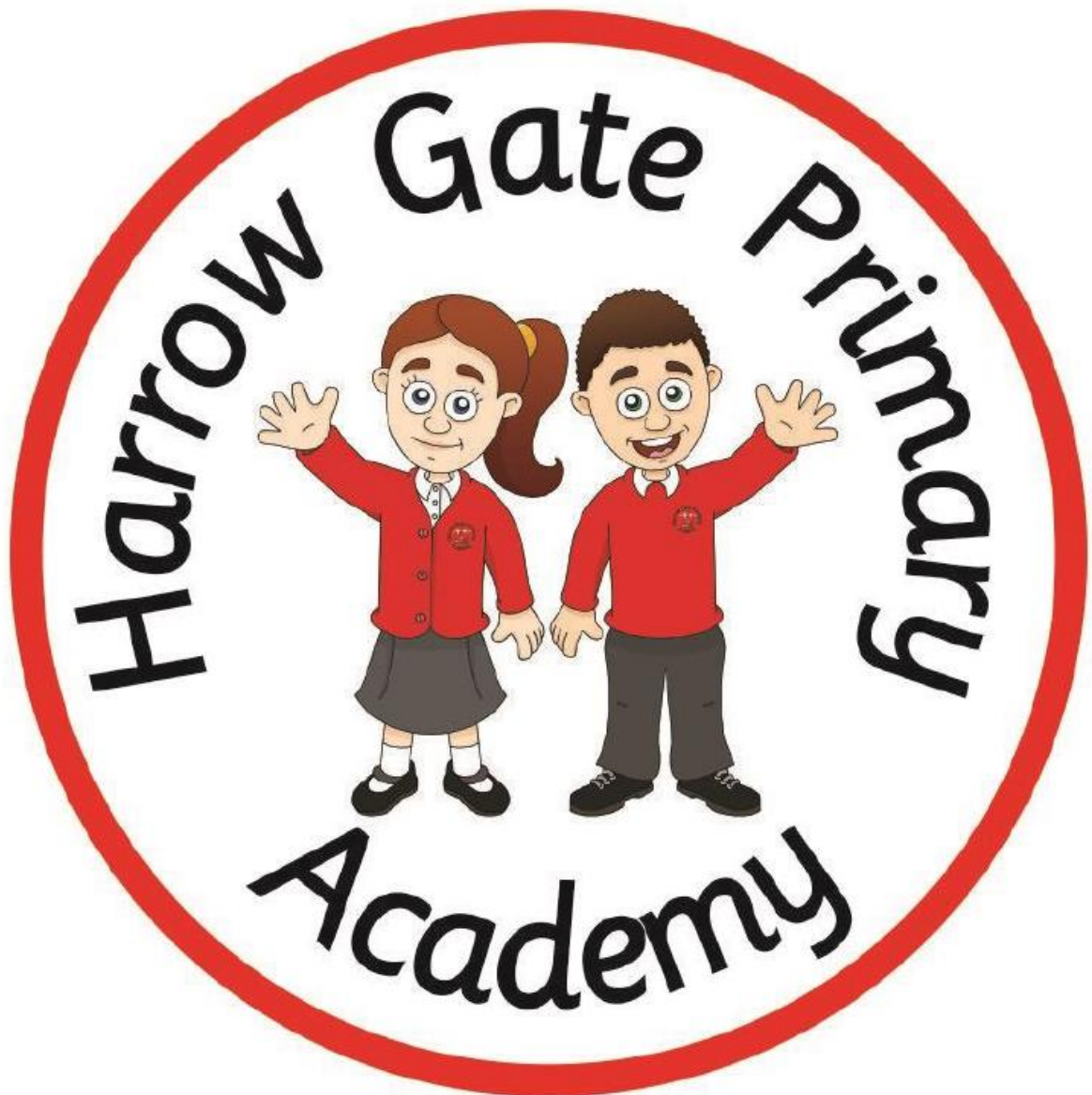


Owners	Mrs Galt
Audience	All Teaching Staff



# English Policy

## Introduction:

English is a core subject in the primary curriculum. This policy outlines the teaching, organisation and management of English at Harrow Gate Academy.

## Teaching English:

English is at the heart of the Harrow Gate Academy curriculum. A daily English session is to be provided for at least one hour and should follow the National Curriculum in England – programmes of study key stages 1 & 2 and the CLPE Power of Reading text based curriculum. Children will be given the opportunity to read a wide range of high quality texts and write in a variety of ways.

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Nursery						
Genre:	Contemporary Fiction	Classic Texts	Contemporary Fiction	Picture Book	Poetry	Picture Book
Reception						

## Punctuation and Grammar:

Each taught English session will start with an English 'Recap'; this task is designed to re-activate recently acquired knowledge as well as ensuring previously learned material is not forgotten. The English Recap will focus on punctuation, grammar and vocabulary. The teaching and learning of punctuation and grammar objectives are mapped out in each year group and can be found on the CLPE Power of Reading text based curriculum documents. Children will receive direct instruction when encountering new content followed by opportunities to apply new skills through authentic writing tasks.

