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# ENGLISH AT ALDBOROUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

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HOW READING AND WRITING IS TAUGHT AT OUR SCHOOL



## Introduction

The intent of this document is to provide an explanation of the English curriculum at Aldborough Primary School. At Aldborough, English is divided into its two composite components: reading and writing. Both components are taught daily either through reading and writing lessons or through opportunities to practise literacy across the wider curriculum.

This document will enable the reader to gain an understanding of the content that we aim to teach our children in English (intent); the way in which reading and writing is taught within our school (Implementation); and the measures that are used to assess and monitor the effectiveness of our English curriculum (impact). In addition, the document contains details of the scientific research that has informed our approach to teaching reading in particular, and information on how we ensure that our English curriculum can be accessed by all children, including those with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND).

Further information about our English curriculum can be found on the school website at [www.aldborough.norfolk.sch.uk](http://www.aldborough.norfolk.sch.uk). On the website, you will find key documentation, including our reading spine, English long-term plan and supporting information regarding the teaching of phonics in Reception and Key Stage 1.



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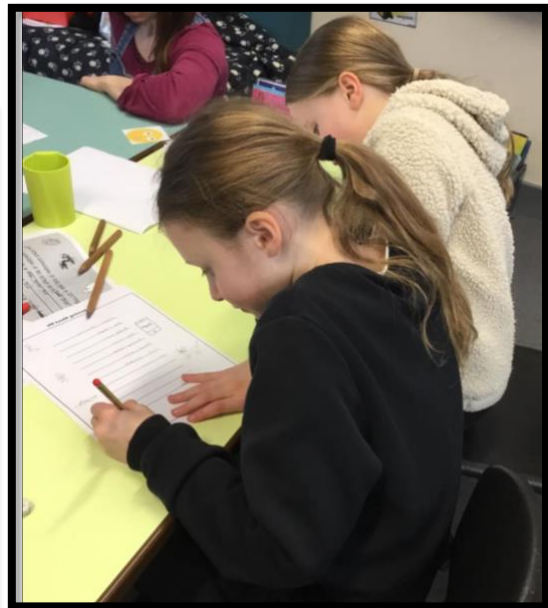
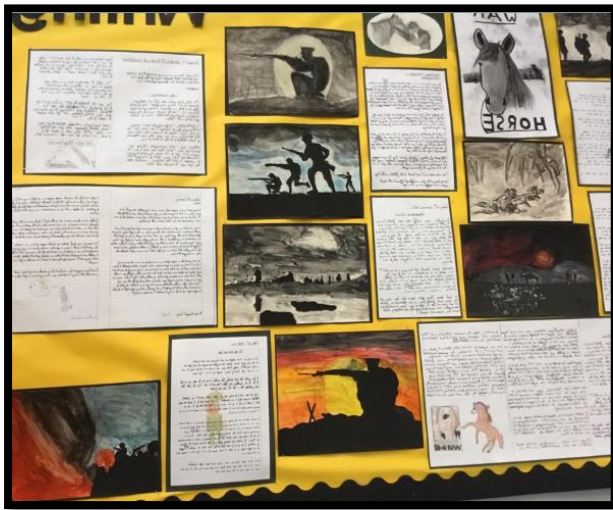
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## Reading and Writing – Two Sides of the Same Coin

To teach reading and writing effectively, it is important to understand the close relationship between the two disciplines. Reading and writing are the processes by which information is imparted (writing) and retrieved (reading). Neither discipline can truly exist without the other. Without the ability to write, knowledge could not be shared across generations and without the ability to read, this information could not be understood.

Each discipline is mutually beneficial to the other. As children's reading ability and experience grows, they can internalise common language structures and develop a greater sense of purpose and audience. Their knowledge of vocabulary is extended through exposure to high-quality texts, and they are more able to apply these words to their own writing, aware of the impact that these vocabulary choices can have on the reader. Similarly, writing instruction can help to enhance reading ability. Transcription activities, namely handwriting and spelling, assist a child to develop their phonemic awareness and their knowledge of grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPC). As children begin to gain understanding of sentences and grammatical structures, they can begin to appreciate the strategies implemented by authors to affect their readers in different ways.

An overview of reading development at Aldborough Primary School is included across the next pages.



# Reading at Aldborough Primary School

## Statement of Intent

At Aldborough, we believe that the teaching of reading is integral to a child's understanding and appreciation of the world around them. It is a platform that allows our children to see beyond what they know; share in diverse experiences; and develop the vocabulary they need to effectively express themselves. We cultivate the behaviours that children will need to be discerning readers as they read frequently and widely using self-regulation strategies and discussions about what they read. At Aldborough, we aim to foster a lifelong love of reading.

Our reading curriculum is delivered through synthetic phonics, a linked approach to shared and class reading, reading for pleasure, reading across the curriculum, home reading, regular opportunities for independent reading and hearing quality texts read aloud every day. All of these are essential components as they offer the range of opportunities needed to develop fluent, enthusiastic and critical readers.

It is important that children are motivated to read at home regularly; when their reading opportunities increase, so does their fluency and stamina which in turn increases their enjoyment of reading. Therefore, the link between children's motivation to read and reading for pleasure is reciprocal. Furthermore, we know that reading for pleasure is beneficial not only for reading outcomes, but for wider learning enjoyment and mental wellbeing. Thus, we work hard to foster a love of independent reading to build a community of engaged readers.

We understand the significance of parents and carers in supporting their children to develop both word reading and comprehension skills, so we endeavour to build a home-school partnership which enables parents and carers to have the confidence to support their children with reading at home.

Reading is at the very heart of our curriculum. We are committed to promoting a love for reading and not only giving children opportunities to read in English lessons, but in the wider curriculum too.

## Early Reading (Reception and Key Stage 1)

Learning to read is one of the most important things a child will ever learn. It underpins everything else, so we believe in putting as much energy as we possibly can into making sure that every single child learns to read as quickly as possible. We also want our children to develop a real love of reading and to want to read for themselves. This is why we work hard to make sure children develop a love of books as well as simply learning to read.

We start teaching phonics in Reception, continue in Year 1, 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 of our children are able to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. At Aldborough, we also model the application of the alphabetic code through 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.

Alongside this the children are taught the 'tricky words' – high frequency words which do not follow the regular phonetic pattern.

Phonics and reading activities are taught as a whole class or sometimes as a small group. Discreet phonic sessions take place daily for 15 - 20 minutes and there are also enhanced phonic activities within the indoor and outdoor environment available for the children to explore independently throughout the day – (in Reception class.) Phonics provision is also supplemented by a wide range of speaking and listening, English, spelling and grammar activities.

Teachers regularly read with the children so the children get to know and love all sorts of stories, poetry and information books. This is in addition to the books that they bring home. This helps to extend children's vocabulary and comprehension, as well as supporting their writing.

## **Implementation (Group Reading in EYFS and Year 1)**

**Key expectation** – Every reading group has an adult led reading session three times a week.

In EYFS and KS1, we take an approach which incorporates several members of staff. We have a team of adults (Teachers and supporting staff members from across the school) who deliver group reading to a group of children three times per week.

Each member of the team has a consistent 'tool kit':

- tricky words
- phase 2, 3, 5 sounds
- year group expected reading words
- decodable reading books

Teachers plan and resource every group and the sessions that will be delivered.

When listening to reading, adults will 'live mark' reading strategies by intervening at the point of reading and re-model the error observed in the moment of reading (immediate feedback).

In key stage 1, children read the same text all week, with the following focus:

### **Session 1 -**

#### **Focus - Book introduction and first exposure.**

Key teaching points – identify front/ back cover/ blurb/ vocabulary that children will encounter/ reading strategy that will be used.

### **Session 2 –**

#### **Focus – Prosody and second exposure to text**

Key teaching points – Fluency, expression, intonation, taking account of punctuation.

The children re-read the text using expression, intonation.

### **Session 3 –**

#### **Focus – Oral comprehension**

Key teaching points – comprehension linked to a specific reading domain.

