



Literacy Policy

2021 - 2022

At Urmston Primary we believe that language and literacy is fundamental to the overall development of the child and their access to the curriculum in all its aspects. We aim to deliver quality teaching of basic and higher order reading, writing and speaking and listening skills to enable children to become confident, independent and successful in their literacy. We follow the National Curriculum and other guidance to enable quality learning and teaching to take place.

The above will be achieved whilst considering our school values, the resources that we use and the way we support and challenge the children in Literacy, guiding them to become resilient and responsible learners whilst empathising with the content of the texts they study.

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Aims

The aims of the subject, interwoven throughout school life, are to enable children to:

- *become enthusiastic and independent readers;*
- speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners
- listen with concentration and empathy in order to identify the main points of what they have heard;
- adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands;
- evaluate their own and others' contributions through a range of drama activities;
- read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding;
- be able to orchestrate a full range of reading cues (phonic, graphic, syntactic, contextual) to monitor their reading and correct their mistakes;
- understand the sound and spelling system and use this to read and spell accurately;
- have a strong grasp of punctuation and grammar and the reasons for varying sentence lengths and sentence structures;
- have fluent and legible handwriting;
- have an interest in words and their meaning and a varied vocabulary which they are continually developing;
- know, understand and be able to write in a range of genres in fiction and poetry, and understand and be familiar with some of the ways in which narratives are structured through basic literary ideas of setting, character and plot;
- understand, use and be able to write a range of non-fiction texts;
- plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing;
- have a suitable technical vocabulary through which to understand and discuss their reading and writing;
- be interested in books, read with enjoyment and evaluate and justify their preferences;
- through reading and writing, develop their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.

Teaching and Learning

On entering our school nursery, baseline assessments are carried out to establish each child's starting point in Literacy. Activities can then be tailored according to the children's needs. Similarly, a baseline assessment is established on entering Reception, determining which stage of the Early Learning Outcomes each child is working at and whether they are emerging, developing or secure at that stage. Regular interactions, focused activities and formative assessment enable teachers to identify next steps and address the children's needs in order to achieve the Early Learning Goals at the end of Reception.

Pupils' attainment continues to be tracked through KS1 and on arriving in KS2 they will each have a level of attainment from the statutory assessment undertaken at the end of Year 2.

Since September 2016, levels of attainment have been based upon the new national curriculum but, at present, for Years 5 and 6, are based upon old curriculum levels.

At the beginning of Year 3, the Year 3 teachers' baseline assessments will enable them to see what stage the children are working at and to support the judgements made at the end of Year 2. A year group statement of attainment (Working Towards, Expected, Greater Depth) will be given to the children for the teachers to accurately work from and to ensure that any gaps in understanding can be filled as soon as possible in order to provide a solid foundation for the Year 3 and 4 curriculum.

The teaching of literacy throughout our school includes:

- explicitly taught and planned sessions following the guidance and objectives of the Primary National Curriculum (2014) and the English programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2 (2013);
- genre overviews to identify the success criteria of each unit of work and weekly plans tailored to the needs of our children
- explicit teaching of spelling strategies and rules and phonics where required;
- sentence level work led by quality texts to develop grammatical awareness and punctuation skills;
- text level work involving reading a range of genres to develop comprehension skills and scaffold writing;
- a range of text types, including cross-curricular writing, modelled to promote sustained composition and cohesion;
- immersion in a print rich environment that promotes a reading culture and develops speaking and listening.
- inclusion of ALL learning styles – kinaesthetic, visual and audio to cater for ALL children's needs.

- a structure for writing that enables all pupils the opportunity for use and application of grammar, spelling and punctuation skills alongside developing the use of key literary devices to build imagery for the reader.

Phonics and Spelling

Phonics and spelling are taught daily at Urmston Primary School through a number of avenues. The teaching of phonics follows our bespoke phonic curriculum, but predominately uses 'Active Learn, Bug Club' which is supported by the actions, visual aids and mnemonics designed by ourselves as this was lacking from the scheme. These are however, used consistently throughout the school, giving fidelity to our teaching and learning. Our phonics scheme of work consists of 6 progressive phases which are taught from Nursery through to Year 2.

EYFS

In Nursery, our children learn the skills required to prepare them for Phase 2 of our phonics scheme. Phase 1 is split into 7 aspects:

- Aspect 1: General sound discrimination – environmental sounds
- Aspect 2: General sound discrimination – instrumental sounds
- Aspect 3: General sound discrimination – body percussion
- Aspect 4: Rhythm and rhyme
- Aspect 5: Alliteration
- Aspect 6: Voice sounds
- Aspect 7: Oral blending and segmenting

Here the children take part in focused activities to promote the strands of:

- Tuning into sounds (auditory discrimination)
- Listening and remembering sounds (auditory memory and sequencing)
- Talking about sounds (developing vocabulary and language comprehension).

