English at Ashbourne Primary School

Intent

English at Ashbourne Primary School develops competent, confident and creative readers, writers and speakers. Our work is underpinned by our vision 'Excellent effort always matters'. Our Three Golden Threads run through our entire curriculum and our PRAISE aims are at the heart of every lesson our focus on the removal of barriers to learning is firmly embedded into all areas of the English curriculum. One of our Golden Threads is Language and Literacy. This is explicitly taught across all subjects through reading, talk and writing, ensuring all pupils can access, retain and apply knowledge effectively.

At Ashbourne Primary School, we believe that a quality English curriculum should develop the children's love of reading, writing and discussion. Our English curriculum aims to provide the foundation for reading through phonics; for children to read fluently and widely and be able to express their preferences and opinions about the texts that they have read. We intend to provide an English curriculum which inspires a love and enjoyment of reading as well as being a tool to access information and to communicate with the world.
We want our pupils to understand that Writing is also a tool for communication, through which their voice and ideas can be heard. This is demonstrated through our text-based approach to teaching. We aim to provide pupils with opportunities to access a range of texts and authors.
It is our intention that after completing the English curriculum at our school, pupils will have developed their skills and confidence to tackle a range of texts and to write for a variety of purposes and audiences, so they can effectively communicate with the wider world.

Implementation

Scheme of Learning

At Ashbourne Primary, our English curriculum is built around a cohesive set of evidence-informed approaches designed to develop confident, capable and enthusiastic readers and writers. We follow *Unlocking Letters and Sounds* to deliver high-quality, systematic phonics teaching that supports early reading and spelling. This is complemented by *Unlocking Handwriting*, which provides a structured progression of handwriting skills, and *Unlocking Spelling*, which ensures pupils build secure knowledge of spelling patterns and rules. To strengthen grammar and composition, teachers draw on *Grammarsaurus* resources, alongside oracy strategies, which immerses children in rich model texts and explicit stages of imitation, innovation and independent application. *The Pawsome Gang* scheme is used to develop the children's reading skills, including retrieval, inference, vocabulary, sequencing, commentating, author voice and summarising. Together, these approaches ensure that English learning is carefully sequenced, engaging, and adaptable to meet the needs of all learners, enabling every child to progress confidently through the skills of reading, writing, spelling, grammar and communication.

Planning

Class teachers work from a medium-term plan, which then feeds into a weekly plan. Links may be made with other areas of the curriculum. The English coordinators collect MTPs at the beginning of each half-term and will feedback to staff where necessary. Planning is a flexible document and is used by the teacher and for the children to ensure at least good progress is made by all.
Unlocking Letters and Sounds, Unlocking Handwriting and Unlocking Spelling provides the planning and resources for the class teachers.

Resources

Unlocking Letters and Sounds, *Unlocking Handwriting* and *Unlocking Spelling* are our main scheme of work for phonics, handwriting and spelling. Teachers use *Grammarsaurus* and *Oracy* strategies to support the teaching of writing, grammar and punctuation. The *Pawsome Gang* scheme is used to support the teaching of reading.

Grammarsaurus

Unlocking Letters & Sounds

Unlocking Spelling



Lesson sequence

At Ashbourne Primary, the teaching of English follows a consistent and structured sequence designed to build strong foundations in reading and writing. Phonics teaching follows a four-part cycle of *Revisit/Review, Teach, Practise,* and *Apply*, enabling children to secure prior learning, encounter new phoneme–grapheme correspondences, rehearse them with increasing fluency, and finally apply their knowledge in meaningful reading and writing contexts. A typical English lesson begins with a focused starter activity—such as dictation, a Grammarsaurus-based task, or responsive feedback from the previous lesson—to activate prior learning and address misconceptions. This is followed by the main teaching sequence, where new skills and strategies are explicitly modelled. Pupils then complete an independent task that allows them to apply and embed the key learning. Each lesson concludes with a plenary to consolidate understanding, celebrate progress, or prepare pupils for the next learning step. Reading sessions follow a whole-class reading structure, ensuring all children access high-quality texts and develop comprehension skills through shared modelling, discussion, and targeted practice.

Pedagogy

Our English pedagogy is built on a systematic, mastery-based approach that ensures all pupils become confident, fluent readers and articulate, effective writers. Early reading is grounded in high-quality phonics teaching through *Unlocking Letters and Sounds*, with fully decodable texts that match pupils' phonic knowledge. As pupils progress, comprehension is deepened through the *Pawsome Gang*, which supports the development of key reading strategies and precise, text-based reasoning. Writing is taught using oracy strategies, allowing children to internalise language patterns, build rich vocabulary, and confidently apply skills through modelled, shared, and independent writing. Grammar and punctuation are taught explicitly using *Grammarsaurus* to provide clear structure and high-quality examples. Accuracy and fluency in transcription are secured through *Unlocking Handwriting* and *Unlocking Spelling*, ensuring pupils develop automaticity essential for higher-level composition. Across all English teaching, learning is carefully sequenced, language-rich, and supported by structured talk, enabling every child to think deeply, explain their ideas, and enjoy success as readers and writers.

Three Golden Threads



Language and Literacy: We place language and literacy at the heart of learning because they unlock access to the entire curriculum. We ensure pupils develop a rich and ambitious vocabulary across all lessons. Pupils are also taught to read fluently and with understanding. Our curriculum plans for children to communicate clearly and confidently and to se language to think, explain and learn

Resilience and Regulation: Our English curriculum is structured in small, progressive steps that help children experience success while developing essential reading and writing skills. By offering achievable challenges alongside tailored support, pupils build confidence, independence, and pride in their learning. This nurturing approach supports positive wellbeing, promotes perseverance, and encourages children to take risks in sharing ideas, drafting, and editing their work.