## Spelling:

Spelling will be taught daily and will be in line with the Spelling at Harrow Gate document which will be reviewed annually.

### Spelling at Harrow Gate Academy

#### Intent

At Harrow Gate Primary Academy, our intent is to enable children to develop the skills to become strong spellers as this aids **communication, literacy and future employment**. Communication skills are essential for children to grow and interact successfully with the world thus helping with employment.

The art of **correctly assembling words** from their letters, is one of the **essential components** of successful writing. Learners who feel confident with letters and word patterns are able to read and **comprehend** more **complex texts**.

We have adopted the SCODE spelling scheme for all children who have passed their phonics screening in Year 2. The scheme teaches the spelling requirements of the National Curriculum for years 2-6 by teaching children the **Advanced English Phonic Code**.

*The National Curriculum (2013) states; 'The rules and guidance are intended to support the teaching of spelling. Phonic knowledge should continue to underpin spelling after key stage 1; teachers should still draw pupils' attention to GPCs that do and do not fit in with what has been taught so far. Increasingly, however, pupils also need to understand the role of morphology and etymology'.*

#### Implementation

Within our SCODE lessons we use various strategies to develop children's confidence and skills as spellers: Providing five times weekly sessions for pupils in Year 2, 3 & 4 and three weekly in Year 5 & 6. All lessons are explicitly taught using the spelling content and curriculum words sorted by sound and code in accordance with the requirements of The National Curriculum for England 2014 (Y1 to Y6). Three times a week the current year groups objectives will be taught, two times a week, previous objectives that have not been met will be taught.

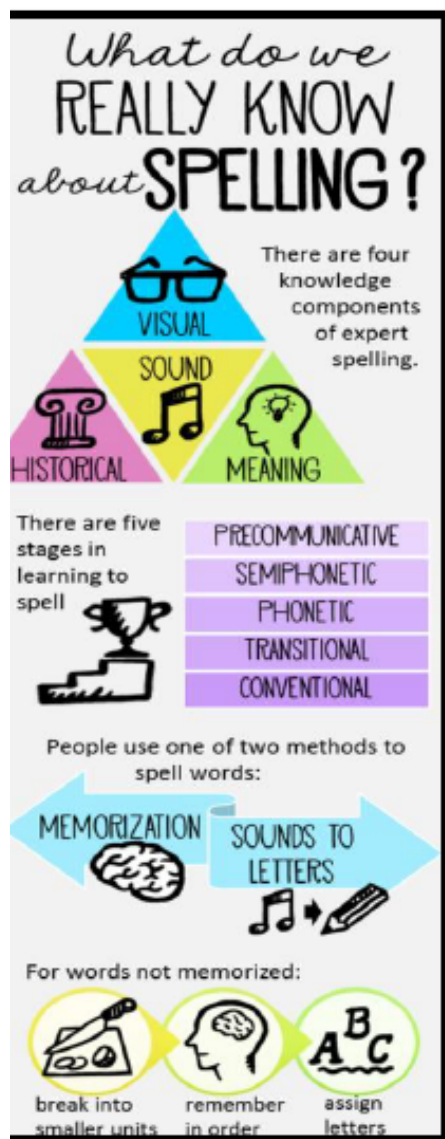
Throughout the spelling process, children are encouraged to **orally rehearse** and **smash down words**. This means giving children the opportunity to practise before they write by clapping out the syllables, saying the word out loud before they commit it to paper in their book.

Once a word/spelling pattern is taught children are expected to use it correctly in their written work – with scaffolds and reminders where appropriate. Spelling words will be **explicitly taught**; sessions will include instruction on meaning, etymology, use and pronunciation. Time will be given daily for **practice**.

Spelling Frame will also be accessed by children from Year 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 to **consolidate** new sounds and spellings that have been learned. This can also be accessed at home if children wish to.

#### Impact

Assessment has been distributed across time and activity. It is often hidden from children but designed in a way that you can quickly and easily assess if progress is being made. Careful and considerate teaching and **frequent practice** of spellings will lead to children developing overall English skills and becoming confident spellers. Spelling is a **crucial component of communication, literacy and future employment**.





## Vocabulary:

Vocabulary will be taught in line with Vocabulary Teaching at Harrow Gate Academy document which will be reviewed annually.

### Vocabulary Teaching at Harrow Gate Academy

#### Intent

We are committed to **broadening** our children's vocabulary. We are a **vocabulary rich school** and take every opportunity to **explore new words**, recognising that a broad vocabulary is vital to **fluent, accurate, confident** and **effective** expression in both speech and writing.