In Reception, Phases 2, 3 and 4 of our bespoke phonics scheme (can we claim this?) are taught through daily discrete phonics lessons, with the opportunity to apply their learning within their play in the continuous provision of the classroom, as well as regular focused activities. In tandem with Phase 2, any children who have been identified during initial baseline assessment as not secure in Phase 1 aspects, will take part in intervention activities to ensure further development of the skills. During these phases, the children are taught the single letter sounds followed by digraphs and trigraphs. Blending and segmenting skills are learnt in order to read and spell single and polysyllabic words, with Phase 4 introducing words containing adjacent consonants. Letter names and tricky words are also taught.

Continual assessment allows the teacher to identify any children who need to be introduced to new sounds at a slower pace and require further consolidation of the sounds already taught. After

the initial teaching of Phase 2, the children are then identified and grouped according to their needs. The teachers plan for all groups and alternate teaching between the groups.

KS1

After initial consolidation of Phase 4 (?), children now concentrate on Phase 5 and 6 using 'Bug Club', which is supplemented with extra resources to suit the learning needs of our children, where they consolidate their knowledge of phonemes and graphemes, as well as learn all alternative spellings and pronunciations of sounds. The mnemonics, letter formation pattern and flash cards are consistent with EYFS to bring fidelity and consistency to our scheme. Further tricky words are learnt as are further spelling rules including suffixes, prefixes and plurals. Phonics continues to be taught as a discrete lesson with the opportunity to consolidate learning throughout the curriculum and in focused activities. Children in KS1 are streamed for their phonics teaching four days a week, with one day spent together in class to consolidate their learning and to practise applying their phonic knowledge. Careful assessments are taken over the year to ensure that the children are progressing well and appropriate intervention is taken for any children who are not working within expectations. This learning is consolidated through the use of independent reading books that are sent home weekly and supplemented with extra online books too. Videos for each grapheme or new area of learning and homework tasks are also sent home for parents to engage and support their children.

One of these interventions, Hold-A-Sentence, supports pupils in their use and application of their decoding knowledge when spelling, as well as providing reminders of core punctuation and letter formation.

KS2

Every class from Year 3-6 uses the UPS long term plan for GPS (grammar, spelling and punctuation), which includes various activities, teaching the children spelling rules and patterns as well as opportunities for phonics practice.

Teachers model spelling strategies and then the children carry out numerous individual tasks to embed the word patterns and rules learnt.

Alongside this, we have established a three-pronged approach to spelling: the first being that every Monday children are exposed to the spelling rule or pattern for the week, based on the year-group expectations. Each morning, children will have time to develop their understanding of the rule through a variety of activities recorded in the yellow spelling activity books. For children who are still struggling with Phase 5 and 6 spelling rules and alternative graphemes, they will take part in interventions to revisit and revise these phases with a variety of activities and tasks.

In tandem with this, the pupils are given a baseline assessment and, for pupils who are working above age related expectations, a subsequent **UPS Spelling List** ranging from Stage 1 (Red) to

Stage 23 (Gold). These are based upon Letters and Sounds phonics, spelling rules and National Curriculum year group word lists. Children are expected to learn these spellings in their own time before being tested on a three-week cycle. Once tested, teaching assistants mark the tests and children are retested on any misspellings before moving on to the next level. ***This raises the profile of the importance of spelling and stretches the knowledge, skill and understanding of our highest attaining children.***

Those children who have difficulty with using and applying their phonetical knowledge are also part of the intervention programme, **'Hold-A-Sentence'**, which focuses on 'Letters and Sounds'. Numerous activities are carried out with support staff to assist with visual application to add to phonetical awareness. A pupil's success in applying the correct grapheme to words is assessed on a regular basis and the grapheme focus is changed regularly based on need. The computer program, **Lexia**, is also used to support pupils' learning and understanding in spellings.

Addressing spellings and supporting children to correct misconceptions, with extensive opportunities to practise them, is key, and this forms part of our Feedback Policy which states that teachers encourage children to address common misconceptions with spellings across the curriculum, through identifying and then re-writing the word three times to consolidate understanding. Editing for errors and to improve is key to our writing process.

Reading

High priority is given to reading at Urmston Primary School throughout all year groups and we are proud of the reading culture we have and the enthusiasm that our children have for reading.

At UPS, reading is approached through a number of avenues:

1. *Whole class reading* that develops listening skills, a love of story and reading for pleasure. This is both teacher and pupil led reading with children listening and responding to questions, predictions and vocabulary choices as appropriate to the level of the children.

