



PROUD to be Forefield  
Passion, Respect, Opportunity, Unique, Determined



## Subject Leader Report: English 2024/25



### Philosophy

At Forefield Junior School, we provide our children with a high-quality reading education that enables them to be confident and ambitious readers with a passion for reading. As subject leaders, academic results are important, yet to inspire a generation of children and gift them with the love of reading, truly is delightful.

Writing is a valued and integral part of the curriculum at FJS. Our curriculum endeavours to create a love for writing whilst equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language. Teaching ensures children enjoy exploring a wide range of genres and have the opportunity to write for different purposes and audiences. We strive to help our children develop into articulate and imaginative communicators, who are well-equipped with the skills they need to become life-long learners; English learning is key in this.

The ever-evolving English curriculum is one that continues to successfully adapt to the needs and demands of our children within our school environment. The shared ethos of working together to support every learner allows our pupils to achieve well across the curriculum and beyond, striving for nothing but the best in the education for our pupils, which includes making important literacy links across the curriculum and enriching learning opportunities.



## Principles and features characterised in our curriculum:

- Staff reinforce an expectation that all pupils are capable of achieving high standards in English.
- The large majority of pupils progress through the curriculum content at the same pace. Differentiation is achieved through adaptive teaching methods.
- Interventions focus on gaps in knowledge and developing a growth mind-set in order to ensure all children achieve.
- Teaching is underpinned by using high quality literature and quality first examples. These texts are then analysed in depth with the children in order for them to learn and apply those skills. This is achieved through using VIPERS skills in whole class reading alongside other lessons.
- Grammar and punctuation skills are practised and consolidated until all children have a firm understanding of how to apply them into their own work.
- Teachers use precise questioning in class to develop children's critical thinking and explanations; ultimately helping children to make literary choices in their writing.

Reading begins in our sister school Forefield Infants during the Foundation Stage. Children progress through the reading bands accordingly with each book level introducing new reading and comprehension skills. Parents are encouraged to support their child to develop a love of reading through home reading and school events such as the readathon.

Staff are confident and familiar with the delivery of whole class reading sessions. As a year group, sessions are planned and designed using *'The Literacy Shed,'* *'Comprehension Ninja'* and other topic-specific texts, chosen by teachers, yet guided by the English leads (to match, where possible, what is being taught within each year group). Class teachers are adaptive in their approach to ensure quality-first teaching for all is achieved.

Teachers monitor closely the progress of children's reading fluency and comprehension, and those pupils who make less progress than expected for their age group are identified from assessment and further supported with reading interventions, for example, Lexia which is a home/school online reading programme that we continue to observe good progress in. Rapid Reading is also being used as a

reading intervention that the infants use too. Successful communication between the two schools have allowed a successful implementation for its transition and ensures the learning of children is not interrupted.

## Pedagogy

- Teachers use precise questioning in class to develop the children's thinking and explanations, helping children to make literary choices in their writing.
- Children are articulate in explaining and justifying their thinking when answering comprehension questions.
- Children have opportunities and are taught to work both collaboratively and independently (both in reading and writing).
- Structured high quality opportunities for speaking and listening are used to develop children's language skills as well as to support writing and reading.
- Activities are fun and engaging and include use of iPad technology.

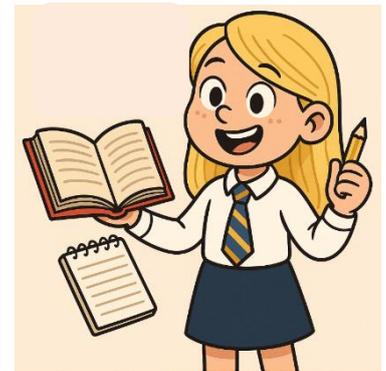


English is taught in mixed ability groups as this allows all children to achieve and be exposed to challenge, as part of their learning in action. In addition, our curriculum design encourages collaboration and the developing of a growth mind-set through working with their peers. As practitioners, we use our shared experience to plan collaboratively as year groups, to ensure tasks are accessible to all by adapting our approaches to enable pupils to fulfil their potential.

Additional intervention and Quality First teaching is provided for children working below age expectations across the English curriculum, along with adaptive teaching methods to further challenge children working at greater depth.

## **British Values**

English lessons support British values of democracy, law, liberty, mutual respect and tolerance in lots of natural, everyday ways. Through what children read, write, discuss, and how they're encouraged to express themselves, British values are upheld and discussed. Reading and discussions give endless opportunities to encourage mutual respect, while studying characters from different backgrounds encourages empathy and understanding. Texts open windows into other lives, and we aim to expose children to diversity through reading different authors, about different cultures, traditions and themes.



