



PROUD to be FOREFIELD:

Passion, Respect, Opportunity, Unique, Determined

Subject Leader Report: English 2022/2023

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. We feel PROUD that visiting Ofsted inspectors (July 2021) observed first hand and commented positively about our '*book-rich*' environment and how '*all staff foster a love of reading in the pupils.*' 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. Following on from Ofsted's visit, their report highlighted that '*curriculum leaders know their subjects well. They are passionate about them. Leaders support all staff to teach the curriculum well. This includes making useful adaptations for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.*' It is this shared ethos amongst our school community that allows our pupils to achieve well across the curriculum and beyond, striving for nothing but the best in the education for our pupils,' which supports important literacy links across the curriculum and enriching learning opportunities.

Principles and Features Characterised in Our Curriculum:

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- 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 which focus on skills to be taught. These texts are then analysed in depth with the children in order for them to learn and apply those skills (most recently through Reading VIPERS – whole class guided reading).
- 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: Readathon.

This will now be our third year of whole class guided reading sessions and children have adjusted well and have shown great progress in the new delivery of teaching. As a year group, sessions are planned and designed using ‘*The Literacy Shed*,’ ‘*Comprehension Ninja*’ and also *topic-specific texts*, chosen by teachers (to match what is being taught within each year group). The classroom teacher will be adaptive in their approach to ensure quality-first teaching for all is achieved. Mr Swift in the Autumn term of 2021 observed lessons. His feedback was positive; the content and delivery from staff and training from the local authority was all evident in the observations and children were making progress. Those pupils who fail to progress at the expected rate of achievement 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. This year, we have also introduced Rapid Reading, this 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.

Mr Swift has completed further lesson observations in reading during the autumn term of 2023. Without a doubt, teachers have become a lot more confident in delivering the teaching of reading skills and we now have a more consistent approach across all year groups.

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 we know all children can achieve with exposure and they respond to challenge in their own UNIQUE way. In this approach, children are exposed to higher-level thinking questions often based on ‘Blooms taxonomy’ which is learning in action. In addition, our curriculum design encourages problem-solving as well as having the opportunity to collaborate and develop 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

At every opportunity, English lessons are used to reinforce the British Values of: Democracy, Law, Liberty, Mutual Respect and Tolerance. This has been evidenced in planning, through a particular book study, drama activity and a written exercise.



Assessment

Using NFER Reading and SPaG assessments, (CGP tests 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 delivered to school governors by the assessment co-ordinator.

Below is the data for the end of the year 2022-2023 in reading, writing and maths. For the coming academic year (2023-2024), it has been decided that the Year 6 children will use past SATs papers during ‘test week’, instead of CGP practice papers. This will enable the Year 6 teachers to gain a more accurate assessment of where children ‘sit’ in line with the end of

year expectations. This will then allow staff to put into place, interventions that will support those children who need it.

The CGP tests that are currently used are extremely useful in giving the children the SATs practice that they need, but only indicate whether the children are 'on track' or not. As a Year 6 teacher myself, I would definitely not want to stop using CGP tests as they are very similar in layout to the actual SATs papers and help to 'demystify' (a buzz word used in a recent SATs course) the actual SATs papers.

		Reading					Writing					Maths					
		3B	3KS	3M		PP	3B	3KS	3M		PP	3B	3KS	3M		PP	
Year 3	Below ARE expectations	B	7/16	6/13	5/15	25/89	7/16	10/16	8/13	6/15	30/89	11/16	8/16	5/13	5/15	29/89	9/16
		G	4/14	3/16	0/15	28%		3/14	3/16	0/15	34%		4/14	6/16	1/15	32%	
	EXP or above	B	9/16	7/13	10/15	64/89	9/16	6/16	5/13	9/15	59/89	5/16	8/16	8/13	10/15	60/89	7/16
		G	10/14	13/16	15/15	72%		11/14	13/16	15/15	66%		10/14	10/16	14/15	67%	
	EXC	B	2/16	3/13	3/15	22/89	2/16	1/16	1/13	3/15	12/89	0/16	4/16	3/13	6/15	28/89	1/16
		G	3/14	6/16	5/15	25%		2/14	3/16	2/15	13%		4/14	6/16	5/15	31%	
	<p>3B – 16 boys, 14 girls, 8 pupil premium, 5 SEND 3KS – 13 boys, 16 girls, 5 pupil premium, 6 SEND 3M – 15 boys, 15 girls, 3 pupil premium, 2 SEND</p> <p>Working at ARE or above – result in brackets is for the same cohort last term: Reading – 72% (63%) Writing – 66% (57%) Maths – 67% (61%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These children are now in Y4. • Emma Harper continues to teach a funded group every morning for English and Maths. • Identified children have phonics intervention groups • There are Lexia groups to support reading • Spelling Attack • Rapid Reading groups • Times tables intervention group 																