Adult introduce/ reinforce and guide children through a range of questions linked to the reading domain.

## Impact

Children's progress in phonics is continually reviewed through daily informal and half termly formal phonic assessments and evidence from their reading and writing.

Assessment is used to monitor progress and to identify any child needing additional support as soon as they need it. Rapid catch-up and 1-1 intervention is then used to support this.

- 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 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.

## Statutory assessment

- Children in Year 1 sit the Government's Phonics Screening Check. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.

## Ongoing assessment for catch-up

Children are assessed continually and through their teacher's ongoing formative assessment using the Phonics Tracker and interventions implemented as appropriate.



## **Reading in Year 2 and Key Stage 2**

### **Implementation**

Our reading curriculum in Year 2 and Key Stage 2 has been carefully designed to help our children build upon the foundations laid in early reading. Reading lessons occur daily for approximately 30 minutes (this is known as Book Club in Year 2) and a wide range of high-quality texts are utilised to further reading development. We deliver our reading lessons in 'blocks' of approximately 2 weeks (teachers retain autonomy to adjust reading blocks according to the needs of their class). This enables our children to study selected texts in greater detail and to experience longer passages, as well as shorter extracts. Each block has a focus on either fiction, non-fiction or poetry, and each of the 3 different text-types will be explored during the course of every half-term. In addition to taught lessons, classes also have 'Book Club' sessions, opportunities to use the library regularly, and parents are invited in to school to share 'Reading Breakfasts' with the children.

### **Fiction block**

In this block, reading is taught through the class text as identified on our reading spine. Children are encouraged to immerse themselves within the text and enhance their understanding of the content within. Fluency and comprehension are practised and, through careful questioning, in-depth discussion around areas such as characterisation and author intent is initiated by the class teacher. Occasionally, children may be required to give written responses to questions, particularly in upper key stage 2.

### **Non-Fiction block**

Our non-fiction reading lessons are used to underpin the wider curriculum and to improve our children's background knowledge, as well as to enhance the particular reading skills needed to tackle non-fiction texts. Texts are carefully selected by the class teacher to support or review learning in subject areas such as Science, History, Geography or Religious Education.

### **Poetry block**

Poetry offers so much to a developing child. In essence, it is an exploration of language and how it can be manipulated to emote and entertain. It can be a powerful catalyst towards improvements in a child's imagination and vocabulary. In-depth study of poetry can also develop a child's understanding of word choice, sentence structure and other literary devices. Carefully selected poems from our reading spine are used for our poetry reading lessons.

### **What does a reading lesson look like?**

Such (2021) devised the following labels for the different components of reading instruction and these components form the basis of our reading strategy:

- Phonics Instruction
- Fluency Practice
- Extended Reading
- Close Reading
- Shared Reading
- Vocabulary Instruction
- Comprehension Strategy Instruction



Depending upon the needs of our pupils, each of our reading lessons utilises one of the above components.

## Phonics Instruction in Key Stage 2

Phonics development continues into Key Stage 2 and is delivered via rapid catch up using Little Wandle for those children who require additional support, and through our teaching of spelling. In spelling sessions, children continue to work on their knowledge of sound spelling correspondence (SSC) (Grapheme Phoneme Correspondence, complementing their Little Wandle learning in key stage 1 to complete the code) as well as building upon their phonological knowledge via the manipulation of morphemes and syllables. Reading fluency and comprehension assessments (YARC) are undertaken towards the beginning of each term and children who are identified as having gaps in their phonetic knowledge are supported by means of phonics-based interventions that align with the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds programme used in Key Stage 1.

## Fluency Practice

The ultimate aim of reading is the derivation of meaning (comprehension) and reading fluently is essential for that aim to be achieved. For a passage to be read fluently, it must be read with accuracy, automaticity and prosody. Whilst prosody (including intonation, stress of appropriate syllables, words or phrases, and rhythm) is more of a subjective judgement, accuracy and automaticity can be measured via the assessment criterion of words correct per minute (WCPM), and this can give a largely accurate picture of an individual's oral reading fluency. It is believed that a reading speed of less than 90 WCPM is detrimental to a reader's ability to comprehend the text they are reading and that a reading speed of 110 WCPM+ is optimal for comprehension (Such, 2021). With this in mind, we strive to ensure that each of our children are reading at a speed of at least 140 WCPM by the end of Key Stage 2; however, we understand that reading fluency improves incrementally and at different rates for different children. Based on the work by Hasbrouck and Tindall (2017), the table below shows the target fluency ranges in each year group, as measured by WCPM. The lower score of each range would represent a child working at age-related expectations (ARE)

<b>Target fluency Ranges as measured by words correct per minute (WCPM)</b>			
<b>Year Group</b>	<b>Autumn</b>	<b>Winter</b>	<b>Summer</b>
<b>Year 2</b>		30-60	50-90
<b>Year 3</b>	50-90	80-110	100-120
<b>Year 4</b>	80 – 120	90-120	110-140
<b>Year 5</b>	90-130	120-150	130-160
<b>Year 6</b>	120-150	130-160	140-170

At Aldborough, we use the York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension (YARC) tool for summative assessment of our pupil's reading progress (please see the impact section for further details of the YARC assessment). The YARC assessment uses criteria to provide an ability score and a standard score in the areas of accuracy and reading rate (accuracy and reading rate scores can be averaged to give a reading fluency measure that is equivalent to a WCPM score). The table below shows the expected reading ability scores at different points in the academic year, per year group:

## Expected Age Ranges by Year Group for Accuracy, Rate and Fluency

### September

Year Group	Actual chronological age range	Expected reading accuracy ability score	Expected reading rate ability score	Expected combined ability score = fluency
Year 2	6.01-7.01	27-39	10-39	18.5-39
Year 3	7.01-8.01	39-47	39-56	39-51.5
Year 4	8.01-9.01	47-53	56-64	51.5-58.5
Year 5	9.01-10.01	53-57	64-70	58.5-63.5
Year 6	10.01-11.01	57-60.5	70-74	63.5-67.25

### January

Year Group	Actual chronological age range	Expected reading accuracy ability score	Expected reading rate ability score	Expected combined ability score = fluency
Year 2	6.04-7.04	31-41.5	14-47	29.5-44.25
Year 3	7.04-8.04	41.5-48.5	47-59	44.25-53.75
Year 4	8.04-9.04	48.5-54	59-65.5	53.75-59.75
Year 5	9.04-10.04	54-58	65.5-71	59.75-64.5
Year 6	10.04-11.04	58-61.5	71-75	64.5-68.25

### April

Year Group	Actual chronological age range	Expected reading accuracy ability score	Expected reading rate ability score	Expected combined ability score = fluency
Year 2	6.07-7.07	34-43.5	19-51	41.5-47.25
Year 3	7.07-8.07	43.5-50	51-61	47.25-55.5
Year 4	8.07-9.07	50-55	61-67	55.5-61
Year 5	9.07-10.07	55-59	67-72	61-61.5
Year 6	10.07-11.07	59-62	72-76	65.5-69

The pupil's standard score compares their ability scores for accuracy and reading rate against those obtained by a sample of children across the UK that have taken the same test. Therefore, this measure is the most accurate assessment of a pupil's reading progress at any given time. At Aldborough, we average the standard scores for accuracy and reading rate to provide us with a measure for 'reading fluency.' The table below places the standard score within the context of age-related expectations (ARE).

<b>Level: (measured against age-related expectations (ARE))</b>	<b>Standard score</b>
<b>Well below</b>	0-80
<b>Below</b>	81-90
<b>Just below</b>	91-100
<b>Expected</b>	101-110
<b>Just above</b>	111-120
<b>Above</b>	121-130
<b>Well above</b>	>130

To improve our children's reading fluency, they must be given plentiful opportunities to decode. Much of our reading instruction, particularly in lower key stage 2, is focused upon fluency practice. In fluency lessons, children will normally practise repeated oral reading of a short text or extract (the text should be approximately 7-10 sentences in length and should relate to the class reader, the wider curriculum or, upon occasion, a matter of interest for the class). They will do this with a reading partner, with one child following the text with a ruler whilst the other reads aloud. Reading partners support each other and may assist one another to decode difficult words. Before reading commences in pairs, the class teacher will model the reading of the text with prosody. Whilst the children read in their pairs, the teacher and TA circulate the room, ensuring that support is offered to those in need. Children will be given the opportunity to read the text a total of 3 times, each time trying to improve upon their fluency. Lessons will finish with a short, question-based discussion to ensure that the focus remains upon deriving meaning from the text.