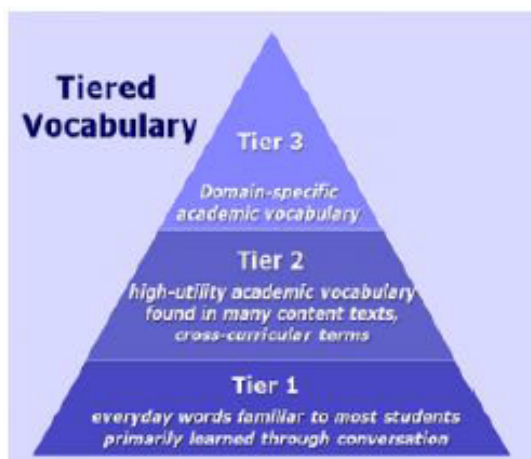
Children's vocabulary knowledge is directly tied to their success in school. This is partly because vocabulary is an important aspect of reading comprehension (Hattie, 2009; Scarborough, 2001; Stahl and Nagy, 2006).

#### Implementation

Classrooms at HGPA will be both **language** and **vocabulary** rich through our commitment to reading aloud daily and sharing discussions about what has been read and the development of the **situation model**.

Vocabulary to be taught explicitly should be identified at the planning stage of your Power of Reading text. Subject specific vocabulary to be **explicitly taught** is listed, with descriptions, on your year group unit plan. These words will make up the vocabulary organiser. Depending on year group the vocabulary organiser should also include word class, **synonyms, homonymy** and **antonyms** and **collocation as appropriate**.

Direct instruction of a targeted set of vocabulary will help children to learn new words and gain the vocabulary knowledge they need for success in school in the form of a **vocabulary organiser**. Vocabulary instruction will include descriptions of a word as opposed to a definition; all descriptions will be taken from a Cobuild dictionary.



Teachers will focus on **explicit instruction** of carefully chosen Tier 2 words.

As children progress through KS2 they will begin to include appropriate **Tier 3** words.

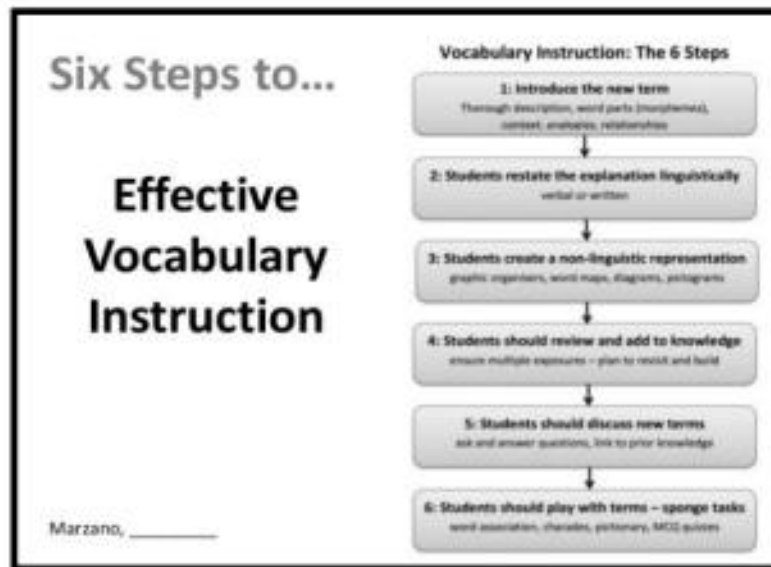
**Tier 2** words will be largely taught using the six step process for vocabulary instruction formulated by Haystead and Marzano (2009).

Words will be displayed in classrooms and revisited as appropriate. Alongside the use of the six step process we should also remember that.

Due to **vocabulary** being at the heart of our English curriculum, vocabulary organisers will be shared in a variety of lessons and referred to constantly in learning.

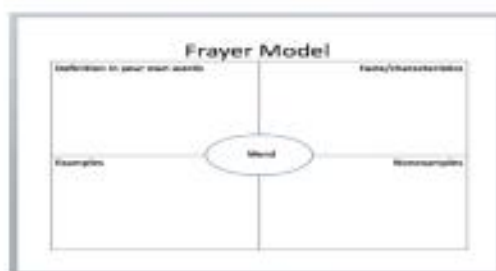
“One should not underestimate the value of any meaningful encounter with a word, even if the information gained from the one encounter is relatively small”.

Marzano (2013)



Pre teaching words from the vocabulary organiser before a text is shared is also an effective method of instruction.

Teaching and investigating both Tier 2 and 3 words can also be done through the use of different models and activities.



