

English Policy

Relevant roles held and by whom (correct at the time of publishing)	
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Signed:	
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SEATON
ACADEMY

Introduction

At Seaton Academy, we support the aim for English expressed within the National Curriculum: *“to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping our children with a strong command of the spoken and written language and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.”*

We aim to develop our children as speakers and listeners by:

- allowing many opportunities to speak clearly and audibly in ways which takes account of their listeners; adapting their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands
- encouraging them to listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard
- building and enhancing their abilities to reflect on their own and others contributions and the language used
- motivating them to have an interest in words, their meanings; developing a growing vocabulary in spoken form

We aim to develop our children as readers by:

- creating fluent, confident and lifelong readers; for purpose and pleasure
- growing their skills to decode words in order to be able to read fluently
- ensuring children understand what they have read
- encouraging children to respond with curiosity about what they and others have read
- motivating children to be enthusiastic and motivated to read for pleasure
- building their confidence in reading a wide variety of genres and text types
- expanding their knowledge of a wide range of authors and illustrators

We aim to develop our children as writers by:

- discover the powers of imagination
- encouraging them to establish a passion and enjoyment for writing and recognise its value
- high-quality modelling of a range of writing forms
- teaching them to be able to write with accuracy and meaning, for a range of purposes, in narratives and non-fiction
- to have the increased ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work
- teaching handwriting skills progressively through a consistent approach using ‘*Little Wandle Letters*’ and *Sounds*’ and ‘*Nelson Handwriting*’ and to be able to write legibly and fluently at each point in their development
- supporting them to find an effective and comfortable pencil grip

Intent

We aim to inspire our pupils to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding to become lifelong learners. We strive to ensure that all our pupils receive a well-rounded learning experience when reading, writing, speaking and listening which will equip them with the fundamental tools to achieve. It is our intention to immerse pupils in the wonders of quality texts to instil a love for reading, a passion for discovery and a confidence to explore their imagination through placing Literature at the heart of our curriculum.

We believe the exposure of children's literature is vital as a rich context for learning; not only within English as a subject but to support building our reading culture throughout school. We use high quality picture books, novels, non-fiction and poetry texts that offer opportunities for empathy and can aid philosophical enquiry, where children see their cultures, families and relationships reflected, as means of developing the spoken language requirements, through debate, drama and discussion using the issues raised through, and within the text.

Implementation

Early Years

In the EYFS the development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. The children follow a broad and ambitious curriculum and have a wide range of opportunities to communicate and develop early reading and writing skills. High-quality, back and forth interactions from an early age, as well as exposure to a wide range of vocabulary, form the foundations for language development; building a solid foundation to become effective readers and writers.

The stimulating, language-rich provision provides a balance of child led and adult led experiences for all children. Through extensive enhanced and continuous provision, children are provided with opportunities to use and embed language in a range of contexts; allowing them the opportunity to thrive. Imaginative role-play and storytelling take place daily, where children are supported to share their ideas, questions and elaborate; developing a rich vocabulary and language structure. Resources are used creatively to stimulate curiosity and excitement about the world around them.

In Early Years, we begin to use Little Wandle Foundations in Nursery, alongside the rest of the school.

In Reception, children make a strong start and begin the formal teaching of Little Wandle; learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and begin to blend. Application to embed this learning is planned for throughout the curriculum. Teaching of Literacy Tree begins, where children are exposed to high-quality texts, creating strong levels of engagement to provide meaningful and authentic contexts for writing.

Our Reading Spine ensures that our youngest learners are immersed in the wonder of literature from the earliest opportunity, to promote a lifelong love of reading. Daily

engagement with fiction, non-fiction rhymes and poems provide extensive opportunities for the children to use and embed new vocabulary in a range of context.

Key Stage One

In Key Stage One, spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing, and is fundamental for success. Staff model excellent use of spoken language and correct use of grammar through Standard English.

Exposure to a wide variety of high-quality language and interaction between adults and children, ensures children build an extensive vocabulary and develop effective communication skills in readiness for writing.

Opportunities for children to ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge are provided daily, as well as chance to articulate, justify and offer opinions. Interactive teaching strategies are used, such as: role-play, hot seating, performances, presentations, talk-partners and group discussions, to engage all children and in order to raise standards of spoken language, reading and writing.