### **Extended Reading**

Extended reading involves a greater engagement with a longer passage or text. The focus of these lessons is on improving fluency, word knowledge (vocabulary), background knowledge and text-specific comprehension. Extended reading lessons enable the children to read like a writer and explore authorial choices and devices, such as specific vocabulary choices or chosen text structures. These lessons are organised in one of the following four ways, with options 1 and 2 being preferable for classes who have less reading fluency in general terms.

1. The teacher reads to the class as they follow the text, using their fingers or a ruler to keep pace. The teacher ensures engagement from the class by occasionally asking the class en masse to repeat the next word or phrase.
2. The teacher selects children from the class to read the text whilst the rest of the class follow with fingers or a ruler. The teacher will occasionally model reading passages from the text with

prosody themselves. Quick transitions between readers occur to ensure engagement and accountability.

3. Children read silently in shorter bursts, the length of which are carefully controlled to manage differences in reading speed.
4. Children read silently for extended periods, with questions prepared for quick finishers.

Each extended reading lesson will finish with a quick burst of questions and discussions that have been pre-planned by the teacher. In a half-hour lesson, the teacher should ensure that at least 50% of the time is spent reading.

### **Close Reading**

In close reading lessons, a short text or extract is analysed in greater detail. The extract is examined multiple times and rich discussion is planned around themes, vocabulary choices or literary devices. The children may scour a text to find examples of description or discuss the way in which an author uses punctuation for meaning. Close reading sessions may involve written tasks or responses to carefully-planned questions. Texts chosen for close reading lessons may include model texts for writing units, poems or information relating to the wider curriculum. Close reading sessions may also involve elements of comprehension strategy teaching. These lessons are more prevalent in upper Key Stage 2.

### **Vocabulary Instruction**

All classes in Key Stage 2 partake in 10 minutes of vocabulary instruction per day. In these sessions, children are introduced to a different Greek/ Latin root word each week, as well as a variety of tier 2 vocabulary. Retrieval practice is built into these sessions as children have at least one opportunity per week to revise previous content. Children are given opportunities to use taught vocabulary in context via discrete activities and, wherever possible, as part of their learning in the wider curriculum.

### **Comprehension Strategy Instruction**

Whilst the majority of our reading instruction is delivered via reading practice and discussion, comprehension strategy instruction can catalyse improvements in reading comprehension if used sparingly. Some lessons in Upper Key Stage 2 are used to teach and model comprehension skills such as summarising, retrieving information or making inferences. The children are then given the opportunity to practise these strategies in the context of extended reading or close reading sessions. Comprehension strategy instruction enables the children to gain structure and confidence when tasked with answering comprehension questions such as those likely to be asked as part of the end-of-Key Stage 2 SATS.

In addition to the reading instruction components detailed above, shared reading takes place regularly in each class. These sessions are free from instruction and are purely for the enjoyment of reading.

Whilst teachers retain autonomy to alter reading instruction to meet the needs of their pupils, a typical reading timetable in Key Stage 2 may look like this:

<b>Cherry Blossom Class - Year 1</b>				
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
Little Wandle Phonics (daily 20/25mins.)				
Daily opportunities to share stories with friends and to change books to take home (reading for pleasure)				
Little Wandle Text De-coding	Little Wandle Text Prosody	Little Wandle Text Comprehension	MC-Story	Library Select text to take home for the weekend
Children either read these texts in small groups or read 1-1 with an adult. After the third read books are sent home for the children to share.				
Shared Reading (10-20 min. daily) Shared stories and poems				

<b>Cherry Blossom Class -Year 2</b>				
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
Little Wandle Spelling (20 min. daily)				
Daily opportunities to share stories with friends and to change books to take home (reading for pleasure)				
Introduce Reading Spine text (20 min)	Reading Spine text- Vocabulary (20 min)	Fluency Practise-shared reading (20 min)	Comprehension	Library
Shared Reading (10-20 min. daily) shared stories and poems				

<b>Pine Class</b>				
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
Vocabulary Instruction (10 min. daily)				
Phonics/Spelling (15 min. daily)				
Fluency Practice (30 min)	Extended Reading (30 min)	Fluency Practice (30 min)	Extended Reading (30 min)	Fluency Practice (30 min)
Shared Reading (10-20 min. daily)				

<b>Willow Class</b>				
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
Vocabulary Instruction (10 min. daily)				
Phonics/Spelling (15 min. daily)				
Fluency Practice (30 min)	Extended Reading (30 min)	Fluency Practice (30 min)	Extended Reading (30 min)	Close Reading (30 min)
Shared Reading (10-20 min. daily)				

<b>Oak Class</b>				
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
Vocabulary Instruction (10 min. daily)				
Phonics/Spelling (15 min. daily)				
Extended Reading (30 min)	Close Reading (30 min)	Fluency Practice (30 min)	Extended Reading (30 min)	Close Reading (30 min)
Shared Reading (10-20 min. daily)				

## **Impact**

Our children's reading progress is assessed and monitored through both assessment for learning (AfL) and summative assessment.

## **Fluency**

Teachers use AfL strategies, such as effective questioning and observation to assess the reading fluency of a pupil on a day-to-day basis. During reading fluency sessions, teachers and teaching assistants circulate the room to hear the children reading in pairs. Children in need of further support are identified through careful observation and discussion between the pupil, teacher and supporting colleagues.

For summative assessment, the YARC assessment tool is used. Children undertake YARC testing at the beginning of the Autumn term, Spring Term and Summer Term. The YARC assessment challenges the children to undertake a single word reading test (SWRT) in which the children are asked to read aloud a number of increasingly complex words. The pupil's attainment on the SWRT is used to select two appropriate passages for the pupil to read through independently, and the pupil's accuracy and reading rate (how long it takes to read the passage) is assessed via the recording of any reading errors. This data is then used to identify any areas of concern / development that may be present within a pupil's reading fluency level. The children's comprehension is also tested via eight questions about each passage.

## **Book Suitability**

Children with a fluency age of 8.00 or below read appropriately levelled phonetically-decodable books to support progress in fluency.

Children above this fluency age are given free choice to select a reading book; however, in certain circumstances, the Lexile level of a book may be used as a guide to ensure text suitability. We use the Lexile system following the system below:

- 1) The pupil's three reading percentiles from their last YARC results are noted.
- 2) The correct table and row from the information below is selected. This is dependent on the pupil's year group and the term.
- 3) The column(s) closest to the pupil's reading percentiles are identified. This enables the teacher to approximate the pupil's Lexile level. The teacher exercises judgement as to which percentile is the most relevant, i.e. reading rate if it is a very long but fairly simple text, or comprehension for a complex graphic novel aimed at older readers.
- 4) The pupil / teacher refers to the Lexile level of the book they have chosen at [Find A Book | Lexile & Quantile Hub](#) and assess the suitability of the chosen text. It is also possible to use this website to find a book at the 'correct' level for a pupil. The system also uses codes in front of some of the book levels – these are listed below.