The Frayer Model



Semantic Mapping

### Impact

Our children will know what words mean and how they **interconnect** to create networks of knowledge that allow students to **connect new information** to previously learned information. (Marzano, 2004). This will ensure children have a **significantly broadened vocabulary** from the time they join Harrow Gate to the point they then transition to secondary school.

## Reading for Pleasure at Harrow Gate Academy

### Intent

A love of books will be fostered in each classroom as we strive to become a school where children **read for pleasure**. We invest in Reading Pleasure for time to ensure that children can develop their reading fluency; giving them the means to use **efficient** and **effective word recognition skills** that permit a reader to construct the meaning of text.

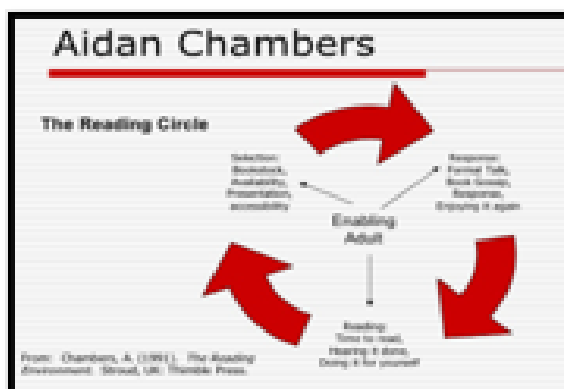
### Implementation

Reading Pleasure for time will happen in all classrooms where children will be given the time and space to select and enjoy a wide range of **high quality texts**.

All children will have the support of a trusted and experienced reader who, acting as **the enabling adult**, will guide and support them through all aspects of 'The Reading Circle'.

**The enabling adult** is at the very centre of The Reading Circle.

All children will experience reading in the following formats –



Reading to...	Reading with...	Reading by...
Read Aloud Programme	Shared / Guided Reading	Reading Practice / Free Reading
	Adult-Led	1:1
Whole Class / School	Whole Class or	Independent
	Small Groups	Self-selected groups

**Reading areas** will be well-presented and organised in a way which can ensure easy access, for **browsing** and **selecting**, by all children. **Book stock** must contain the books that children want and the books that children don't know that they want yet! Each reading area will be categorised using the school 'emoji system' which will accommodate **informal book talk**, **book reviews** and personal **recommendations**.

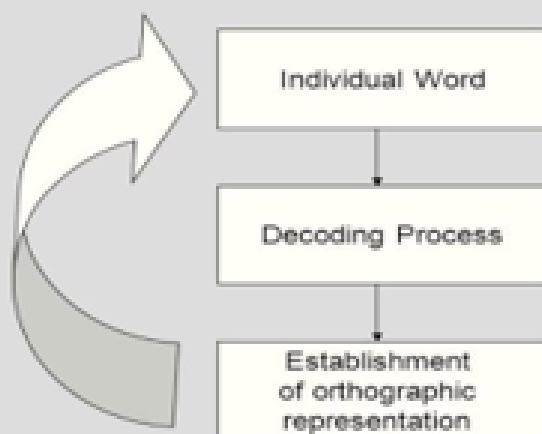
Children will be given the time and space to find and enjoy a book; a book that they will want to read again, another book by the same author or more of the same kind.

Children will be given the time and the language skills to talk about a book with someone else – an opportunity to explore what has happened, discuss what the book meant to them and say why it is important. **Booktalk** will take two forms-

- **Informal gossip**, the kind that goes on between friends.
- More formal, **more considered talk**; the sort of discussion that goes on in an organised book group.

Reading Pleasure for time is underpinned by **Share's Self Teaching Hypothesis**.

## Self-Teaching Hypothesis (Share)



This hypothesis has alphabetic decoding at its core but Share proposes that, by requiring the child to engage in **the effortful process of translating print to sound** and therefore to focus on the letters in the word and their sequence, the act of decoding also provides an **opportunity to acquire further orthographic knowledge**.

This knowledge is then available on future encounters with the word, lessening the reliance on alphabetic decoding. Through the combination of **alphabetic decoding** and **repeated exposure**, children can self-teach through their independent reading.

The self-teaching hypothesis provides a powerful paradigm for representing how children move from **novice** to **expert**.

### Impact

A love of books will be fostered in each classroom as we strive to become a school where children **read for pleasure**.

**Reading for pleasure** will happen in all classrooms where children will be given the time and space to select and enjoy a wide range of **high-quality texts**.

**Reading response:** Emojis are used to support the children with book talk and **comprehension of key themes and their opinions of a text**.

### **EYF8 to Year 8:**

An agreed set of emojis are to be used to **classify books** that the children have read. With adult modelling, the children select the appropriate basket to place the book, according to the class opinions. Over the year the children's selections will grow as they read and experience more texts.

During class **'Reading for Pleasure'**, children are encouraged to discuss and **debate** the selection.