2. *Shared reading* that immerses children in the pattern of narrative and features of non-fiction text types. This happens in literacy sessions when introducing text and prior to writing. The teacher models as an expert reader and draws out the key elements of the content.

3. *Guided reading* that targets children's reading skills.

Guided Reading (small guided reading groups in EYFS and KS1 and as a whole class in KS2) gives the teacher the opportunity to hone in on particular skills that children need when reading. Having initially discussed the book, the teacher will give the children some written or verbal questions based upon specific reading focuses which will be chosen to suit the children's needs. This may or

may not involve children reading out loud but more often than not, will focus on comprehension, inference and deduction and author intent and purpose, rather than decoding strategies.

To ensure that the class teacher is able to support each pupil to confidently progress with their reading skills, every 3rd week will involve the pupils being heard individually and assess whether they need to move to a different level for guided and independent reading in KS1 and for independent reading in KS2, as guided reading is a whole class text. This is in response to parent voice and the need to ensure that we are progressing our children at a pace suitable for them, rather than allowing them to simply work their way through each level. It will ensure each child is supported and challenged appropriately.

4. Independent reading in school and at home.

Books from our 'Active Learn, Bug Club' reading scheme are sent home with a reading record for communication with parents. It is anticipated that children change their reading books once a week although on some occasions children will be 'free readers' and choose their own. All children have access to extra books online for practise within the book band that they are currently reading at.

At UPS we make it clear that reading is for enjoyment. We want to nurture a love of reading and as long as the pupils are letting us know what they read, and are incorporating a variety of text-types, we do not want to force them to read material that may lead to them seeing reading as a burden.

5 The school libraries

The library provides reference and reading materials for children and teachers. Our Year 6 pupil librarians carry out a returns service for pupils which encourages a use of libraries outside school. The school encourages all children to join and use their local library and a member of staff of the library regularly takes an assembly to promote this. We also promote reading through our 'Ten-a-term'. Each year group is allocated a different ten books each term, which they can borrow from either our school library or the local library. Again, this is to promote a love for reading and introduce a variety of genres and text types to our pupils.

6. Intervention

KS2 TAs are all well trained in **BRP (Boosting Reading Potential)**. Pupils who find decoding and reading with greater fluency a little tricky, work with a TA on a 1-1 basis three times a week for 20 minutes. It is a very structured, 10-week program which supports the child's reading fluency. Moving on from this, **Inference and Deduction** training supports those children whose fluency is generally good, but who need to develop their understanding of texts, specifically their inference and deduction skills

Pupils who have APDRs (formally SEN IEPs), do short bursts of learning with an adult almost every day of the week (including adults at home). These bursts of learning are focused on key developmental targets pointed out by the class teacher and the repetition enables the pupils to embed core literacy skills and help to provide a foundation for further learning.

The system of 'priority readers' allows us to ensure that any pupil who requires support in school, whether that be down to need, less enthusiasm or lack of parental engagement, reads on a

frequent basis with either a teacher, T.A. or volunteer to further develop their skills and foster a love of reading.

EYFS

In the EYFS, great importance is placed upon promoting a love for reading as well as equipping the children with the initial skills they need to become lifelong readers. When children enter the foundation stage there is a wealth of continuous provision to support the development of children as readers. Children have the opportunity to enjoy a range of fiction and non-fiction books, poems, rhymes and songs within a literacy-rich environment. Our reading areas are engaging and accessible with a wide range of books which can be borrowed and shared at home.

Using exciting and engaging introductions to story-based topics, along with the use of story props, role play areas and displays enables us to bring stories to life.

We understand that the more children take part in conversations, the more they will understand once they can read and the more vocabulary and ideas they will have to draw on when they can write. We therefore provide a language-rich environment with regular back and forth interactions between adults and children, in order to widen our children's vocabulary and bridge any gaps in language. We plan time to talk and develop vocabulary using carefully chosen books and themes with wide semantic fields. Our vocabulary gradually builds upon our word walls and is regularly revisited in order to be fully understood and made use of. In the moment opportunities are also captured to develop language associated with the children's current interests.

Our children regularly hear stories being read and are given the opportunity to read to an adult in school once a week using levelled reading books, either 1-1 or within a guided group. Reading records communicate reading progress between home and school and include teachers' and parents' feedback. From the Spring term, well-planned and differentiated guided reading sessions are carried out for the children who are ready to read with some independence. Priority readers are read with on a daily basis.

Our daily phonics teaching focuses on decoding skills, whilst comprehension skills and new vocabulary are learned during story times, whole class shared reading, individual reading and guided reading sessions.