**Autumn:**

Year group	Lexile level for 10th percentile	Lexile level for 25 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Lexile level for 50 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Lexile level for 75 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Lexile level for 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile
2	-	-	10L	220L	435L
3	-	100L	290L	480L	675L
4	185L	355L	530L	705L	885L
5	415L	570L	735L	895L	1060L
6	600L	745L	900L	1050L	1210L

**Spring:**

Year group	Lexile level for 10th percentile	Lexile level for 25 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Lexile level for 50 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Lexile level for 75 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Lexile level for 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile
2	-	-	85L	290L	505L
3	-	170L	355L	545L	735L
4	250L	415L	590L	760L	935L
5	485L	635L	790L	950L	1110L
6	625L	770L	925L	1075L	1235L

**Summer:**

Year group	Lexile level for 10th percentile	Lexile level for 25 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Lexile level for 50 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Lexile level for 75 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Lexile level for 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile
2	-	-	165L	365L	570L
3	65L	245L	425L	605L	795L
4	315L	480L	645L	810L	985L
5	555L	700L	850L	1005L	1160L
6	650L	795L	950L	1100L	1260L

## The Lexile codes are:

- **AD: Adult Directed:** Better when read aloud to a student rather than having the student read independently.
- **NC: Non-Conforming:** Good for high-ability readers who still need age-appropriate content.
- **HL: High-Low:** Content to engage older students who need materials that are less complex and at a lower reading level.
- **IG: Illustrated Guide:** Nonfiction materials often used for reference.
- **GN: Graphic Novel:** Graphic novels or comic books.
- **BR: Beginning Reader:** Appropriate for emerging readers with a Lexile reader measure below OL.
- **NP: Non-Prose:** Poems, plays, songs, recipes and text with non-standard or absent punctuation.

It is important to understand that Lexile levels are only used to assist a pupil that is finding it difficult to choose an appropriate book. At Aldborough, we value reading for pleasure highly and recognise a pupil's freedom to choose their own reading text as an important contributing factor towards developing a love for reading.

### Comprehension

Reading comprehension is also assessed via formative and summative assessment. Extended reading sessions are based around carefully crafted discussion questions that enable the teacher to gain insight into a pupil's level of understanding via targeted questioning. Occasionally, pupils may be asked to provide written responses to questions which inform teacher assessment of comprehension.

Summative assessment of comprehension is conducted via two methods: As part of the YARC assessment, children are asked comprehension questions about the short text passage that they read to assess fluency. Children are given an ability score and standard score for comprehension based on their oral response to the afore-mentioned comprehension questions. Comprehension is also assessed via written assessment on a termly basis; Rising Stars reading assessments are used for Years 2-4 and Year 5 and 6 pupils complete Key Stage 2 SATs assessments from previous years. Key Stage 2 SATs assessments are scored against the national scaled scores for the respective year that the assessment took place.



## **Reading and Writing Combined**

At Aldborough, our writing and reading curriculums are inextricably linked. From the very earliest stages of reading, children are also practising their writing skills. Children practise their handwriting and develop their spelling as part of their phonics instruction. As they move into Key Stage 2, children continue to develop the phonemic awareness to progress with their spelling and use their reading skills to examine the model texts that inform their writing.

Each unit of writing begins with close reading of a model text that follows the genre of writing that the children are asked to produce. The children read the text to internalise genre-specific language patterns using techniques such as oral rehearsal (reading fluency), story mapping and text analysis (close reading). As the children progress, they gain a greater understanding of literary choice and text structure, and they begin to read as a writer; they begin to develop an understanding of the purpose and audience of their writing and start to apply deliberate and purposeful choice to their own written compositions.

The following section details how writing is implemented at Aldborough Primary School and how the various components of writing (handwriting, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and composition) are taught:

## **Writing at Aldborough Primary School**

### **Statement of Intent**

At Aldborough, we understand the integral role that communication will play in the lives of our children. Throughout history, the written word has formed and shaped our understanding and interpretation of the world that we live in; from the earliest cave paintings of the Stone Age to the sacred texts that underpin the religions of the world, writing has informed the customs, beliefs and cultures by which people decide to live their lives. As well as informing, writing can also inspire, entertain and offer joy to those that embrace it. Whether it be a bedtime story, a best-selling novel or the lyrics to a meaningful song, writing can be a conduit for imagination, innovation and creativity. In an ever-changing world of emails, instant messaging and social media, never has it been more important for people to be able to write with a clear understanding of the intricacies of vocabulary, grammar and punctuation, and how these areas can affect the meaning of what is said. Through successful implementation of our writing curriculum, our aim is to ensure that our children are taught the knowledge and the skills they need to become:

- Creative storytellers
- Effective communicators
- Purposeful writers
- Accurate and legible scribes
- Confident spellers

### **Implementation**

The following pages detail how each of the following components of writing are taught at Aldborough Primary School.

- Transcription - Handwriting
- Transcription - Spelling
- Composition
- Grammar and Punctuation

## Handwriting

*Links to: accurate and legible scribes*

Handwriting at Aldborough Primary is taught according to the principles of The Handwriting Association (NHA).

The NHA advocates the use of 'P checks' and 'S factors' as good practice for successful handwriting.

### **P checks**

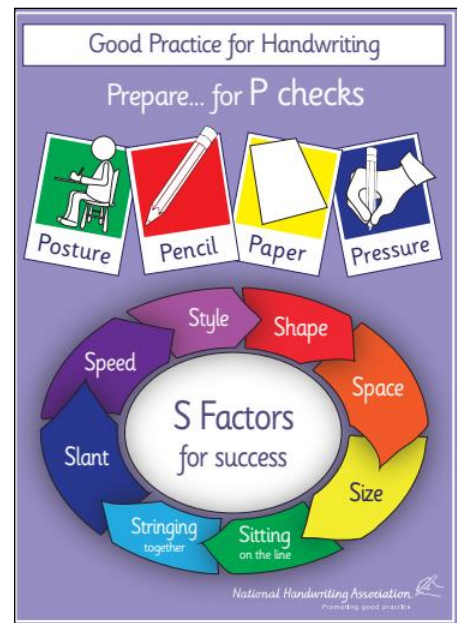
**Posture** = Poor posture can cause difficulties for children trying to develop their handwriting. Errors in posture can lead to pain and soreness, premature fatigue and, eventually, a reluctance to write. We use the following guidelines to ensure that our children are writing with good posture:

**POSTURE GUIDELINES**

- Feet flat on the floor or on a wide based raised surface
- Knees at a right angle with 2-fingers space behind the knee to avoid compression
- Sit on the chair so hips are positioned at approximately 90° with the back supported
- Sit approximately a fist-distance away from the table

AND

- Table height adjusted so that forearms rest on the top without leaning forward (too low) or raising the shoulders/arms (too high)
- Surface - clean, smooth and uncluttered



**Pencil** = A dynamic tripod grip is optimal for accurate and legible handwriting. Before being taught how to the grip their pencil correctly, the class teacher will assess if the child has the requisite fine motor skill development to commence writing. It is expected that our children will be using a dynamic tripod grip by the end of Year 1. Children who find the pencil grip more challenging are given Stabile Easygrip pencils to use. The following guidelines are used to teach pencil grip:

**PENCIL GRASP GUIDELINES:**

- Check the child is developmentally ready before asking them to write.
- A dynamic tripod pencil grasp is the most efficient and is expected by end of Year 1.
- Address an inappropriate grasp in the early learning stages and later if it is causing discomfort or impacting speed.
- Consider corrective action using adaptive grips or specialist writing tools, but always trial several options to find the most appropriate.
- Encourage a 2 cm gap between finger tip and pencil point - and slightly greater for left-handers.

**Paper** = to aid children when handwriting, paper should be slightly offset according to the writing hand. For a right hander, the top left corner of the paper should be angled down to the left. For a left hander, the top right corner of the paper should be angled down to the right. This enables the hand to follow its 'natural path' and reduces strain on the forearm, wrist and writing hand. Careful consideration is also given to the levels of light on the paper as this can affect the writer's eyes. The following guidelines are used to help with paper positioning:

- PAPER GUIDELINES:**
- Tilt and offset the paper according to the writing hand.
  - Move the paper up or down to facilitate a comfortable reach and keep it in place with the non-writing hand.
  - Consider glare from paper and overhead lighting.
  - Consider a specialist vision assessment if visual stress continues.