In Key Stage One, English is taught daily through dedicated English lessons using The Literacy Tree, alongside separate Little Wandle Spelling and Nelson Handwriting lessons.

These lessons have a focus on: drama and spoken language; vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) and composition; along with cross curricular opportunities to embed the learning from English lessons across the curriculum. The amount of time devoted to English is a minimum of 1 hour per day. Through these opportunities, children develop the capacity to explain their understanding of books; to prepare their ideas before they write.

We strive to make English learning an enjoyable and motivating experience by using a range of stimuli, including drama, film and text, relating these as closely as possible to real-life experiences that children can relate to.

Approaches to Reading (this policy is to be read in conjunction with the [Reading Policy 2023](#))

Phonics

We believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching Phonics in Nursery and follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression, which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school.

Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions three times a week

We teach children to read through reading practice sessions three times a week. Each reading practice session has a clear focus, so that the demands of the session do not overload the children's working memory. The reading practice sessions have been designed to focus on three key reading skills:

- decoding
- prosody: teaching children to read with appropriate intonation and expression
- comprehension: teaching children to understand the text

Additional reading support for vulnerable/lowest 20% children

- Children who are receiving additional phonics Keep-up sessions or interventions read to an adult in school five times per week.

Fluency

At our school, we recognise that fluency is a key component of skilled reading and that it bridges the gap between decoding and full reading comprehension. To support this, we follow the **Little Wandle Fluency** programme, which builds directly on the familiar reading practice sessions from the **Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised** phonics programme.

Teaching Prosody

Prosody—the ability to read with expression, appropriate phrasing, and intonation—is explicitly taught in every Little Wandle Fluency lesson. We understand that teaching prosody deepens children’s comprehension and helps them to connect emotionally and cognitively with the text, making the meaning of words come alive.

Each fluency lesson includes opportunities for **repeated reading** to develop accuracy, automaticity, and expression. The activities we use are carefully chosen for their impact and suitability for group teaching. These include:

- Echo reading
- Rehearsed reading
- Emotion reading
- Marking up texts to guide expressive reading

As children grow their orthographic knowledge and become increasingly able to recognise words ‘at a glance’, they read with greater ease and speed. However, we recognise that reading rate alone is not a full measure of fluency. Research identifies **accuracy**, **rate/automaticity**, and **prosody/expression** (including appropriate pausing and intonation) as the three key dimensions of fluency (Pikulski & Chard, 2005; Rasinski, 2014).

Promoting Comprehension through Fluency

Little Wandle Fluency also supports comprehension development through a range of carefully designed activities:

- **Pre-reading tasks** that introduce and explain key vocabulary
- **Bonus materials** that provide additional background information to help pupils connect with the text’s context and themes
- **Explicit teaching of prosody**, ensuring that how the text is spoken supports its meaning
- **Dialogic discussion**, encouraging pupils to think deeply about what they have read and make meaningful connections
- **Clarification of misconceptions** to ensure secure understanding

Through this structured and evidence-informed approach, we aim to ensure that all pupils become fluent, expressive, and motivated readers who read with both understanding and enjoyment.

Home reading

In Reception and Year 1, children are given a decodable reading practice book to take home. This book is carefully matched to their developing phonic knowledge: containing both previously taught and focused GPCs and tricky words. These matched decodable books ensure success is shared with their families.

In Year 2, children select their own Accelerated Reader book within a Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) range matched closely to the child's reading ability (decided through completing the Star Tests).

Children also take home 'Reading for pleasure' books. These are for parents/carers to share and read with/to children. We share the research behind the importance and impact of sharing quality children's books with parents at our 'Helping Your Child with Reading & Phonics' evening.

Approaches to Writing (this policy is to be read in conjunction with the Handwriting Policy).

At Seaton Academy, our children are encouraged from the beginning, to see themselves as writers and to have confidence to express themselves through print.

Nursery staff have been trained to deliver 'Move to Write'.

This programme gives the children opportunities to develop core strength and muscle isolation; an important step towards writing. The children use large scale movements, using each side of their body to make shapes. Activities to work at large scale are incorporated daily into the provision using brushes, chunky crayons or pencils. Through the development of their gross motor skills, muscle control becomes more defined until they develop an ability to use straight lines and curves to form symbols. To develop a foundation for writing and to support transcription, daily opportunities to develop finger strength are also incorporated, through fun, play activities. All children are given access to a wide range of activities in continuous and enhanced provision to develop an effective pencil grip and enhance their early writing skills.