KS1

In KS1, children become secure at decoding with greater emphasis placed upon comprehension of the text. Reading skills are taught through shared class texts, often topic-related and daily group guided reading sessions. Guided reading sessions follow our Active Learn, Bug Club. This adds fidelity to the teaching of phonics and reading and helps to consolidate learning and immerse children in the sounds they are learning. Pupils are grouped with children of a similar ability for decoding text and comprehension, allowing them to be supported and challenged as needed. Guided Reading is a time for developing skills that are then consolidated further during individual reading, independent reading tasks, home reading and ERIC time (Everyone Reads In Class).

KS2

The teacher will conduct whole class shared/guided reading with the pupils and will use a whole class text to ensure opportunities for consistency are always available. Guided reading will take place once a week.

Reading is taught predominantly through a shared whole class text to immerse pupils in the narrative and enable greater empathy, whilst providing that balance with teaching a deeper understanding of the skills of reading. Much of non-fiction learning is met through 'spin-off' texts during both guided reading and the English curriculum.

Reading Goals are used which are based on an amalgamation of the DfE's archived APP assessment foci alongside the content domains for the new reading assessment framework.

RG1 - read age-appropriate books with confidence and fluency (including whole novels); read aloud with intonation that shows understanding

RG2 - retrieve information from fiction and non-fiction

RG3 - explain and discuss their understanding of what they have read, drawing inferences and justifying these with evidence

RG4 - understand the reasons for the organisation, structure and presentation of the text and consider grammar choices

RG5 - evaluate the author's use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader

RG6 - consider the overall purpose of the text - summarise main ideas, identifying key details and using quotations for illustration – what effect does this have on the reader?

RG7 - predict what might happen from details stated and implied

RG8 - work out the meaning of words from the context

RG9 - make comparisons within and across books and relate texts to their society, culture and history

These are used to focus teaching and key questioning, using literature reflecting each learning intention which can then be applied when reading independently.

The question of how readers of all abilities and attitudes are catered for in KS2 is an important one. The rationale behind doing guided reading as a whole class is as follows:

- 1) It provides a further opportunity for pupils to become ***immersed in a text*** and provides the teacher with time to further ***nurture a love of reading***.
- 2) It gives opportunity for pupils to hear the teacher read, both in and outside of the focused teaching and learning of reading, developing their understanding of how ***pace and intonation*** (RG1) can impact on how a text is perceived.
- 3) It ***enables rich discussion***, led by the class teacher as a ***reading role model***, that ***ALL children can access***. The teacher's ability to enthuse the children and ***evoke a passion for reading*** is key here and, due to the range of abilities in the class, children of all reading abilities can engage in discussion with, and learn from, their peers.
- 4) It ensures ALL pupils can ***widen their vocabulary*** through deep discussion on the author's chosen language – pre-teaching and learning of words that pupils may be unfamiliar with are discussed here.

- 5) It helps to **develop reading resilience** – the sessions are conducted in a way which means all pupils can access one text. Those pupils who are not as fluent, can still access high level reading skills based upon the Reading Goal focus for that week, through the rich discussion and **skilled questioning** of the teacher, both verbal and written. Resilience is a key value at UPS and supporting pupils to access quality texts and nurturing an independence in doing so is imperative.

*It is important to note that SEN and lower ability pupils are not only supported during these sessions by the teacher or a TA where necessary, but also take part in a **pre-teach session** for guided reading that allows them to access the text and vocabulary prior to the session. This ensures greater engagement and reduced frustration for pupils, narrowing the gap in understanding and creating a more balanced learning environment. However, it is essential that independence is still fostered and so, after the initial discussion, time should also be given for that independence and peer support. Pupils who need to further develop their fluency may be 'priority readers' to aid this development or may take part in intervention such as 'Boosting Reading Potential' (BRP) or 'Inference Training' for more in-depth support.*

Writing

At UPS we aim to immerse children in rich and varied texts and stimuli in order to enable them to access a highly developed understanding of vocabulary, sentence type and genre features. This exposure to such texts will then increasingly enable children to write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences, selecting language that shows good awareness of the reader, use a range of devices to build cohesion and select vocabulary and grammatical structures that reflect what the writing requires.

We believe that writing should be a creative/developmental process both at a functional and an imaginative level. All attempts at writing are valued and we know that all children have potential to be successful writers. The compositional and transcriptional skills are taught alongside the creative aspects.

Immersion in reading, talk and preparation for writing is essential to the writing development process. We have taken account of research from the EEF in 'Improving Literacy in Key Stage 2', October 2021 and acknowledge how it is extremely important that pupils get an idea of the whole process from pre-writing and the generation of ideas to planning, drafting, revising, editing, evaluating and publishing. The guidance states that teachers should, '*describe and model how, when, and why pupils should use each strategy, support pupils to practise with feedback, then gradually reduce support as pupils increasingly use the strategies independently.*'

EYFS

Initially in our EYFS, children are encouraged to mark-make as this is the very early stages of writing. Writing in the early years involves both transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

Our children are taught spelling skills in our daily phonics lessons and are given many opportunities to segment for spelling and write dictated words, captions and sentences.