**Pressure** = Children are taught to recognise the correct amount of pressure to apply when handwriting. A faint, shaky script may indicate a lack of pressure. This may indicate a postural or pencil grip issue and teachers will put in place measures to remedy such problems. Marks that go through pages or indentations on the underside of the paper are indicators of heavy pressure. Physical symptoms on the writer's hand, such as white knuckles or red pressure marks on the skin, are also indicative of too much pressure. The class teacher will use a range of techniques, such as writing implement substitution or shading exercises to enhance the children's idea perception of correct pressure using the following guidelines:

- PRESSURE GUIDELINES:**
- The just-right pressure eases writing across the page, which is important for fluency and reducing the risk of pain during handwriting.
  - Use teaching tools such as carbon paper, mechanical pencils, 'light-up' and 'squiggle' pens to demonstrate appropriate pressure.
  - Try some gross and fine motor warm ups before and during the handwriting task. Actions which include squeezing and deep pressure, resistance and/or vibration will increase body awareness.
  - Check that posture/issues with postural control are not the causative factor here.

### ***The S Factors***

We teach handwriting according to the S Factors. These factors provide a structure and a sequence for the development of handwriting. The S factors also enable teaching staff to accurately assess handwriting difficulties and quickly provide guidance for correction. The following pages are taken from The HWA journal of Handwriting and provide details about each of the S Factors.

# TIPS FOR TEACHING

National Handwriting Association   
Promoting good practice

## 'S' Factors for success



Shape, Space, Size, Sitting, Stringing, Slant, Speed, Style Useful as:

- 1 A **GUIDE TO TEACHING** handwriting and a **CURRICULUM RESOURCE** showing development of handwriting skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the National Curriculum (NC) KS1 & 2.
- 2 An **ASSESSMENT TOOL**: a checklist for quick evaluation of handwriting by a student or teacher (see p 3)

### Part 1 'S' Factors as a GUIDE TO TEACHING handwriting

#### 1 Shape

EYFS: Reception  
NC: KS1

Letters can be put into groups or teams according to the movement needed to make them. When children learn to write a new letter, the 'lead' letter of its team will help them to start.

Once a child is ready to write, the first important task is to learn how to form the letters correctly - best taught as a motor skill. (This will save many problems at later stages.)

Children learn best by:

- 1 Watching the letters being made and hearing a simple patter.
- 2 Making the letters themselves in developmentally appropriate ways using just fingers - sand, paint, sandpaper, air-writing etc. - before pencils.

The 'l' team l i u t y j  
The 'c' team c a d g q o e s f  
The 'r' team r n m h b k p  
The 'zig-zag' team z x v w y k

N.B.  
These letters have exit flicks to support joining but **no entry strokes** which complicate the basic letter shapes and use diagonal lines that many young children find difficult at this stage.

A basic lower case alphabet in letter formation families

#### 2 Space

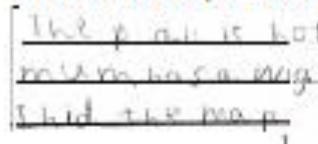
NC: KS1

Children need to understand that spaces need to be left between words so they can be easily read.

Gradually, they need to learn to leave an appropriately-sized space - about the size of 1 or 2 letter 'o's. Lolly sticks make good spacers for beginner writers, followed by coffee stirrers if necessary later. These work much better than the traditional finger-spacing. (Fingers grow bigger while writing becomes smaller so are ineffective when the child is older. Finger spacing is also difficult for left-handers to use).

#### 3 Sitting on the line

Once children are secure in forming letters correctly they need to know where to position them in relation to the base line.

 Writing on a single base-line

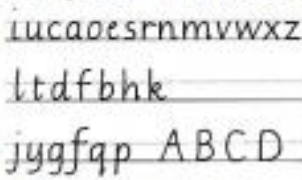
**4 Size**  
NC: KS1

... and also to their relative sizes:  
Small/halfway letters/x-height letters e.g. a, e, o, s  
Tall letters/letters with ascenders e.g. h, l, b, k (plus all capitals)  
Tailed letters/letters with descenders e.g. p, g, y, j

A visual image helps children understand the 3 levels. Suggestions are:  
• sky/grass or forest/underground • head/body/legs

While children are learning about size it is helpful to use paper marked with a base-line and a second line above for the tops of a, e, s, o etc. The tall letters and tails are written at about twice that size.

(This is preferable to traditional 'tram-line' paper with 4 lines that encourages over-long ascenders and descenders).



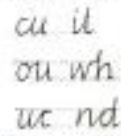
Beginner writers, especially, need widely spaced lines to avoid cramping letters and all children need some flexibility in line spacing rather than 'one size fits all'.

**5 Strings**  
NC: KS1 & KS2  
Basic joins.

Joined or cursive writing is the next step towards fluency.  
The NC states that children 'should be taught a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation' and 'understand which letters, when adjacent to each other, are best left unjoined.'

These can be taught in a series of lessons with plenty of practice:

- Diagonal (up the hill join) to 'l' team letters, both tall and short e.g.
- Horizontal (washing line join) to both tall and short letters from o, v, w e.g.
- Joins to 'e' team letters e.g.



Practice is more fun making patterns from digraphs using felt tipped pens. (See Tips for Teaching: Patterns for Ideas)

The NC expectation for Years 3 & 4 is that pupils will be 'using joined handwriting throughout their independent writing'. This will encourage joined writing to become automatic. Note: cursive/joined writing can have some breaks - usually after j, y, g, x, z. (See Style below)

**6 Slant**  
NC: KS 2

A consistent slant helps the appearance of handwriting.  
A slightly forward slant is a natural movement for right-handers and helps to improve fluency and speed. (See 'Slant' in Part 2)

**7 Speed**  
NC: Y5+

Students in KS2 & 3 need to be able to write legibly and quickly.  
Students need help in understanding that increasing speed changes writing: it can improve rhythm and fluency but can cause illegibility if allowed out of control. It will help students if they are encouraged to gradually build up the speed of legible writing by repeating words, then phrases, sentences & paragraphs in short regular periods of practice. (See Tips for Teaching: Speeding up)

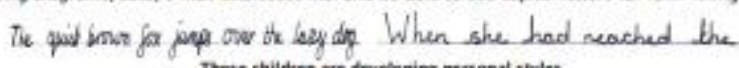
**8 Style**  
NC: Y5+

Students should be encouraged to develop a style of writing that works for them.

Students can consider changes to their writing style that could increase speed and/or fluency, e.g.

- Adding loops to g, y, j and possibly f to increase speed and flow.
- Consider if there are any joins that do not flow well and would be better left unjoined.
- Be aware that different qualities and speeds of writing are required for different tasks: personal notes, exams, course work, job applications - and adapt accordingly.

N.B. They should also be aware of occasions when an unjoined style is appropriate: for labeling diagrams/data, e-mail addresses etc. and be able to use capital letters for form-filling.