#### Year 4, 5 and Year 6:

A **Reading for Pleasure** display will develop as the children read through the year. Class libraries are to be sorted using the emoji system and recommended reads.

After finishing a text, children will complete a short book review (post it note style) to be placed on the relevant emoji on the display. Other children will then use this as a basis for the next book they would like to read.

<u>Reading</u>	
Title:	_____
Author:	_____
Rating:	_____






The development and support necessary for each child to read will continue to grow from early reading in EYFS to independent reading in Y6.

The Reading@HGA Continuum clearly outlines how reading must be supported in each year group or 'stage of reading'. This document also sets out what must happen in each year group to ensure that optimal practice is reached and that children are on track to meet age related expectation.

Home reading expectations are also set out in this document and mirrored in the HGA Reading Commitment for Parents and Carers documents.

## Reading@HGA Continuum



Stage/Year group	We facilitate and teach reading by -	We ensure that –
<p><b>Developing Readers</b></p> <p><b>Y1</b></p>	<p>Providing stimulating reading environments which include a wide range of materials.</p> <p>Creating reading areas that reflect the curriculum and the children's interests.</p> <p>Observing and sampling reading regularly to analyse strengths, self-corrections and substitutions and identify next steps.</p> <p>Providing opportunities for children to read for pleasure and purpose as a regular part of classroom routines.</p> <p>Sustaining home school links to ensure positive reading routines and behaviours continue to develop.</p> <p>Facilitating and supporting a range of reading experiences such as dialogic groups, paired reading, book clubs, reading aloud, sustained periods of quiet, uninterrupted and independent reading.</p> <p>Continuing to read aloud regularly, allowing opportunities for children to participate, question and give opinions.</p> <p>Teaching phonics systematically, enabling children to read a wider range of words that may not be easily encoded through syntactic or semantic cues.</p> <p>Encouraging improved fluency by supporting children to look at larger chunks of words through a more analytic approach.</p> <p>Further embedding comprehension and interpretation of texts by developing children's questioning skills and inference. This includes reading illustrations in picture books that may give a deeper meaning than the text on the page.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our learning environment is <b>text rich</b> and promotes a love of reading!</li> <li>An inviting and discerningly stocked reading area is embedded in to the environment where it is used to <b>support</b> and <b>model</b> positive reading behaviour.</li> <li>Reading is part of our daily routine – <b>adults read aloud daily!</b></li> <li>ERIC Time happens daily.</li> <li>High quality text interrogation/comprehension skills are at the heart of all English sessions.</li> <li>Adults create a 'buzz' about books and promote 'book talk'.</li> <li>ERIC time happens daily.</li> <li>Daily phonic sessions are taught following Daily phonic sessions are taught following Little <b>Woods</b> Letters and Sounds Revised programme and phonic application is developed in meaningful contexts and rich reading experiences.</li> <li>Children learn Y1/2 common sight words; these can be found in classrooms.</li> </ul> <p>Children will read an accountable book, which is closely matched to their phonic stage, to an adult weekly (1:1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to apply their growing phonic knowledge and experience success</li> <li>to teach specific reading skills</li> <li>facilitate book talk</li> <li>to assess and inform next steps</li> <li>fine-tune text choice</li> </ul> <p>Assessments and comments will be made in class reading files.</p> <p>A reading record will be used to enable an ongoing dialogue with parents/carers about how their child is reading.</p> <p>A 'key objective' or 'area to improve and practise' will be shared weekly so that parents/carers know how to help and support their child.</p> <p>Reading records will be checked weekly by staff. Any comments will be responded to by the class teacher/TA.</p> <p>Collins Big Cat books and picture books will also be shared with children to facilitate reading aloud, book talk and oral comprehension skills.</p>

- Children who are not at ARE or who are at risk of falling behind (the bottom 20%) will need further and more rigorous input to help them progress.
- Children who do not read at home must read with class teacher or TA weekly.
- Year group is to be used as a guide only!

# Phonics

All phonic sessions will follow the **Little Wandle for Letters and Sounds Revised programme**. This will be taught in line with the Phonics at Harrow Gate Academy document which will be reviewed annually.

## Phonics Teaching at Harrow Gate Academy

### Intent

At Harrow Gate Primary Academy, we know that to be able to read, children need to be taught an efficient strategy to decode words. That strategy is phonics.

Children are actively taught and supported to use phonics as the only approach to decoding. Phonic decoding skills are practised until children become automatic and fluent reading is established. Fluent decoding is only one component of reading. Comprehension skills are taught to enable children to make sense of what they read, build on what they already know and give them a desire to want to read. Reading increases children's vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech.

### Implementation

Phonics teaching at Harrow Gate Primary Academy embodies the following seven features of effective phonics practice:

- direct teaching in frequent, short bursts
- consistency of approach
- secure, systematic progression in phonics learning
- maintaining pace of learning
- providing repeated practice
- application of phonics using matched decodable books
- Early identification of children at risk of falling behind, linked to the provision of effective keep-up support.