In order to develop handwriting skills, children first need the gross and fine motor skills required. A great deal of time is spent in Nursery developing these skills in order to prepare our children to develop a good pencil grip and pencil control in Reception. Children are taught correct letter formations, firstly when beginning to write their own names, then as our children are introduced to each letter in their phonics lessons, they are taught the correct formations of these using our UPS handwriting pattern. In Reception, handwriting and fine motor skills are practised each morning as the children come into school and gross motor skills continue to progress through opportunities provided in outdoor learning and P.E. lessons.

From very early on, story maps and actions are used to retell stories and help to develop our children's awareness of composition. Our language-rich environment prepares children as writers, with plenty of time dedicated to idea-sharing and the verbal construction of sentences.

Opportunities to write independently for their own purposes are given to pupils throughout continuous provision, both indoors and out, and a specific mark-making table is always available. In addition to this, our children take part in regular shared and guided writing activities. Shared writing allows the teacher to model how to construct sentences verbally and then record them using correct letter formations, capital letters, finger spaces and simple punctuation (full stops, question marks and exclamation marks). Phonic knowledge and tricky word knowledge is also drawn upon when spelling. Guided writing gives the children the opportunity to write with the support of an adult. The focus of this writing is teacher-initiated and will cover a range of genres throughout the year for both fiction and non-fiction alike.

KS1 and KS2

Designed to follow the six stages of the writing process, the structure that we use, based upon Jane Considine's 'The Write Stuff', leads to a final quality published piece.

All pupils, when introduced to a new genre, should have the opportunity to build competency through the following processes. These structures support and challenge and will be delivered to suit the varying learning needs of our pupils. It is intended that this will enable our children to develop a greater breadth of detail to their fiction and non-fiction writing and a deeper understanding of how important text structure and plot, vocabulary, language and grammatical choices are to the effect that a piece of writing gives to a writer's audience. This focus on intent and audience very much links in to Reading Goals 5 and 6 mentioned above.

The stages of the writing process are as follows:

- **Stage 1 - Initiate and Comprehension:** Each unit will begin with a hook to excite the pupils about what they will be writing about. Following the hook, pupils will engage in a variety of activities to familiarise them with the characters, text type, format, etc. At this stage, pupils will investigate key features and associated word and sentence level activities, building knowledge of the text and aspects of GPS. They will also map out the plot points of features.
- **Stage 2 - The Model Text:** Every unit must have a model text, with the features of spelling, punctuation and grammar that pupils are to identify, understand and then use to support them with their own writing. The model should push beyond year group expectations as we do not want to put a ceiling on writing, and children must have something to aspire to.
- **Stage 3 –The First Draft:** Now the children fully understand the plot / text / information it is their turn to write. However, it cannot be expected for children to write a sustained piece of writing by pulling together all the different activities that they have done along the way. Essentially, this stage of the process ensures that we chunk the story / text with an emphasis on chronological carving up of sentences, running one after the other, to tell the story precisely, or to include the non-fiction features. This ensures a richer and broader depth of understanding of how a piece of writing is sustained and cohesive.
- **Stage 4 – The Innovation Piece:** Using the same theme, children should then have the opportunity to innovate and create their own story or text. The plot remains the same (or similar) but the setting, character and other key aspects are changed. Just like maths, we should chunk the learning outcome into smaller sections so that the pupil (and teacher) never lose sight of the final goal. Pupils now have the foundations firmly laid and can confidently produce a piece of work featuring the key features of a genre and include the relevant word and sentence structures.
(IS THIS INDEPENDENT ENOUGH TO BE ASSESSED?)
- **Stage 5 – The Editing Stage:** When editing, we must ensure that our children are not subject to cognitive overload. This is more important at this stage as the previous stages have been immersive, ensuring that our children have thought about spelling, grammar, punctuation, language choices and composition all at the same time. The idea of editing for one concept at a time allows the children to focus purely on that aspect and therefore refine their piece of work.
- **Stage 6 – The Final Published Piece:** The final piece is likely to be on coloured border paper and will go into each child’s Creative Writing Book. This is the piece that the children are most proud of and should be given an opportunity to share their books. It is the piece that is assessed against the year group writing goals, with green used to highlight excellent examples of expressive language etc.