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Opportunities include:

- Mark making using a wide range of writing tools and mediums
- Threading
- Play dough
- Peg boards

- Tracing and following letter/writing patterns
- Cutting opportunities
- Dough Disco
- Squiggle While You Wiggle

At Seaton Academy, we believe it is crucial for children to develop their hand and finger strength. Through carefully planned activities, EYFS staff support the children to use pencils comfortably and with control, as they begin to form some letters in their name.

In Reception, children begin the formalised teaching of handwriting through Nelson. Children in Key Stage One, are explicitly taught handwriting twice weekly.

Writing Curriculum

Our formal writing curriculum is designed using Literacy Tree, ensuring all children are exposed to a wide range of genres and high-quality texts, traditional tales and poetry, which capture their imagination and stimulate positive responses. We value reading as a crucial life skill here at Seaton Academy and believe that exposure to children's literature is vital as a rich context for learning.

By placing books at the core, we allow teachers to use the text as the context for the requirements of the National Curriculum.

The National Curriculum states that:

'This guidance is not intended to constrain or restrict teachers' creativity, simply to provide the structure on which they can construct exciting lessons.'

At Seaton Academy, we ensure writing opportunities are meaningful; whether short or long the audience is clear. Our carefully chosen, high-quality books offer this opportunity, with the overarching aim that children have real reasons to write, where to explain, persuade, inform or instruct and that where possible, this can be embedded within text or linked to a specific curriculum area. Opportunities for the children to write in role using a range of genres is key to our approach.

This sits comfortably alongside the following statement from the English National Curriculum:

'The National Curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.'

Literacy Tree has mapped the coverage of the entire English Programme of Study for Key Stage 1 Writing, as well as meeting the needs of the statutory 2021 Early Years Framework. At Seaton Academy, we have ensured objectives are covered more than once and the children have opportunities to apply these several times over the course of a year, as well as consolidating prior knowledge from previous years.

Through high-quality texts and the expertise of teaching staff, writing skills are effectively and consistently shared and modelled to demonstrate the ambitious high standards expected of all children. We embed the teaching of Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPAG) in all of

our English lessons, holding the belief that these skills are essential in all aspects of life. Spelling opportunities are planned in line with the teaching progression of Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised.

Our approach to writing delivery supports children to think deeply and develop writing and oracy skills with depth, providing purposeful opportunities for development of spoken language through drama, debate and discussion.

Writing in Reception

Children in Reception are provided with daily opportunities to write recognisable letters, spell words using their knowledge of Little Wandle Letters and Sounds progression and write simple phrases and sentences. Opportunities are also provided within our planned continuous provision, in all areas of learning, both indoor and outdoor. Through the wide range of texts shared, children are introduced to a trove of vocabulary, developing their spoken vocabulary. Children are encouraged to write at an age-appropriate level and teachers use high-quality interactions as part of the learning sequence to develop oracy skills.

Approaches to Vocabulary

At Seaton Academy, we use Vocabulary Vines alongside our Literacy Tree teaching. These vines explicitly identify vocabulary from each text, providing additional opportunities for paired, small group and whole class experimentation with the vocabulary in context. Vocabulary vines further complement spelling development too, through exploration of the morphology (word structure) and etymology (origins) of words. They also provide oracy opportunities through a focus on talk tasks and oral sentence construction.

Outlined below is our Vocabulary Vines (*Literacy Tree*) pedagogy:



Approaches to Spelling

Children in Reception are taught to spell words using Phase 2 and 3 GPC's and words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with accuracy following 'Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised'.

In Year 1, the children continue to follow 'Little Wandle' and initially review Phase 3 and 4, before moving on to being taught to spell words using Phase 5 GPCs with accuracy.

In Year 2, children are explicitly taught spelling through the use of Little Wandle Spelling. The children continue to build on the firm foundations developed using 'Little Wandle', strengthening spelling skills and building vocabulary acquisition. The teaching begins with a five-week review of Phase 5. Year

In the Autumn term, teaching begins with a Phase 5 review, before 'Bridge to Spelling' where the children will complete the alphabetic code and learn the underpinning concepts of spelling.

Once this learning is secure, children are ready to move on to the Year 2 Spelling units. Little Wandle Spelling teaches children to consider etymology, morphology and grammar when spelling new words. Each week the children study words; word parts; their meanings and how this affects spelling. Lessons throughout the scheme consolidate children's knowledge of common morphemes such as root formations, prefixes and suffixes.