## **Assessment**

Using NFER Reading and SPaG assessments, and past SATS papers in Year 6, the children have been tested as usual in the autumn, spring and summer terms. The results of these tests were put onto the school tracking system and progress reports are produced for school governors. The results of these tests allowed staff to monitor progress and attainment of pupils and put into place interventions to support those children who needed it.

At Forefield, we know how much both the children and their families appreciate the work that goes into preparing the pupils for their end of KS2 SATS tests. Whilst it can be a daunting experience for many, we work hard at school to ensure that the children feel relaxed and well-prepared for SATs week.

Below is the Summer Term data for children in Reading and Writing.

## Reading

Y3 – 75% working at ARE+ including 22% exceeding ARE

Y4 – 79% working at ARE+ including 26% exceeding ARE

Y5 – 75% working at ARE+ including 36% exceeding ARE

Y6 – 86% working at ARE+ including 42% achieving a high score

## Writing

Y3 – 65% working at ARE+ including 9% exceeding ARE

Y4 – 74% working at ARE+ including 14% exceeding ARE

Y5 – 65% working at ARE+ including 10% exceeding ARE

Y6 – 86% working at ARE+ including 10% achieving a high score



## Key Stage 2 SATs Results 2025

	% Below Expected Standard	% At Expected Standard	Achieving a High Score		National Results
			%	Average Score	
Reading	14%	86%	42%	108	75% (33%)
Writing	14%	86%	10%	/	72% (13%)
SPaG	11%	89%	52%	109	73%
Mathematics	19%	81%	26%	105	74% (26%)
R/W/M combined		77%	9%		62% (8%)

The table above shows the end of year SATs Results for Year 6. In Reading, Forefield gained an overall Expected Standard of 86% (National Results 75%). This was an increase from the previous year which we were very pleased about. The work that goes into providing regular whole class reading sessions is most definitely having a positive impact on both the children's comprehension and reading fluency.

In SPaG, as always, the number of children achieving the expected standard was 89% (National 73%). This is something that we are extremely proud of: we have always historically gained a high percentage of children gaining expected or above. SPaG skills are regularly taught, being 'drip-fed' into specific SPaG activities/lessons and also across other subject areas. For example, in Geography, the children could be discussing countries and continents across the world, and aspects of SPaG will be highlighted – capital letters for proper nouns.

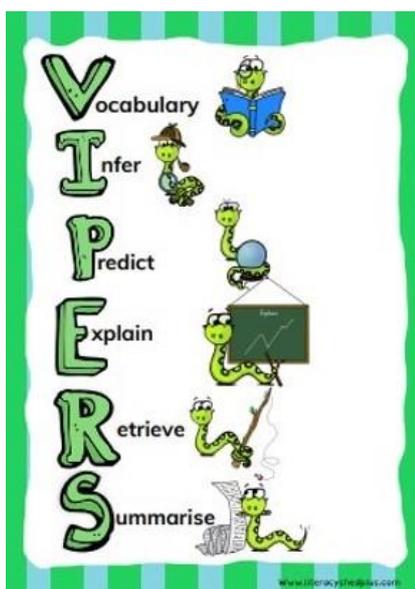
## Whole Class Reading

The fluency drills that teachers use in whole-class reading and English lessons are also included in other areas across the curriculum, and these drills and strategies are now embedded into lessons, with very positive outcomes.



By the end of this academic year, we would like to have videos on the school website demonstrating these fluency drills so that families are able to replicate these at home and support their children's reading even further.

It is worth noting that the reading drills are only a *part of* our whole class reading sessions and not the main focus. We also put a lot of time into teaching the VIPERS skills that really help to develop children's comprehension as well.



## VIPERS

*Vocabulary, Inference, Prediction, Explanation, Retrieval, Sequence/Summarise.*

I am confident that we are providing quality-first teaching when it comes to the teaching of reading.

## Promoting Reading around the School

All around our school, books are a prominent feature both in corridors and classrooms. Teachers promote a love of reading, and the wealth of books demonstrates just how highly we value reading in all aspects of school life.

With reading for pleasure always a priority at Forefield, this year we have provided many opportunities for children to further develop a love of books.

## SPaG

Following the introduction of the updated Curriculum and Progression Map in recent years, each year group continues to follow a structured outline of SPaG activities, ensuring all objectives in all year groups are covered thoroughly. Each lesson comes with resources that have already been created, however, as teachers, we often like to 'tweak' or create our own resources to support the children in the best way possible. By the time the children get to Year 6, they will revise the whole SPaG curriculum once again, in preparation for SATs.



## Writing

Our focus in writing during this year was to ensure that a cross key stage two, there was coverage of different text-types and genres in our writing curriculum. We also wanted to make sure that a range of writing tasks were being taught across the key stage, avoiding repetition of similar activities. Our writing curriculum now has a broad and balanced approach, giving children many new writing opportunities.