Grammar and Punctuation

At UPS, GPS (Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling) is interwoven into English planning throughout the different stages of the writing process. The Long Term Plan (LTP) ensures thorough coverage, which is assessed through use and application within pupil's writing and also through termly GPS assessments. As part of our feedback policy and next steps activities, there will often be a daily whole class activity as well as personal next steps and editing activities, which focus much more on pupil's individual needs. Across the school, there are year group 'non-negotiables', objectives that ALL pupils should be competent in by the end of the year (see appendix).

We also teach and provide opportunities to learn the rules, terminology and use and application of grammar and punctuation throughout the different areas of the curriculum and these skills need to be transferable to all areas of learning.

Handwriting

(See Handwriting policy for more detail and rationale).

Good presentation is emphasised at all times, in all areas of the curriculum, and through all forms of writing. IT ISN'T AT THE MOMENT.

Although there is scant evidence to suggest that handwriting impacts on spelling and content, we agree with the EEF's 'Improving Literacy in Key Stage 2' when it emphasises that, *'fluent writing supports composition because pupils' cognitive resources are freed from focusing on handwriting, spelling and sentence structure and can be directed towards writing composition'*. It also states the importance of monitoring pupils' handwriting to *'ensure accurate letter formation habits, providing effective feedback to promote efficient and fluent handwriting.'*

Pupils are taught handwriting from Reception onwards as part of phonics and writing sessions, along with a bespoke patten designed to support our pupils with where each letter starts and finishes. Pupils begin by learning non-cursive letter formations. Once secure in their printed letter formations, children are introduced to a cursive style, most commonly in Year One, in readiness for joining their handwriting in Year 2. No joining in Y1? Discrete handwriting activities are carried out on a weekly basis, focusing on that week's letter formation/join.

In LKS2, pupils will continue to develop a fluid continuous cursive style, taking part in short discrete activities. In UKS2, is up to the teacher to decide on the necessity of whole class handwriting lessons or activities. Those pupils needing handwriting interventions attend these sessions. As pupils progress through the school, we will encourage them to develop a legible formation that they are comfortable with and allows for fluidity within their writing that may vary from the continuous cursive style, should it still, essentially, allow for speed and clear formation.

Spoken Language

In line with the English Curriculum, we believe that spoken language is fundamental to children's development and that confidence in this area is essential to be successful in all areas of literacy. Pupils develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and prepare their ideas before they write. They are assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others and teachers ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions.

Pupils are taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate. All pupils are encouraged to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Pupils learn to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role. They have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.

Familiarisation with these goals, which are the same across all year groups, ensures that pupils are constantly considering how to speak and listen to each other and the art of performing is practised not only in discreet literacy lessons, but across the whole curriculum, including in class assemblies.

These oral skills are directly taught, modelled and sensitively encouraged in whole class and small group settings. Opportunities across the whole curriculum are planned for and developed. Children play an active part in presentations, topic talks, group discussions, debates and drama activities on a weekly basis.

Planning

English is a core subject within the National Curriculum. Work is planned in year groups, ensuring that classes within each year group cover the same objectives and have equality of opportunity. Class teachers complete short term plans and resources for the teaching of literacy based upon the UPS English Curriculum. These identify the specific learning objectives for each lesson and include specific activities to support learning. There is no expectation for teachers to complete specific planning grids, but it must be taught and delivered in line with the Teaching and Learning Policy and the Feedback Policy, using the LTP for writing and GPS.

Work is planned in order that the three main learning styles (kinaesthetic, audio, visual) are catered for on a daily, weekly and unit or work basis, when necessary of course.

Lessons are planned around an open-ended question posed to the pupils, rather than an objective with success criteria. This allows for a deeper level of learning, discussion and understanding rather than a very closed set of criteria to be 'met'. Questions focus on 'how' 'what' and 'why', such as, "In what ways can I..." or "How do I..."

There are children of differing ability in all classes at Urmston Primary School and we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. This is achieved through a range of strategies offering support for those who require it and challenge for those who can achieve. In many lessons we ask children to work in mixed ability partners and groupings (to share knowledge, ideas and understanding) from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. Where Teaching Assistant support is available, they work with small groups of children with work matched to the needs of individuals. This is in line with our Teaching and Learning policy which states:

*"All pupils are offered **appropriate support and appropriate challenge**, with scaffolding for the less able, where necessary, and with teachers essentially extending the most able, having **high expectations of all pupils** and providing them with opportunity to take their learning as far as they can and there being **no ceiling to learning.**"*

Assessment

Reading

EYFS

Progress in reading is continually monitored throughout Nursery and Reception and is reviewed termly using our traffic light system. Children who are not meeting age related expectations will be highlighted in red and any children having any minor difficulties will be highlighted in orange. These children will then be given specific next steps and additional intervention activities to ensure progression. The children who are meeting expectations and on track to achieve the Early Learning Goal at the end of the year will be highlighted in green and will continue with their planned next steps in reading.