Becoming and Belonging: In English, we recognise and celebrate the diverse experiences, languages, and perspectives that children bring to the classroom. Through exposure to a wide range of texts, authors, and genres, pupils see themselves represented and learn about the experiences of others. English lessons foster inclusion, belonging, and high expectations for all learners, helping children develop strong communication skills and a belief in their ability to shape their own stories, both in writing and in life.

Environment

All English lessons should provide rich opportunities for both teachers and pupils to use high-quality spoken language to explore ideas, discuss vocabulary, explain authorial choices, reason about texts, and justify interpretations. Teaching incorporates modelled, shared and independent practice using approaches from *Pawsome Gang, Grammarsaurus, Unlocking Letters and Sounds, Unlocking Spelling, and Unlocking Handwriting* to support all aspects of reading and writing. Concrete and pictorial resources—such as text maps, sound mats, vocabulary prompts, story structures and grammar guides—work alongside abstract strategies, enabling pupils to build deep understanding of language, structure and purpose.

Each classroom will include an English Working Wall that reflects and supports current learning. It should change regularly and be actively used during lessons, showcasing key vocabulary, modelled writing, phonics or spelling patterns, text maps, grammar examples and reading strategies to guide pupils' independent application.

Feedback Teachers and Teaching Assistants provide feedback to the children in the lesson through discussion, questioning, observation and checking work. As stated in our Marking and Feedback policy, children mark their work where appropriate and make corrections in green pen.	**Monitoring** English is monitored regularly across school through learning walks, lesson observations, book scrutinies, pupil voice, data analysis, planning reviews, assessments of key skills, moderation, evaluation of teaching resources and identifying teacher CPD and support.
How groups are supported All children, except those working below age-related expectations, should access the same unit of learning and core texts. High-quality scaffolding—such as modelled examples, sentence stems, word banks and additional guided support—should enable all pupils to participate fully in the lesson. Children who are working below age-related expectations should be supported through the systematic use of *Unlocking Letters and Sounds,* including targeted phonics intervention, blending practice and decodable texts matched to their phonic phase. Additional resources from *Unlocking Handwriting* and *Unlocking Spelling* should be used to reinforce key skills and secure foundational knowledge. Children working at the expected standard should access the full sequence of teaching using *Talk for Writing*, the *Pawsome Gang* reading approach, and grammar instruction supported by *Grammarsaurus*. Concrete and pictorial prompts, collaborative discussion, and structured rehearsal should help them achieve success. Children working above the expected standard (GDS) should be challenged through targeted questioning, deeper-level vocabulary and grammar tasks, and extended opportunities for independent writing. Challenge should be provided through reduced scaffolding, greater emphasis on reasoning about authorial choices, and problem-solving style tasks taken from *Grammarsaurus* to extend their creative and analytical thinking.	**Interventions** Our termly data analysis informs our interventions for the following term. Children identified as needing extra support with phonics, reading or writing after an assessment point are placed into intervention groups and given targeted support. The intervention is determined by what the children's next steps are and any gaps in their learning.

Impact

Evidence

Medium-term plans and weekly lesson planning will show clear, small-step progression across reading, writing, phonics, spelling, grammar and handwriting.
Consistent representations and approaches—including those from *Talk for Writing, Pawsome Gang, Unlocking Letters and Sounds, Unlocking Spelling, Unlocking Handwriting and Grammarsaurus*—will be used and will be progressive across year groups.
Lessons will be structured with clear learning intentions and will use a range of supportive strategies and resources such as text maps, model texts, vocabulary prompts, phonics mats and grammar scaffolds to ensure all children can access learning. Teachers will model high-quality reading behaviours, writerly thinking and language choices, demonstrating processes such as annotating texts, generating vocabulary, planning, drafting and editing. High-quality questioning will be used to promote discussion, reasoning, explanation and deeper understanding of texts and authorial choices.
Differentiation will occur through scaffolding, targeted support, challenge through depth and opportunities for greater independence.
Children's English books and writing outcomes will show a range of evidence, including reading responses, vocabulary development, grammar application, modelled and shared writing, planning, independent writing and opportunities for editing and improving. Evidence will also show pupils applying taught strategies and structures drawn from *Grammarsaurus.* Pupils will be able to articulate what they are learning, explain features of texts, discuss vocabulary choices and describe the strategies they use as readers and writers using precise, subject-specific language.

Assessment

We assess children's English attainment against the National Curriculum objectives at three assessment points per year (December, March and July). To support summative assessment, we use NFER reading assessments 3, 4 and 5, and SATs papers in years 6. During these assessment points, Foundation Skills are also assessed in EYFS, year 1 and 2.
Phonics attainment is assessed through ongoing Unlocking Letters and Sounds assessments, with Year 1 pupils taking the Phonics Screening Check and Year 2 pupils re-sitting if required. These outcomes help teachers tailor reading and writing instruction so that every child receives the appropriate level of support and challenge.

Formative assessment takes place continually throughout daily teaching. Teachers make ongoing judgements about each child's progress through guided reading discussions, targeted questioning, book looks, and observation of children applying skills in reading and writing. Feedback is provided through verbal responses, live marking, and use of our Marking and Feedback Books, ensuring pupils understand their next steps.
These ongoing assessments inform planning, teaching and intervention to ensure learning is responsive and appropriately pitched.