieved low average scores during Summative Assessments, to test fluency and oracy. Fluency interventions and additional opportunity to read aloud to practise those skills are also put into place for those small groups of children.

Writing

We assess writing using writing 'journeys'. These are one-page documents that are divided into four sections: composition, handwriting, spelling and vocabulary, grammar and punctuation. These are used regularly to keep track of pupils' progress and provide next steps. Children working below year group expectations will have the relevant year group's journey in their books to work towards.

We will standardise writing samples to:

- Demonstrate how pupils' work meets National Curriculum attainment targets for KS1 and KS2, to help with assessment
- Make sure staff have a consistent approach to marking pupils' work
- We will refer to the exemplification materials for KS1 and KS2 from the Standards and Testing Agency (STA) to support with this.
- We will moderate teacher assessments of reading and writing at least termly.

11. Promoting a 'Reading for Pleasure' culture

We work hard to promote a love of life-long reading for the children at St Luke's. Each class has a newly-updated class library (Story Mountain books), which contains a wide-range of beautiful fiction and non-fiction books. Children (and teachers) are encouraged to read these and share their thoughts with the class.

Every class has a dedicated 'story time' or class reader session, where the children are read to by the class teacher. Children also enjoy reading books they have brought in to their class and sharing what they have enjoyed about the story. Books are chosen in a variety of ways, e.g. class votes and recommendations. Book Talk and recommendations are always encouraged. Children often choose to purchase books from their Whole Class Reading sessions.

We have also been lucky enough to welcome authors into school for presentations and workshops. The children also thoroughly enjoy taking part in our annual World Book Day in school.

12. Impact

As we believe that reading is key to all learning, the impact of our reading curriculum goes beyond the result of statutory assessments. Children have the opportunity to enter the wide and varied magical worlds that reading opens up to them. As they develop their own interest in books, a deep love of literature across a range of genres and cultures and styles is developed and enhanced.

Through the teaching of systematic phonics and reading enquiry, our aim is for children to become fluent and confident readers who can apply their knowledge and experience to a range of texts through the Key Stage 2 curriculum.

As a Year 6 reader transitioning into secondary school, we aspire that children are fluent, confident and able readers, who can access a range of texts for pleasure and enjoyment, as well as use their reading skills to unlock learning in all areas of the curriculum

In addition to this:

- Parents and carers will have a good understanding of how they can support reading at home, and contribute regularly to home-school records
- The percentage of Phonics Screening Check pass rates will be at least in-line with national figures
- There will be high progress measures from a child's initial reading ability

- The percentage of pupils working at age related expectations and above age-related expectations within each year group will aim to be at least in line with national averages and will match the ambitious targets of individual children
- The gaps in progress of different groups of children will be significantly reduced, e.g. pupil premium vs non-pupil premium

13. Links with other policies

- Curriculum documents
- SEN/SEND policy and information report
- Marking and feedback policy
- Equality information and objectives
- Behaviour policy