Formative assessment takes place during weekly guided reading sessions and individual reading to assess decoding and comprehension skills. In addition to this, termly phonic assessments involving grapheme phoneme correspondences, key word reading and blending skills also take place to give a full picture of exactly where each child is at in reading.

KS1

We no longer benchmark children at the beginning of KS1, unless a child is new to our school. Teacher judgement and EYFS assessment is sufficient for pupils to continue on their reading journey from where they finished the previous year.

At each book band, pupils become fluent and confident both within decoding (saying the words) and in comprehending the text. Children are regularly assessed during guided reading to ensure that they have secured both of these skills before changing the colour of their book band.

UPS reading goals, based on the National Curriculum objectives, are used as a summative (formative?) assessment tool to determine whether the children are working towards expectations, working at expectations or working at greater depth.

In the summer term of Year 1, pupils carry out a statutory phonics screening check. Should a child not achieve the required score to pass this test, they will receive appropriate intervention and repeat the check in the summer term of Year 2.

From the Spring term in Year 1, where appropriate, pupils will complete summative reading assessments (Rising Stars) in order to gauge competency in fluency and comprehension, ensuring a consistent and moderated approach as they move through the school.

KS2

UPS Reading Goals are given to the children, and teachers use these to ensure that the pupils are exposed to each year group expectation. Pupils' comprehension skills are assessed during whole class reading sessions as well as in summative assessments at the end of each term (Rising Stars).

Writing

As with assessment in reading in the early years, progress in writing is continually monitored through formative assessment in phonics lessons, guided writing and independent writing carried out in continuous provision. It is then reviewed termly using our traffic light system. Interventions and next steps are put into place or adapted as needed. As part of our termly phonics assessments, the children's spelling skills are also assessed.

In KS1 and KS2, children are assessed in writing completely holistically, taking into account their ability to plan, draft, edit and evaluate elements of the writing process. However, pupils will complete an independent piece of writing at the end of each unit and this will be marked using our own criteria which includes all of the objectives in the English National Curriculum which can be assessed by a piece of writing.

Developmental points are given as are targets for the children to consider. Following this, the pupils will self and peer assess to evaluate what went well and how their writing could be even

better. This is based upon the English curriculum targets with reference made to the whole writing process rather than just the final draft.

Grammar Punctuation and Spelling

Throughout the school, pupils are assessed in Grammar, punctuation and spelling as part of the use and application within their writing.

In Year 2, pupils complete an optional GPS assessment from the DfE at the end of the year and are assessed termly using excerpts from previous years' assessment papers. In KS2, GPS is assessed termly using curriculum year group optional assessments but pupils may be informally assessed more regularly by teachers to gauge levels of understanding and to inform planning and next steps.

Tracking Progress

See our Assessment Policy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation role of the Literacy Coordinator involves:

- nurturing a culture which embraces a love of reading;
- modelling good practice;
- being responsible for the upgrading and ordering of resources and arranging for their storage;
- keeping informed and up to date with developments and new initiatives to support the teaching of language and literacy and ensure staff are informed;
- auditing needs and organise staff training;
- training staff in the teaching and learning of literacy;
- facilitating sharing of good practice opportunities within UPS and outside, when and where possible;
- monitoring planning on a regular basis with the head teacher;

- scrutiny of books and lesson observations/learning walks with constructive feedback;
- conducting pupil discussion to gauge enjoyment and understanding;
- supporting teachers in planning and using resources;
- working with the assessment lead and HT on analysing pupil progress and attainment – essentially leading to a thorough awareness of areas for development, and adapting/enhancing provision accordingly;
- organising annual school themed days and weeks in collaboration with other staff;
- updating the school policy when necessary;
- providing the Head Teacher and link governor with updates, evaluating strengths and identifying areas for development in the subject, indicating areas for future development.

Provision for Special Educational Needs

As the pupils attending Urmston Primary School reflect the full ability spectrum, there are children who have specific difficulties relating to one or more of the four areas of Literacy.

The school's policy for Special Educational Needs outlines the procedures that are currently in place for the identification, assessment, monitoring and implementation of learning programmes for these children.

There are also children attending Urmston Primary School who are gifted in one or more of the four areas of Literacy. These children, too, are identified and are appropriately challenged to ensure progress and breadth of knowledge; their progress is also monitored and tracked.

Cross-curricular links

As the skills learnt in Literacy are completely transferable to other curricular areas, every effort is made to incorporate the use of the skills, knowledge and understanding learnt in daily literacy lessons to other areas of our creative curriculum. This commitment provides opportunities for the children to apply what they have learnt in daily literacy lessons, allowing further consolidation and extension. Literacy texts are also chosen, when appropriate, based on topic links.