All phonics sessions at Harrow Gate Academy follow the systematic, synthetic phonics programme outlined in the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme. All staff follow the programme with fidelity and understand the benefits of a clear and consistent programme of SSP.

All children benefit from an early start from week 1 in Autumn 1 and phonic sessions happen daily in Reception, Y1 and Y2 and where necessary throughout KS2.

Each year group has a strategic programme of study which maps out which phase and sounds are taught weekly so that every child can be closely tracked; ensuring that no one is at risk of falling behind. For those children who do struggle to keep up, a catch-up plan is identified and implemented as a matter of urgency so that any gaps are diminished as quickly as possible.

Phonic sessions follow the sequence of teaching outlined in the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme however the application of decoding and encoding of taught sounds is the focus of authentic reading and writing opportunities offered in daily Power of Reading Sessions.

# Writing

Writing will be taught in line with the Writing at Harrow Gate Academy document which will be reviewed annually.

## Writing at Harrow Gate Academy

### Intent

At Harrow Gate, all **writing is purposeful and valued**. We aim to develop **children as writers, who see themselves as writers and have positive attitudes towards writing**.

Writing is a complicated and intricate process, to enable a child to become a writer you have given them a voice, supported them to communicate and provided them with a skill that is vital for **all of** their schooling and in their life beyond.

*'Learning to write begins – whatever the learner's age – with seeing oneself as a writer, doing things writers do, and thinking the way writers think. This is a matter of identity, not of instruction, or of effort, or even of desire to learn. Teacher has a crucial role to play here, not in teaching the technicalities of writing, but in engendering appropriate attitudes to writing'.*

Smith, Frank (1994:180) Joining the Literacy Club

### Implementation

**CLPE is at the heart of our English curriculum.**

We pride ourselves in being a CLPE Power of Reading Associate School.

Writing always **has to** have a **real purpose and authentic audience**.

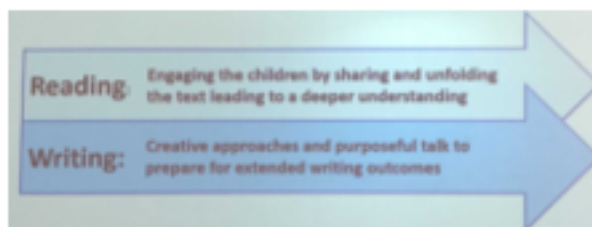
Children need to know that their writing will be **valued by a reader**

whether that is themselves, their peers, or an adult in school, parents or a wider audience on Twitter.



**Reading** plays a crucial role in developing writers. Children are immersed in **high quality texts**.

Each half term, each class reads a different **high quality** text that has been carefully selected on the **text based** curriculum map. Each classroom will have **'books that remind me of'** which are other **high quality** texts that relate and support the main text. Time is invested in high quality texts so that the children are engaged with the reading which results in them wanting to write and knowing what to write about.



Primary School Primary text-based curriculum  
Year 2 Autumn 1

Before the visit – Make a plan for the visit. Decide what all the children will do at school, what they will do at the visitor's place, and what they will do at home. Make a plan for the visit. Decide what all the children will do at school, what they will do at the visitor's place, and what they will do at home. Make a plan for the visit. Decide what all the children will do at school, what they will do at the visitor's place, and what they will do at home.

Reading	Writing
<b>Reading</b> Engaging the children by sharing and unfolding the text leading to a deeper understanding	<b>Writing</b> Creative approaches and purposeful talk to prepare for extended writing outcomes

The Plan Value of Participation and Engagement

Reading	Writing
<b>Reading</b> Engaging the children by sharing and unfolding the text leading to a deeper understanding	<b>Writing</b> Creative approaches and purposeful talk to prepare for extended writing outcomes

We use a range of **creative teaching approaches** that build imagination, provide opportunities for ideation and give time for oral rehearsal. Approaches such as role play and drama also promote engagement and attainment in writing.

We use the **CLPE teaching sequences** that go with the **high quality** text as a starting point. We then use a carefully planned text-based curriculum approach to identify writing opportunities and the teaching strategies

that will be used to support the children's writing.

Spelling and handwriting are taught discretely but opportunities often arise in texts to consolidate the spelling patterns taught.