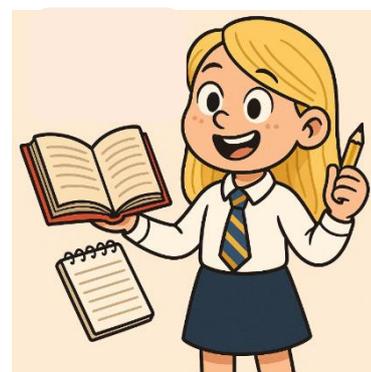
As part of this update to the writing curriculum, we re-evaluated how we support children with their proof-reading and editing skills. In staff meetings, we trained teachers about how to mark the children's writing in a way that models the proof-reading and editing process. This then led to children becoming more confident at improving their own writing when working independently.

## **Oracy – Voice 21**

During 2024-25, we began our involvement in the Voice 21 Oracy project.

Voice 21 is the national charity that advocates for and supports schools in delivering a high-quality oracy education. In becoming a Voice 21 Oracy School, we are joining a network of over 1,100 Voice 21 Oracy Schools across the UK that are transforming teaching and learning through talk. Oracy is articulating ideas, developing understanding and engaging with others through speaking, listening and communication. We actively invest teaching time into creating "talk-rich" classrooms, valuing every student voice, boosting confidence, and preparing our students for their futures.

- Speaking and listening skills are critical foundations for reading and writing.
- Studies show that students with better oral language skills are more likely to achieve the highest grades academically in both English and Maths
- Young people with good communication skills are less likely to have mental health difficulties.



By teaching students to become effective speakers and listeners, we empower them to understand themselves, each other, and the world around them better.

As a Voice 21 Oracy School, we are placing oracy at the heart of our teaching and learning across all subject areas enabling students to develop and deepen their knowledge and understanding through talk in the classroom.

## **MAT Group Meetings**

Last year, we met with teachers from other schools within the Mersey View Learning Trust, where teachers brought a selection of writing books from their year group to share with each other. This was a very useful opportunity to discuss approaches to writing and teacher assessments.

## Enrichment Opportunities

We believe in providing the children of FJS with as many enrichment opportunities as we can, in order to inspire learning. Without a doubt, one of our continuing strengths is *'reading for pleasure.'* Below is a description of the opportunities that we have provided children with this academic year.

### School Library



### World Book Day

This year, we once again provided a number of exciting opportunities to celebrate World Book Day. Children were invited to dress up as a book character, and a display of photos was put up in the school library and corridors for everyone to enjoy!

As part of our WBD celebrations, I led a school assembly and launched a number of reading opportunities for the children to take part in. These included a national *'Design a book token'* competition, as well as a school based *'Get Caught Reading'* opportunity.

In classes, a whole-host of reading-based activities took place, making this a most enjoyable day.

Another part of the day which has now become embedded within school was for teachers to swap classes and to read a story to a new group of children. Each class always enjoys the 'surprise' of seeing *who* will appear at their classroom door.

At the end of this session, all of the children were taken to the hall where we all sat and had our very own readathon. This has now become a bit of a tradition at Forefield and is enjoyed by children and staff.

## Reading Ambassadors

Our reading ambassadors this year, as always, have been amazing. We have continued to have 24 ambassadors (two per class) to champion reading across the school. Ambassadors meet on a weekly basis (when possible) to think of ways of promoting reading throughout the school. They have been brilliant in helping to keep our busy library tidy and also in launching and judging a number of reading events across the school.

The reading ambassadors helped to organise and run a pre-loved book sale in our school studio, which was very successful.



## Book Vending Machine



Forefield's book vending machine continues to be used to promote reading for pleasure. At various points in the year, for example, '*Pupil of the Term*', children are given a vending machine coin which they can use to select a book! Since it arrived at school, the vending machine is always a talking point with visitors to the school.

## Next Steps

The focus for the next academic year is to work on updating and improving the English curriculum across all year groups. Time will be given to making sure planning and resources for each unit of work are readily available and organised on the school network.

2026 is also the National Literacy's Trust's Year of Reading, with the theme 'Go All In', where the focus is on reconnecting reading with the things that already inspire us – from playlists and football matches to films, food and family time. It's reading that fits how we live, not the other way around. The National Year of Reading campaign highlights that reading doesn't just mean books, it includes stories, ideas and information in print, digital and audio – from graphic novels and lyrics to articles, podcasts and games. All forms of reading are valid and valued, so that every child can find their own way in to reading for pleasure: something we already value highly at Forefield. Throughout the year, there will be opportunities for our school to join in with events across Crosby, Sefton and nationally, to encourage this important initiative.



Mark Croot and Sarah Harding