Literacy skills in other subjects

During a blocked unit of work, informal assessments are carried out on a weekly basis via marking and interaction with the children, the focus of which may include literacy skills.

Children are assessed against learning outcomes and success criteria which have been identified within schemes of work and lessons, linked to the National Curriculum.

It is common practice for teachers to give pupils the opportunity to write in other subjects of the National Curriculum and when doing so, ensure that pupils remember their writing targets and the expectations for a particular genre.

Promoting Children's Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development...our school values

We truly believe that children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development influence their ability to learn and achieve. For this reason, we ensure that our school values of **respect, responsibility, resilience, kindness, happiness** and **pride** are considered in the way we teach and the ways children learn literacy skills.

The teaching of literacy develops skills through which our children can give critical responses to the moral questions they meet in their learning and we take every opportunity to ensure this. Their understanding and appreciation of a range of texts brings them into contact with their own literacy heritage and texts from other cultures, creating openings for empathetic discussion. The organisation of lessons allows children to work together and gives them the chance to discuss their ideas and results. The texts that teachers have chosen to read with their children, both within the curriculum, and purely for enjoyment have been chosen not only to provide contextual links to the curriculum, but for their focus on equality, diversity and mental health, wellbeing and character development.

Homework

In Reception, the children each have a 'sound bag' containing sound and high frequency word cards. This is introduced at the start of the year on beginning Phase 2. The words and sounds taught during the week are added to the sound bag every Friday, along with parental guidance on how they can be used, the handwriting patten associated with each letter formation and some simple captions/sentences to be read.

Children are given access to our online reading books as soon as they begin Phase 2 and are allocated books containing the phonemes they are currently learning in school. Once the children have completed Phase 2 of phonics, they take home an independent reading book from our Phonics Bug scheme each Monday, to be read and returned to school the following Monday. This

book is chosen to allow the children to apply previously learned phonic knowledge and become increasingly confident readers.

In KS1, as in EYFS, children take home an independent reading scheme Bug Club book each Monday, to be read and returned to school the following Monday. This is based on the phonics and spellings that they have just learnt to enable them to purely work on their fluency and to nurture their reading habits and enjoyment of reading. Children have a weekly phonics task, consolidating that week's phonics' objective taught in school which is sent home each Friday, ready to be assessed the following week. Weekend homework covers a range of topics, which more often than not embed aspects of the literacy curriculum, consolidating the application of these skills.

In KS2, Children have a half term homework task which will often include some writing and may be used to consolidate learning that has taken place or to extend understanding further. The learning of spellings forms an important part of the weekly homework schedule as do the reading expectations mentioned above. Often, especially in Upper KS2, pupils will be free readers and, as long as staff are aware of their reading habits through reading journals, they can choose their own books rather than those of the school scheme.

Marking and Feedback

Literacy work is marked in line with the agreed UPS Feedback Policy.

Use of Display

The display of quality literacy-based work is important at Urmston Primary School and will not only celebrate children's work but also provide learning aids for the children within the classroom and indeed whole school environment. Literacy work will be marked on displays and therefore may be photocopied.

Resources

There is a range of resources for the teaching of literacy across the school. Every classroom (where possible) has a literacy area containing a class library, dictionaries, thesauruses and displays along with, of course, the whole class text that is their focus at any given time. All classes have access to additional fiction and non-fiction books which are stored in the main school library, where a loan system and timetable is run by our Year 6 pupils.

ICT-based resources are used to support the delivery of the Literacy curriculum. The use of interactive whiteboards (IWBs) forms an integral part of the delivery of daily literacy lessons in terms of both resource provision and as a medium for developing skills in the four areas. These are

used particularly effectively in using audio and visuals as a stimulus for learning. Information and Communication Technology is used to enhance the learning experience and support effective teaching. There are a range of writing and teaching programs on all computers to support the teaching and acquisition of literacy skills and for presentation of work.

As a core subject, English receives a higher proportion of the general curriculum budget (along with Maths, Science and ICT), reflecting the commitment to the development of this key area as well as recognising the need to continually update and extend reading stock. Events throughout the year are also used in order to raise additional funds for purchasing new reading stock (e.g. Books Fairs and sponsored events coinciding with 'World Book Day').

Visitors and Community Links

We keep in very close contact with Urmston Bookshop and regularly encourage our pupils and parents to pay them visit. Throughout the years, our close relationship with the shop has led to numerous authors coming in to talk about writing and the process involved. All of them have been tremendously engaging and have led to the pupils becoming more enthusiastic about being young writers.

Literacy Lead: Suzanne Hall

Policy developed by: Suzanne Hall

Date agreed by Governors: January 2021

Signed: **S Parker** (Head), **Derek Brown** (Chair of S&C Governors committee)