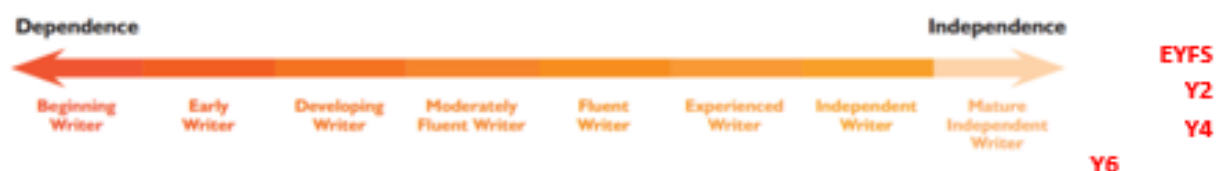
Grammar objectives are identified as suggested by the schools use of the Grammarsaurus programme, careful consideration is given to how this will be taught so that lessons are purposeful to what the children are writing and need. This provides them with opportunities to see **grammar in action** when reading and also to use it in a **purposeful and meaningful way**. Grammar objectives have been closely matched with the half termly text. At the beginning of Autumn 1, in each year group, The Place Value of Punctuation and Grammar is followed by Poetry throughout the school.

Opportunities for **publication** are identified in the planning stages and a range of outcomes including book making, movie maker and green screen are amongst some of the ways that children publish their writing for a wider audience.

**Environments** allow children to access the tools and resources they need to become **independent writers** by the end of year 6.

#### CLPE Reading and Writing Scales

The CLPE Reading and Writing Scales describe the journey that children make in order to become literate. They help teachers to understand what progression looks like in reading and writing. The pedagogy underpinning the scales and the 'Next Steps' is grounded in a coherent theory of children's language and literacy development. The scales are designed to support and develop teacher subject knowledge in literacy development, not to set out a linear sequence of targets that children need to reach in order to move to the next phase.



**Writing is a journey.** It is important that teachers understand where their children are on the scale so that they can support them in their next steps on their journey to becoming an independent writer. The scales are used to develop teacher's understanding of the continuum of literacy learning.

#### Impact

Our school provides a **text rich reading and writing environment** that allows children to thrive as writers.

It is a place where children see themselves as writers, are developing positive attitudes towards writing and their own authorial voice. Our vision is to become a **'writing for pleasure school'** where children choose to write because they enjoy writing.

#### Moderation

Moderation enables teachers within a school to develop and apply a **consistent and concise language of assessment**. We use a TA framework to arrive at a judgement on each pupil, focusing on the way pupils



writing meets the statements. It is vital **that judgements are made objectively** therefore we moderate in teaching partnership and across the key stage. We also moderate across the Trust schools.

Writing outcomes have been carefully selected on the text-based curriculum which children write independently. These pieces of work are then marked following the marking and feedback policy alongside the TA checklist.

The writing outcomes are then moderated across year group teams before the phase moderation with the English lead which will happen termly. Around 15 percent of children's work will be moderated at the end of each term.

*\*It is the responsibility of class teachers to ensure that all moderation activities are complete.*

The development and support necessary for each child to write will continue to grow from early reading in EYFS to independent reading in Y6.

The Writing@HGA Continuum clearly outlines how reading must be supported in each year group or 'stage of writing'. This document also sets out what must happen in each year group to ensure that optimal practice is reached and that children are on track to meet age related expectation.