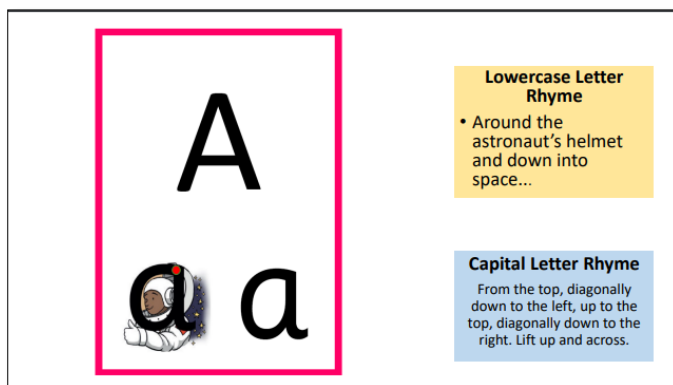


These children are developing personal styles

## How is Handwriting Taught (implementation)?

### Early Years and Key Stage One

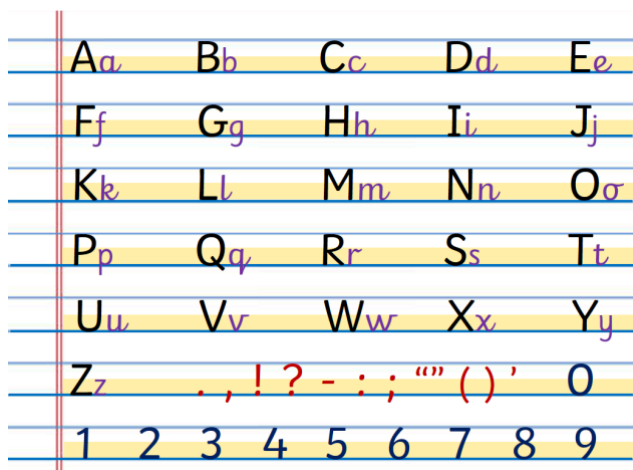
As children enter reception, attention is focused upon the child's physical development; gripping and pressing activities are used to develop the children's gross and fine motor skills, and teachers begin to teach the children about correct posture. Once a child is assessed as being ready for writing, children are taught according to the 'P checks' to ensure that children develop good habits at the earliest opportunity. Handwriting is taught daily in conjunction with the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised phonics scheme. Children are taught grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPC) and are taught to form individual letters in their lowercase and uppercase forms. To ensure consistency, letter formation is taught using Little Wandle's handwriting "patter," an example of which can be seen below:



As children progress through Key Stage 1, they start to practice letter formation within the context of graphemes, using words and short simple sentences.

### Lower Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2, we follow the principles of the Nelson Handwriting Scheme. This is to ensure a consistent approach across the Key Stage, giving our children the best chance to develop a fluent and cursive style of writing. Children in Years 3 and 4 practise letter strings before practising letters already learned in words. To ensure consistency, letter formation is taught using the same age-appropriate 'patter' across all key stage 2 classes. A copy of the Nelson alphabet can be viewed in the image below:



Once the children are secure in their letter formation, they are taught to join their handwriting. Again, this is taught in accordance with the Nelson Handwriting Scheme. Four different types of joins are taught in numerical order. Children are also taught which letters are best left unjoined (break letters). The graphic below details the joins taught.

Join type 1: Curved diagonal join from bottom to bottom of regular letters	→ in am ad ce cc do → dy ha ki lm tu uv
Join type 2: Curved diagonal join from bottom to bottom of ascender	→ at ch ab ef il ik → ut sh nl cl ll uk
Join type 3: Horizontal join across top of standard height letters	→ oa wo fo fa og om → rp ve rd rn wo wi
Join type 4: Upwards diagonal join from top of standard into ascending letter	→ wh ob ff fl ol oh → rt rf rl rb wl wk

The key to joined handwriting is not lifting the pencil away from the paper. The flowing nature will develop through regular practice.

Some letters are called break letters, as they do not join to the letter that follows after, hence breaking the join. These letters are: b, g, j, p, q and y

Joined handwriting enhances the speed, rhythm and ease of writing in pupils. It can also aid children with spelling, as it allows the children to see the words as a whole, rather than individual letters.



A typical handwriting lesson in Lower Key Stage 2 is taught in the following way:

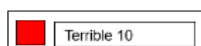
- The teacher models to the children how to form the capital of the letter.
- The teacher checks that every child is doing this correctly.
- Next, the children are shown how to form the lowercase of the letter –again, the teacher checks that every child can do this.
- Next, the teacher writes words on the board for the children to copy, writing a line of each.
- The handwriting lesson on each subsequent day begins with retrieval practice.

## Upper Key Stage 2

It is our intention that each child develops a fluent and legible joined-up handwriting style by the end of Year 4. For this reason, handwriting is taught in upper key stage 2 by intervention only. Year 5 children undertake a handwriting assessment in the 1<sup>st</sup> week of the Autumn term. Those that are assessed as having a handwriting need are re-taught via a “7-week reset” intervention programme. The intervention programme follows the same structure as that taught in Lower Key Stage 2. At the end of the 7-week reset, the children are re-assessed and those still in need undertake further, modified intervention (This intervention may focus upon specific areas of the child’s handwriting where the greatest improvements can be made). The 7-week intervention programme is detailed below:

Handwriting Programme

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	l	l + t	l, t, + u	l, t, u + i	l, t, i, u + j
2	l, t, u, i, j, y + m	l, t, u, i, j, y + n	l, t, u, i, j, y, n + p	l, t, u, i, j, y, n, p + m	l, t, u, i, j, y, n, p, m + k
3	l, t, u, i, j, y, n, p, m, k + r	l, t, u, i, j, y, n, p, m, k, r + h	l, t, u, i, j, y, n, p, m, k, r, h + b	l, t, u, i, j, y, n, p, m, k, r, h, b + c	l, t, u, i, j, y, n, p, m, k, r, h, b, c + a
4	l, t, u, i, j, y, n, p, m, k, r, h, b, c, a + s	l, t, u, i, j, y, n, p, m, k, r, h, b, c, a, s + d	l, t, u, i, j, y, n, p, m, k, r, h, b, c, a, s, d + o	l, t, u, i, j, y, n, p, m, k, r, h, b, c, a, s, d, o + g	l, t, u, i, j, y, n, p, m, k, r, h, b, c, a, s, d, o, g + e
5	l, t, u, i, j, y, n, p, m, k, r, h, b, c, a, s, d, o, g, e + f	l, t, u, i, j, y, n, p, m, k, r, h, b, c, a, s, d, o, g, e, f + q	l, t, u, i, j, y, n, p, m, k, r, h, b, c, a, s, d, o, g, e, f, q + v	l, t, u, i, j, y, n, p, m, k, r, h, b, c, a, s, d, o, g, e, f, q, v + w	l, t, u, i, j, y, n, p, m, k, r, h, b, c, a, s, d, o, g, e, f, q, v, w + x
6	l, t, u, i, j, y, n, p, m, k, r, h, b, c, a, s, d, o, g, e, f, q, v, w, x + z	Lucky dip	Lucky dip	Lucky dip	Lucky dip
7	The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog.	The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog	The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog	The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog	The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog



### Sequence

1. Ladder letters: t, l, u, i, j, y
2. Bridge letters: n, p, m, k, r, h, b
3. Caterpillar letters: c, a, s, d, o, g, e, f, q
4. Monster family: v, w, x, z

## Spelling

*Links to: Confident spellers, effective communicators, accurate and legible scribes*

### Key Stage One

Spelling in Key Stage 1 is taught via the Little Wandle Scheme and is taught in association with the same programme's phonics tuition. Children become used to the phonemes and graphemes taught during phonics tuition, and are taught how to use this knowledge to assist with spelling. The Little Wandle 'Bridge to Spelling' programme may be used in Lower Key Stage should the needs of the cohort necessitate.

### Key Sage Two

We have identified spelling in Key Stage Two as an area for development at Aldborough. A strong base of contemporary research supports the notion that mastery of the alphabetical code is central to success in spelling. Previous spelling strategies that have been implemented at Aldborough Primary have been organised around the teaching of 'spelling rules'. We have found these approaches unsuccessful due to the cognitive overload placed on our children. Such are the complexities of the English language, many exceptions to taught rules exist and our children struggled to make sense of the spelling rules we were teaching. Furthermore, we identified a disconnect between the phonics taught up to year 1 and the approaches towards spelling in Key Stage 2; simply, the children were not utilising their phonetic knowledge to assist in spelling.

McGuiness (2007) explains that most words in the English language can be organised around 44 phonemes and their corresponding graphemes. Our spelling system, based on the approach devised by Christopher Such, organises words according to the 44 phonemes, and includes tier 2 vocabulary and statutory National Curriculum words for the respective year groups. A different phoneme is taught each week across the Key Stage 2 year groups and the word lists for each phoneme contain words spelt with different graphemes, tier 2 vocabulary and common homophones. The system is explained below:

1. At the beginning of the week, the children are provided with a list of words that include a common phoneme:

<b>Autumn Term</b>
<b>Week 1 – 9/9/24</b>
<b>Phoneme- ay (ei) Grapheme- é as in</b> café, ae as in sundae, a-e as in made, eigh as in eight café, canapé, sundae, vertebrae, accommodate, appreciate, communicate, exaggerate, persuade, neighbour
<b>Homophones:</b> fete / fate vein / vane / vain

The teacher organises the spellings according to the grapheme that represents the phoneme and a different grapheme-phoneme correspondence (GPC) is taught each day. Each of the spellings under the focus GPC are taught within the 15-minute session.