		4H	4L	4P		PP	4H	4L	4P		PP	4H	4L	4P		PP	
Year 4	Below ARE expectations	B	3/14	2/13	2/13	18/91	6/15	2/14	3/13	3/13	22/91	7/15	2/14	1/13	2/13	18/91	4/15
		G	2/16	6/17	3/18	20%		3/16	8/17	3/18	24%		3/16	6/17	4/18	20%	
	EXP or above	B	11/14	11/13	11/13	73/91	9/15	12/14	10/13	10/13	69/91	8/15	12/14	12/13	11/13	73/91	11/15
		G	14/16	11/17	15/18	80%		13/16	9/17	15/18	76%		13/16	11/17	14/18	80%	
	EXC	B	3/14	1/13	3/13	24/91	1/15	1/14	1/13	2/13	10/91	0/15	2/14	5/13	4/13	21/91	1/15
		G	7/16	3/17	7/18	26%		3/16	1/17	2/18	11%		5/16	0/17	5/18	23%	
<p>4H – 14 boys, 16 girls, 7 pupil premium 4 SEND 4L – 13 boys, 17 girls, 4 pupil premium, 6 SEND 4P – 13 boys, 18 girls, 4 pupil premium, 2 SEND</p> <p>Working at ARE or above – result in brackets is for the same cohort last term: Reading – 80% (82%) Writing – 76% (77%) Maths – 80% (76%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These children are now in Y5 • There is a spelling attack group from each class and a combined handwriting group during intervention time. • The children are setted for maths with the lower sets having smaller group sizes (18 in set 3 and 12 in set 4) 																	

		5H	5R	5S		PP	5H	5R	5S		PP	5H	5R	5S		PP	
Year 5	Below ARE expectations	B	7/17	4/19	3/18	22/89 25%	10/20	8/17	4/19	4/18	28/89 31%	10/20	5/17	3/19	3/18	25/89 28%	11/20
		G	2/12	4/11	2/12			5/12	6/11	1/12			5/12	6/11	3/12		
	EXP or above	B	10/17	15/19	15/18	67/89 75%	10/20	9/17	11/19	14/18	57/89 64%	10/20	12/17	16/19	15/18	64/89 72%	9/20
		G	10/12	7/11	10/12			7/12	5/11	11/12			7/12	5/11	9/12		
	EXC	B	3/17	6/19	4/18	21/89 24%	2/20	1/17	3/19	1/18	10/89 11%	1/20	3/17	9/19	4/18	20/89 22%	3/20
		G	1/12	2/11	5/12			1/12	1/11	3/12			0/12	2/11	2/12		
	<p>5H – 17 boys, 12 girls, 7 pupil premium, 2 SEND 5R – 19 boys, 11 girls, 5 pupil premium, 10 SEND 5S – 18 boys, 12 girls, 8 pupil premium, 6 SEND</p> <p>Working at ARE or above – result in brackets is for the same cohort last term: Reading – 75% (55%) Writing – 64% (66%) Maths – 72% (66%)</p> <p>Reading in Y5 was 64% in Autumn term, dropped to 55% in Spring (teachers have identified this trend with this set of NFER papers in previous years too) then rose to 75% by the end of the year, so children made good progress across the year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These children are now in Y6 • There is a maths intervention group twice a week with Mr Wood • English intervention group twice a week with Mr Croot • Attack spelling • Rapid reading • Mrs Russell takes a higher group for maths, other children are taught in their mixed ability class (with smaller class sizes as the HA children are out with SR) • When sets resume, Set 3 and 4 will be taught together so there are two teachers and they can have a break out group for support as necessary 																