Beginning Writer Nursery		
Stage	Writing Behaviours	We ensure that -
Beginning Writer	<p>The main feature of this stage is that writers are not yet able to transcribe text conventionally. They may be able to talk about ideas that they would like to commit to writing, but are still at an early stage of understanding how language is written down and need support with transcription.</p> <p>They may be exploring and experimenting with mark making in a variety of forms. Marks are made to show ideas and children start to ascribe meaning to these. At the beginning marks may be large, circular and random. This develops into more letter-like shapes which may be interspersed with number-like shapes and drawing.</p> <p>Children at this stage can express ideas in simple sentences, though these may not always be complete and may use such grammatical over generalisations as 'I brought a toy to school'. They have awareness that their voice is important for expressing and communicating needs and ideas to others.</p> <p>Children may be composing by trying out ideas through talk and dictating their ideas for writing to a facilitating adult or digitally recording their spoken ideas. They may also have some strategies for writing independently (e.g. drawing, mark making, copying, inventing own code).</p> <p>Older children at this stage may either appear to be reluctant to write or alternatively seek constant support and reassurance. Their experience as writers may be limited; they may be composing orally with confidence but be reluctant to write or avoid taking risks with transcription. Such writers need a great deal of support with developing their own texts (which are often brief) and with the writing demands of the classroom.</p> <p>In terms of composition, some children may be able to compose sentences orally that exceed their transcriptional abilities, whilst others require support with structuring their ideas and composing sentences orally prior to writing. Ideas for writing may be limited by their own range of experience and their lack of exposure to language and high quality texts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our environment is print and language rich and celebrates a love of writing; the written word is held in high esteem.</li> <li>We read aloud a range of high quality texts.</li> <li>Books are read repeatedly to develop story related vocab and story related comprehension and structure.</li> <li>High quality phonic sessions are taught daily aligned with HGA Phonics Policy.</li> <li>Children are given daily practise writing their names and forming letters.</li> <li>We have an appealing writing area that is well stocked with relevant, high quality resources. Resources for writing are accessible and are labelled clearly.</li> <li>Talk is valued and time is spent listening to children's ideas. We create opportunities for children to engage in sustained, talk rich activities in which you can model, clarify, recast and enrich vocabulary and oral sentence structure.</li> <li>Staff communicate regularly with parents to communicate the importance of writing.</li> <li>We respond to children's writing and storytelling as a real reader, commenting on content, helping child to recognise what the reader appreciates and why.</li> <li>We provide a range of models and experiences for physical writing development and to develop gross and fine motor control.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>How we support the Beginning Writer to develop independence as a writer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan a curriculum rich in rhyme, song and story to support their growing knowledge of how language works.</li> <li>Plan a programme of phonics teaching around a rich reading curriculum, following careful analysis of gaps in early phonological development.</li> <li>Read texts aloud for pleasure and purpose, and engage children in group performance reading so that they can appreciate the impact of word choice and punctuation on readers and audience.</li> <li>Expose children to rich language and immerse them in high quality texts, providing a range of experiences that support ideas for writing.</li> <li>Create an appealing writing area which is well stocked with relevant, high quality resources that reflect children's interests and approaches to writing</li> <li>Encourage children to explore and experiment with mark making in a variety of forms and to start ascribing meaning to these.</li> <li>Provide a range of independent writing opportunities where children can apply some of their strategies for writing (e.g. drawing, mark making, copying and pre-handwriting patterns).</li> <li>Give children opportunity and time to talk about ideas that they would like to commit to writing.</li> <li>Provide plenty of opportunities for children to express ideas in simple sentences and show an awareness that their voice is important for expressing and communicating needs and ideas to others.</li> <li>Support children in orally composing their ideas through talk and dictating their ideas for writing.</li> <li>Provide experiences for children's physical writing development and to develop gross and fine motor control.</li> </ul>	

# Handwriting

Handwriting will be taught in line with the Handwriting at Harrow Gate Academy document which will be reviewed annually.

## Handwriting at Harrow Gate Academy

### Intent

At Harrow Gate Primary academy, our intent is to enable children to write legibly, fluently and comfortably.

We know that from a very early age 'good writers' develop fluent handwriting so that it becomes automatic. Once they have mastered the skill, they rarely need to expend much mental energy on their handwriting, so they can concentrate on tailoring their content for an audience, selecting appropriate vocabulary and more.

In stark contrast, students with handwriting difficulties can have their thinking slowed, and as their **working memory is strained** by the process of forming legible letters, words and sentences, their focus on spelling and organising ideas into paragraphs etc. can suffer. Weak writers may even suffer a **vicious circle**: to hide their spelling issues, they may try to keep their writing unclear, attempting to mask their attempts at certain words with small, deliberately ambiguous letter formations.

Issues with handwriting can extend into adolescence and may have a damaging effect on student attainment. Without fluency, a student can struggle at all levels of understanding.

*The handwriting rich get richer and the poor get poorer. (Alex Quigley 2017)*

### Implementation

At Harrow Gate Primary Academy, we follow the **Penpals for Handwriting** programme from EYFS to Year 6. Penpals is a practical, active learning approach that supports the delivery of handwriting teaching. Each year group has the interactive software, teaching guide and practice materials. Each unit is discretely taught is a 20-30 minute lesson each week with follow up sessions where necessary.



### Five Key Developmental Phases

Handwriting is a **developmental process** with its own distinctive stages of sequential growth. Penpals have identified **five stages** that form the structure of the programme:

1. Physical preparation for handwriting: gross and fine motor skills leading to mark-making, patterns and letter formation (EYFS, 3-5 years).
2. Securing correct letter formation (Key Stage 1, 5-6 years).
3. Beginning to join along with a focus on break letters, legibility, consistency and quality (Lower Key Stage 2, 7-9 years).
4. Securing joins along with a focus on break letters, legibility, consistency and quality (Lower Key stage 2, (7-9 years).
5. Practicing speed, fluency and developing a personalised style for different purposes (Upper Key Stage 2, 9-11 years).

1. Physical preparation for handwriting
2. Securing correct letter formation
3. Beginning to join
4. Securing the joins and practising speed
5. Developing a personal style

### Impact

Children will be able to children to write legibly, fluently and comfortably. They will meet year group expectations and intervention will be in place to ensure that children catch-up. Summative assessments are carried out at the beginning and end of the school year. Formative assessment is ongoing and children needing additional support are quickly identified. Progress across classes is monitored by the class teacher and English team. Monitoring will include: writing moderations, lesson drop-ins, pupil voice and learning walks.