The programme provides full coverage of National Curriculum spelling requirements.

Spelling is also encompassed through the 'The Literacy Curriculum' in Reception to Year 2, where teaching provides opportunities to practise and apply spelling within meaningful and purposeful contexts. Spelling is closely linked to language acquisition and, as such, the spelling words, strategies and rules in these Spelling Seeds ensure children are exposed to a wide variety of varied and often challenging vocabulary, linked to a range of learning opportunities.

In KS1, Spelling Homework is sent home each week- linked to the children's learning in school.

English across the Curriculum

At Seaton Academy we aim to embed Literacy skills into all areas of our curriculum. Key vocabulary (Tier 1, 2 and 3) is built into foundation subject planning to develop broad, ambitious and subject specific word banks and many opportunities to integrate reading, writing and spoken language.

SEND/ Most Able

Quality First Teaching takes place in all English lessons. The teacher identifies the abilities of each child at the earliest opportunity, and where appropriate, provide approaches such as explicit instruction, scaffolding and flexible grouping (EEF) to move learning forwards for each child.

Where a child has a greater need, the school's SEND policy is implemented. Teaching Assistants are effectively deployed to provide scaffolding and support where appropriate. The class teacher and SENCO work closely together to formulate Individual Education Plans, which will support the child's acquisition of English skills.

The most able children are identified and suitable learning challenges are provided.

Computing

ICT will be used to support the teaching of English, when judged to be appropriate by the teaching staff. This includes the use of: computers, interactive whiteboards or iPad's.

Marking

Marking in English can differ from other subject, as often, answers are subjective and have to be supported by evidence. When marking, teachers will use the following techniques:

- highlight the WALT in green or orange to show understanding of the learning objective
- verbally identify the next steps in the learning process
- explain how the work can be improved by making sure the advice is age appropriate and linked to the objectives of the year group
- highlight up to five spellings in orange; particularly those appropriate for the year group
- support and prompt children to correct punctuation and grammatical errors; appropriate to the objectives for the year group
- allow specific time for pupils to make any corrections; whether this be verbal feedback or anything highlighted in orange

Feedback

Feedback should be given to:

- motivate pupils.
- address misunderstandings
- establish an opportunity to make progress in learning by rectifying a misunderstanding

Impact

Assessment

Assessment is used to monitor progress, inform planning, next steps in learning and to identify any child needing additional support as soon as they need it. Class teachers monitor the progress children make through on-going formative and summative assessment opportunities.

Children's progress is assessed using age-related expectations for each year group, beginning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Progress is reported to parents verbally at parent's evenings, through interim reports and in the annual End of Year report.

Moderation of work is undertaken as a whole staff, to ensure accuracy and consistency in assessments across the school. External moderation is also use to quality assure assessments in line with End of Key Stage One exemplification.

Assessment for Learning is used:

- daily within each lesson to identify what the children have learnt, in order to move the child onto the next steps in their learning.
- weekly in the Little Wandle Review lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings.
- through Accelerated Reader quizzes in Year 2 to identify children who require additional support with their comprehension.

Summative Assessment is used:

- in Nursery and Reception to record and track levels of attainment in each of the Areas of Learning (Development Matters).
- in Key Stage One using the Seaton Academy Assessment Descriptors to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support and to plan the keep-up support that they need. Assessments are recorded on Insight.
- every six weeks through Little Wandle and Accelerated Reader 'Star Assessments' to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support and to plan the Keep-up support that they need.
- by the Literacy Leader and SLT to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support and coaching for teachers can be put into place.

Statutory Assessment

- children in Reception undertake the statutory Baseline Assessment on entry into the year group.
- at the end of Reception, teaching staff complete the EYFS Profile for each child. Children are assessed against the seventeen Early Learning Goals (ELGs) indicating whether they are meeting expected level of development.
- children in Year 1 sit the Phonics screening check. Any child who does not pass the Phonics Screening check will re-sit it in Year 2. The outcomes of these statutory assessments are reported to parents at the end of the school year.

Monitoring

Monitoring of reading, writing, handwriting and presentation comes under the main subject of English and is the responsibility of the Literacy Lead.

Monitoring will take place through: observations, learning walks, book looks and writing moderation.