		Reading (SATS test)	Writing (TA)	Maths (SATS test)
Year 6	Below ARE expectations	27/90 30%	19/90 21%	16/90 18%
	EXP or above	63/90 (was 62 but remarked to 63) 70%	71/90 79%	74/90 82%
	EXC (GDS/High Score)	23/90 26%	11/90 12%	23/90 26%
<p>Cohort context: 46 boys (51%) 44 girls (49%) 16 Disadvantaged (18%) 16 SEND (18%)</p> <p>Results in brackets show teacher assessments in the previous term: Reading – 70% (78%) Writing – 79% (73%) Maths – 82% (62%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These children are now in Y7 • PS has analysed reading papers from the children who were close to achieving EXS and has communicated to staff the priorities for improving reading across the school this year 				

Year 6 SATs

As shown in the table above, the Year 6 results in reading for this academic year were a little disappointing. Achieving below the national average is something that Forefield is certainly not used to. Mr Swift was very quick to analyse the papers and was able to have a number of tests re-marked. Our final percentage was 70% (national 74%).

By analysing our KS2 SATs results, we are able to identify many children who were extremely close to meeting the expectations for the year but missed out by only a few marks. **Time** was clearly an issue. This concern was mirrored across the country, as was highlighted in both local and the national press.

Having already attended a **'Year 6 Conference'** this term, it is clear that reading fluency needs to be a huge focus for schools this academic year. This term, Mr Swift has already put a lot of time and effort into providing training for staff so that we are able to provide opportunities for children to increase their reading fluency and stamina. As a school, we understand the importance of embedding fluency-enhancing skills from Year 3 onwards. We have also discussed the need to communicate with Forefield Infants so that we can ensure that the skills learnt in KS1 are continued and built on, in KS2.

As English lead, I have already fed back the updates for reading, as were discussed during my recent course.

In next year's subject leader report, I will explain further the steps that we have taken to increase reading fluency and stamina. If, however, you would like to learn more about what we are currently doing in school, then please contact me (Mr Croot) and I would be happy to call or meet up with you. Mr Swift has already undertaken lesson observations, focusing on reading and these have been very positive. With the additional training that we have recently received, I am confident that we are providing quality-first teaching when it comes to the teaching of reading.



Pupil Voice

Even though I have carried out a *'pupil voice'* session during this autumn term, I very much wanted to include it in this year's report. I purposely left it until the start of this year as I wanted to gauge from our newest members of the juniors (Year 3) just how we were doing in our approach to reading.

I spent an afternoon session (*about an hour*) interviewing children from both the lower and upper juniors. I selected two children (*at random*) from each class and asked them the following questions:

- 1. Do you enjoy reading? (If no, why?)**
- 2. When do you get a chance to read?**
- 3. What makes a good reader?**
- 4. How do you know if you are reading well?**
- 5. What helps you with reading? How do you get help? How do you improve?**

6. How often does an adult in school hear you read?
7. How often does an adult at home hear you read?
8. How could we improve reading at school?

The responses to these questions were very encouraging. **All** classes showed a clear understanding of VIPERS skills, and all reported having regular guided reading lessons.

In response to questions 6 and 7, it did appear that children felt they were not being listened to read as often as they may have been in past years. Gone are the times where children simply appear at the desk of their teacher and read two pages of their book. Whilst there is still much to be gained in listening to children in this way, we now have a much better understanding of **how** to help children become better readers.

In direct response to question 6, I am VERY confident that this year, all teachers will be providing a wider range of opportunities for children to read aloud (**Staff meeting – November 2023**). Whether it be *'tracking'* a text with a partner, *'jumping in'* (oral cloze procedure), reading drills or echo reading (*to name just 4 strategies*), children will most definitely be able to read aloud more frequently and improve their reading fluency and stamina. This will give them the best chance possible of gaining success in the KS2 SATs.