2. The children say the words out loud.
3. The children segment the word (inot syllables if more than pone syllable is present).
4. The children identify the sounds in each syllable and attempt to select the correct grapheme for each phoneme

5. The children blend the word and say it in its entirety
6. The children add sound buttons to the word
7. The children are taught the vocabulary definition of the word, including an explanation of any root word / morpheme meaning.
8. The children write the word within a dictated sentence.

This learning sequence is then repeated for every subsequent lesson. Each lesson begins with the children spelling the previous session's spellings in a low-stakes activity.

## **Composition**

### **Talk For Writing**

*Links to: Creative storytellers, Effective communicators, Purposeful writers, Accurate and legible scribes, Confident spellers*

At Aldborough we implemented the Talk for Writing approach to teaching writing from September 2022. Below are more details about what this approach entails and why we adopted it.

Talk for Writing enables children to imitate the key language they need for a particular topic orally before they try reading and analysing it. Through fun activities that help them rehearse the tune of the language they need, followed by shared writing to show them how to craft their writing, children are helped to write in the same style. Schools that have adopted the approach have not only increased their children's progress but have found that both children and teachers love it.

Talk for Writing is powerful because it enables children to orally imitate the language patterns they need for a particular genre and to internalise these patterns before modifying a model text and then writing their own version. Each Talk for Writing unit contains several stages of teaching:

- 1) Cold Task – Some time before the unit of work commences, the children complete a cold task. The cold task enables the children to show what they already know about the genre / skillset of writing that is to be the focus of the unit of work. The cold task is used to inform planning for the unit ahead.
- 2) Imitation - the children are given a model text which is learned through story mapping and oral rehearsal. Short burst writing activities and grammar activities are completed to enhance understanding of the text and memory of language patterns. This stage of the teaching process ends with a 'boxing up' of the model text and the creation of a shared 'toolkit'.
- 3) Innovation - the children adapt the model text with ideas of their own. Innovations can range from simple substitutions to changes of setting/ character, to the addition of flashback paragraphs. During this stage, the teacher models writing focus paragraphs and shared writing activities take place


- 4) Invention - the children plan and create their own text using the structure of the model text for support. The invention is used for assessment and is the children's chance to show what they have learned during the unit of work.

## Grammar and Punctuation

Links to: *Creative storytellers, Effective communicators, Purposeful writers, Accurate and legible scribes, Confident spellers*

At Aldborough Primary School, grammar and punctuation is taught both discretely and within the context of a writing unit. An example of our Grammar maps for each class can be seen below:

Scheme of Work for Grammar



Autumn Term			
Week 1 – 9/9/24	Week 2 – 16/9/24	Week 3 – 23/9/24	Week 4 – 30/9/24
<p>I am learning what a noun is.</p> <p>I can identify the nouns within a simple sentence.</p> <p>I can choose an appropriate noun to complete a phrase.</p>	<p>I can pluralise common nouns by adding -s or -es</p> <p>I am learning what a proper noun is.</p> <p>I can use capital letters for proper nouns, including my own name and the days of the week.</p>	<p>I can recognise and use compound nouns within a noun phrase.</p> <p>I am learning what a determiner is.</p> <p>I can add the determiner 'the' to a noun (to form a phrase).</p> <p>I can use a range of determiners (most some, all, many, much, more) in a noun phrase</p> <p>I can separate words with spaces</p>	<p>I can identify which letters of the alphabet are vowels and which letters of the alphabet are consonants.</p> <p>I can use the determiners 'the,' 'a' and 'an' correctly within a phrase.</p> <p>I understand what a phrase is.</p>
Week 5 – 7/10/24	Week 6 – 14/10/24	Week 7 – 21/10/24	Week 8 – 4/11/24
<p>I am learning what an adjective is.</p> <p>I can form adjectives by adding the suffix "-less": <i>help – helpless</i></p> <p>I can form adjectives by adding the suffix "-ful": <i>care – careful</i></p> <p>I can form a noun phrase using determiner + adjective + noun.</p>	<p>I can form comparative and superlative adjectives by doubling the final letter and adding "-er" and "-est": big – bigger – biggest</p> <p>I am learning about prepositions</p> <p>I can form a prepositional phrase: (preposition + determiner + noun) e.g. <i>under the table</i></p>	<p>I can form a noun phrase using determiner + adjective + noun. (Recap)</p> <p>I can form an expanded noun phrase using determiner + adjective + noun + prepositional phrase.</p>	<p>I can form an expanded noun phrase using determiner + adjective + noun + prepositional phrase. (Recap)</p> <p>I am learning what a verb is.</p> <p>I know the difference between a phrase and a clause/sentence / I know that a clause/sentence must contain a noun (subject) and a verb.</p>
Week 9 – 11/11/24	Week 10 – 18/11/24	Week 11 – 25/11/24	Week 12 – 2/12/24
<p>I can identify verbs within a simple sentence.</p> <p>I can choose an appropriate verb to complete a simple sentence.</p> <p>I can write a statement of fact that includes an adjective.</p>	<p>I understand the terms "past tense" and "present tense"</p> <p>I know that regular verbs ending in -ed are past tense verbs and regular verbs ending in -ing are present tense verbs.</p>	<p>I can write a main clause / simple sentence</p> <p>I can use a capital letter to begin and a full stop to end my sentences</p>	<p>I can write an exclamation sentence that ends with an exclamation mark.</p> <p>I can write a question sentence using the words 'what,' 'where,' 'who,' 'why' and 'when.'</p>

## Assessment

At Aldborough Primary School, formative assessment is used to assess and progress pupils' writing. As part of the Talk 4 Writing approach, children are assigned a text type and a writing focus for each unit of work. 'Toolkits' that contain key components of the specific text type are co-constructed by the teacher and the class and these are used to measure a child's progress. Verbal feedback is given during lessons and short-burst writes are marked and written feedback provided where necessary. When marking a piece of writing, teachers highlight positive aspects of the writing in pink and highlight areas for improvement in green (pink for praise, green for growth). This enables the children to instantly recognise areas of strength and development via visual representation.

At the end of each writing unit, pupils complete a 'hot task'. This work is composed independently and offers the pupil a chance to demonstrate the learning achieved during a unit of writing. Hot tasks are subject to summative assessment and pupils complete at least one narrative and one non-fiction piece per half-term.

## **Support in Literacy for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

### **Dyslexia**

The British Dyslexia Association (BDA) has adopted the following definition of dyslexia:

“Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling. Characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed. Dyslexia occurs across the range of intellectual abilities. It is best thought of as a continuum, not a distinct category, and there are no clear cut-off points. Co-occurring difficulties may be seen in aspects of language, motor co-ordination, mental calculation, concentration and personal organisation, but these are not, by themselves, markers of dyslexia. A good indication of the severity and persistence of dyslexic difficulties can be gained by examining how the individual responds or has responded to well-founded intervention.” (Rose, 2009)

Dyslexia is non-discriminatory and can affect people of all intellectual abilities. It presents differently in people but signs that dyslexia may be present include:

#### **Early Years indicators of possible dyslexia**

- Difficulty learning nursery rhymes
- Difficulty paying attention, sitting still, listening to stories
- Likes listening to stories but shows no interest in letters or words
- Difficulty learning to sing or recite the alphabet
- A history of slow speech development
- Muddles words e.g. cucumber, flutterby
- Difficulty keeping simple rhythm
- Finds it hard to carry out two or more instructions at one time, (e.g. put the toys in the box, then put it on the shelf) but is fine if tasks are presented in smaller units
- Forgets names of friends, teacher, colours etc.
- Poor auditory discrimination
- Confusion between directional words e.g. up/down
- Family history of dyslexia/reading difficulties
- Difficulty with sequencing e.g. coloured beads, classroom routines
- Substitutes words e.g. "lampshade" for "lamppost"
- Appears not to be listening or paying attention
- Obvious 'good' and 'bad' days for no apparent reason