Book Scrutiny

During designated staff meeting time this year, we completed a book scrutiny of English work across LKS2 and UKS2. This year, I wanted to continue to focus on our *'Guided Reading'* books, as well as delving into our *'Writing Journey'* books. As each academic year passes by, I do feel that, as a staff, we are developing and maintaining a more consistent approach when it comes to the teaching of reading and writing skills. Within each year group, there is always an experienced teacher that is able to provide support and guidance to those they are working alongside.

Examples of work from our VIPERS *'Reading'* exercise books and our *'Writing Journey'* books. (See photographs below.)

Reading Displays, showing the VIPERS skills.

This year, we have continued to promote a love of reading by providing welcoming reading areas within our own classrooms. Each class teacher has ensured that reading VIPERS skills are displayed and referred to during guided reading sessions.

Once again, I am confident that children across all year groups are able to talk about VIPERS and what each letter represents. (*Vocabulary, Inference, Prediction, Explain, Retrieval, Summarise/Sequence*)



Working walls continue to work very well around school, with teachers utilising them to provide opportunities for children to *'help themselves'* when engaged in reading/writing tasks.

With *'reading for pleasure'* at an all-time low across the country, Forefield continues to provide opportunities for children to develop a love of books.

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:



This summer, Mrs Russell and I spent time in the school library, sorting through the non-fiction section. Our aim was to remove any books that were in poor condition or outdated. One of the aims of this year is to replenish and improve the selection of books in our school library, particularly the more popular titles.

It has been suggested that any money raised during the Christmas BINGO event (2023) is put towards buying new books.

World Book Day: This year, we once again provided a number of exciting opportunities to celebrate World Book Day. Both children and staff were given the opportunity of dressing up as their favourite book characters. Without a doubt, Mrs Cheetham stole the show with her portrayal of Mrs Twit!



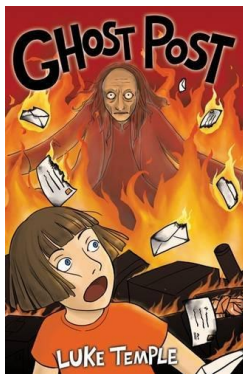
I decided to dress as Skulduggery Pleasant which certainly made the children smile.

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 'Design your own mini book' competition. Our

fantastic reading ambassadors were the judges for our mini books and a winner from each year group was chosen. Their prize was to receive a token to use in our book-vending machine.

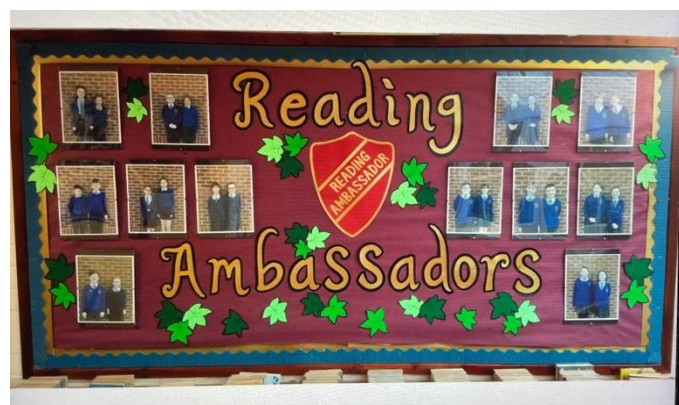
Another part of the day which has now become embedded within school was for teachers to swap classes and to read a story to a new group of children. Each class always enjoys the 'surprise' of seeing **who** will appear at their classroom door.

Author Visits:



This year, we have managed to secure a second visit from the very popular author, Luke Temple. Even though he is not able to visit school until February 2024 (*due to the release of his new book*), we have booked him in for a two-day event. On his last visit, we demonstrated our love of reading by purchasing **many** of his books during his book-signing session. He commented on just how much our school clearly loved to read!

Reading Ambassadors: Our reading ambassadors this year, as always, have been amazing. We have continued to have 24 ambassadors (2 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. Next year, we are keen to get a monthly newsletter published to further encourage a love of books.