### **Primary-aged indicators that dyslexia may be present**

- Speed of processing: slow spoken and/or written language
- Poor concentration
- Difficulty following instructions
- Forgetting words

### **Written work**

- Poor standard of written work compared with oral ability
- Produces messy work with many crossings out and words tried several times, e.g. wippe, wype, wiep, wipe
- Confused by letters which look similar, particularly b/d, p/g, p/q, n/u, m/w
- Poor handwriting with many 'reversals' and badly formed letters
- Spells a word several different ways in one piece of writing
- Makes anagrams of words, e.g. tired for tried, bread for beard
- Produces badly set-out written work, doesn't stay close to the margin
- Poor pencil grip
- Produces phonetic and bizarre spelling: not age/ability appropriate
- Uses unusual sequencing of letters or words

### **Reading**

- Slow reading progress
- Finds it difficult to blend letters together
- Has difficulty in establishing syllable division or knowing the beginnings and endings of words
- Unusual pronunciation of words
- No expression in reading, and poor comprehension
- Hesitant and laboured reading, especially when reading aloud
- Misses out words when reading, or adds extra words
- Fails to recognise familiar words
- Loses the point of a story being read or written
- Has difficulty in picking out the most important points from a passage

### **Numeracy**

- Confusion with place value e.g. units, tens, hundreds
- Confused by symbols such as + and x signs

- Difficulty remembering anything in a sequential order, e.g. tables, days of the week, the alphabet

### Time

- Has difficulty learning to tell the time
- Poor time keeping
- Poor personal organisation
- Difficulty remembering what day of the week it is, their birth date, seasons of the year, months of the year
- Difficulty with concepts – yesterday, today, tomorrow

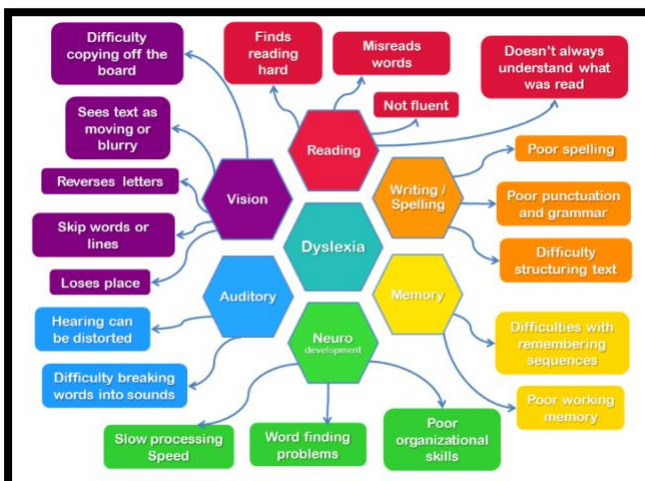
### Skills

- Poor motor skills, leading to weaknesses in speed, control and accuracy of the pencil
- Memory difficulties e.g. for daily routines, self-organisation, rote learning
- Confused by the difference between left and right, up and down, east and west
- Indeterminate hand preference
- Performs unevenly from day to day

### Behaviour

- Uses work avoidance tactics, such as sharpening pencils and looking for books
- Seems 'dreamy', does not seem to listen
- Easily distracted
- Is the class clown or is disruptive or withdrawn
- Is excessively tired due to amount of concentration and effort required

The diagram below gives a visual overview of how dyslexia may affect a pupil's learning in key areas:





Whilst many children display these indicators from time to time, it is the persistence and severity of these indicators that may suggest the presence of dyslexia.

In addition to teacher assessment, difficulties with literacy (including dyslexia) may be identified via the YARC assessment tool. Large discrepancies between a pupil's accuracy, reading rate and comprehension scores may indicate a learning need. In addition, a standard score of 85 or below in any of the 3 areas may also be indicative.

### **Supporting pupils with dyslexia in literacy**

As part of a quality-first teaching approach, teachers at Aldborough Primary School will make adjustments to lessons to support pupils with dyslexia. These adjustments may include:

- Offer alternatives to writing as a key method of recording (children may record their narratives / non-fiction pieces using technology or may dictate their compositions to a scribe).
- Provide handouts that contain the key learning points rather than asking pupils to copy text from the whiteboard or take notes
- Repeat instructions/information and check for understanding of tasks.
- Alter format options onscreen or on an interactive whiteboard
- Provide access to assistive technology such as a computer for pupils who find it difficult to read large amounts of text or to write quickly enough in class
- Use multi-sensory ways of teaching (Dual-coding approaches including visual, auditory and written methods of communication)
- Allow time to respond as many dyslexic students are slower to process information
- Break information and instructions into smaller 'chunks'
- Use different coloured paper to reduce 'glare', and / or provide visual overlays to reduce visual stress.

### **Classroom strategies for children with SEND and children in need of additional support**

Every child deserves has the right to a quality education and, at Aldborough Primary School, we take care to ensure that our literacy curriculum is accessible for all pupils.

#### **Explicit Teaching**

We use an 'I do, we do, you do' model of teaching literacy.

I do – The teacher explains the learning via clear, explicit instructions, ensuring that they check for understanding at regular intervals. Following the explanation, the teacher will model the skill / learning that they wish the children to practice, accompanying their modelling with explanation. Modelling may be 'live', for example, the reading of a passage with prosody, or may be pre-prepared, such as a written paragraph annotated with instructions.

We do – Following on from the teacher modelling, the teacher and the pupils work collaboratively on an activity. For example, the teacher may support the pupils to compose a paragraph with different content but of the same structure as the teacher model.

You do – In this stage, the children practice the skill / learning independently by completed a third adapted activity. This may be to complete a partially written paragraph or to use specific sentence starters to complete their own.

### **Metacognitive Strategies**

To avoid cognitive overload, information is delivered in small chunks and children are given the opportunity to practice and embed their learning before moving on to new content. Each lesson begins with a retrieval practice activity to assist the journey of procedural and substantive knowledge to the long-term memory. Retrieval practice may be conducted via low-stakes quizzing, completion of diagrams or mind-maps (tell me what you remember about...?). Learning is revisited using a phased approach until it is memorised and can be applied independently by the pupil.

### **Scaffolding**

Scaffolding is an essential part of our practice and may be provided in visual, auditory or written formats. In reading, this may include visual representations of difficult vocabulary, differently-sized text or fonts to assist the reader, or via pre-teaching or repeated instruction. In writing, a list of 'steps' or instructions may be provided. Word banks, sentence starters and partially-completed examples may be used to support pupils. Scaffolding is gradually reduced as pupils progress towards independent practice.

### **Flexible grouping**

Pupils may be grouped or paired according to learning needs. For example, pupils may be placed in mixed -ability pairs for reading fluency practice or may work in small groups to generate ideas for a writing project. Groups are flexible and are adapted according to the needs of the lesson.

### **Technology**

Technology, such as word processors or visualizers, are used to aid pupils' learning and provide support. For children with difficulties in literacy, word processors or audio-typing technology can be used to enable them to present their learning in an alternative fashion.

## Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to read this document. It is hoped that this document has enabled the reader to gain a clear understanding of how English is taught at Aldborough. The information contained within explains the purpose and intent of our English lessons and outlines the content that we endeavour to teach our children. It contains information on how our English curriculum is implemented, including details of classroom strategies that are used to support our pupils' learning in literacy. The assessment strategies that are used to measure the impact of our curriculum are described in detail, and an overview of the strategies used to support children with SEND is contained. Further information about our approach to English at Aldborough can be attained by visiting the school website; our school reading spine, English Long Term Plan (LTP) and documentation regarding the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds programme can all be accessed at [www.aldborough.norfolk.sch.uk](http://www.aldborough.norfolk.sch.uk).