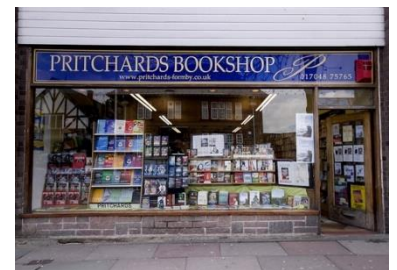


Book Vending Machine:

As was suggested during an INSET day, Forefield is now the proud owner of a book-vending machine which is used to reward children throughout the year. To help stock this exciting addition to the school, the reading ambassadors held a second-hand book sale which they helped organise and run. It was a huge success!



Pritchards Bookshop: This year, our link with Pritchard's bookshop has not been as strong as I would like it to be. Therefore, I am going to make sure that I contact them this year so that we can continue to work together to provide reading opportunities for our children.



Theatre Visit:



Year 6 had the opportunity of experiencing Shakespearian language when they watched a production of '*Romeo and Juliet*'. In Year 6, we study the work of Shakespeare and so this was a great opportunity.

Staff Training

As was mentioned in last year's report, staff finally managed to complete a training session, focusing on phonics and '*Rapid Reading*' (*previously cancelled due to COVID*). This happened on the last day of the autumn term and helped staff to develop their knowledge and teaching of phonics for those children who continued to need some support.

Staff were also signposted to additional online support that they could access in order to further their understanding of phonics teaching.

Professional Development - Capital Writing Project:

In November this year, I attended a Capital Writing Project which took place over three days. Working with the School Improvement Officer and four other local schools, the objective of the project was to share good practice in writing, across the local authority. Each school was given a morning or afternoon to 'present' their school to other teachers. At the end of the three days, an afternoon of action planning took place.

During each of the presentations, the English lead from each school was expected to:

- do a learning walk around the school, focusing on writing.
- set up some lesson observations to watch and then discuss
- talk about 'Writing' at school – written tasks, work in books, assessment etc.

There were lots of opportunities for discussion between the schools and the whole event was very relaxed and non-threatening. It was almost like having an OFSTED, but without the associated pressures.

As part of my action plan, it was noted that I needed to continue to develop a clear progression map of skills in reading, writing and SPaG. Identifying what is taught across each year group in all of these areas also needed to be a priority.

The course leader (*Shelley Pennington*) was very impressed with the level of our Year 6 'Ocean Voices' magazines – written and published by the children. She suggested that next year, some of these magazines make their way into the school library, to be read and enjoyed by children in other year groups.

Next Steps

- 1) To ensure that clear/detailed progression mapping is in place for English: Reading, Writing, SPaG and to contribute to the development of staff knowledge. As Subject Leaders, we will monitor to ensure that our intent is clear and that all staff are implementing each aspect – reflected in the pupil books and outcomes.

The above target was put in place last year and involved not only the English lead, but all teaching staff. They would help to contribute towards producing a progression/curriculum map for reading, writing and SPaG.

Since this target was put into place, staff have now completed three staff meetings (end of 2022) and have provided Mr Croot with details of what is being taught in reading/writing and SPaG. Mr Croot is now working on putting this into one document which will show the coverage in these three areas of learning.

From this document, we will then be able to see if there are any *'gaps'* that need to be addressed.

A progression map of skills across years 3-6 has now been completed. In this year's appraisal meeting, Mr Swift agreed that staff can be given a copy of this progression map in order to check that the skills in each year group are being covered across the year.

An area that also needed to be looked at, which was mentioned by OFSED, was concerning the progression of both skills and vocabulary being used when looking at different writing genres. For e.g. If poetry is being studied in Year 3 and Year 6, are staff aware of prior teaching and therefore how to take the children's learning to the next level?

In reply to this, I have sourced some key documents that show progression of skills and vocabulary within different writing genres. This still needs to be handed out to staff and is certainly on my list of actions to complete.

I am really pleased to be able to report that I am being given an afternoon per week (*academic year 2023-2024*) to be able to work on English-related tasks. I am conscious that I am also PSHE lead in school (*which also is a huge subject*) and so I will continue to do my very best in order to meet the demands of both subject areas.

As already previously mentioned, one of the main focus areas for this academic year is reading fluency and stamina. I am already looking forward to reporting back on the work that will take place in school over the next twelve months.

