



At Willow Bank School we provide an ambitious curriculum in a nurturing and safe environment for pupils to develop:

- Independence
- Emotional intelligence and resilience
- Appropriate communication skills
- The ability to contribute to society through good citizenship skills and preparedness for work

## **Intent**

*Please read this overview in conjunction with the Handwriting Policy and the Oracy Policy.*

Willow Bank School believes that it is essential for pupils that they can speak, listen, read and write at a functional level so that they can communicate clearly with others, and others can communicate with them.

With a strong focus on reading both for information and pleasure, the English curriculum at Willow Bank School provides pupils with opportunities to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually.

We believe that writing for both creative and transactional purposes is a crucial skill for our young people which enables them to develop independence and fully participate in their communities, society and the workplace.

By the end of year 11, we intend that all of our pupils are able to:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in discussion and debate.

## **Implementation**

Pupils start each lesson with a review of learning in their last lesson using a variety of methods. New material is presented in small chunks with a focus on what, how and why questions to check understanding. Modelling is used to support pupils to practice new skills. Pupils are given ample opportunities to practice those new skills with regular feedback from their teacher. Scaffolding resources are available to support independent practice of reading, writing and spoken language skills. Pupils review prior learning at the



beginning and the end of each topic to demonstrate explicit links between their learning. Tier 2 and 3 vocabulary is taught explicitly using the Freyer model or similar.

- Learning is differentiated to support every pupil to access to the curriculum.
- Long term and medium-term plans are completed by the class teacher using the school format.

At Willow Bank we view English as a cross curricular subject and the pupils are encouraged to develop and apply their skills in all other subjects.

## **Reading**

All pupils are given the opportunity to read for pleasure during every school day. Pupils are given the opportunity to read during the 15-minute form time every morning. Pupils are encouraged to read a variety of texts, including digital texts, fiction and non-fiction. We use Accelerated Reader to monitor their progress in reading comprehension and to ensure that pupils are reading texts at an appropriate level for their personal level of development.

## **Key Stage 2**

At Key Stage 2, pupils use the Vocabulary Interpretation/Inference, Prediction, Explanation, Retrieval, Summarise (VIPERS) approach to reading texts. Appropriate texts are chosen by the class teacher according to the individual interests of the pupils, seasonal celebrations and important local, national or global events.

Pupils who are reading below age related expectations will access personalised additional needs literacy support from our learning mentor on a regular basis.

At KS2, all pupils access Word Shark spelling programme, daily. Teachers add subject specific vocabulary according to their current topic areas in Mathematics, Science, Humanities, P.E, Music and Forrest School.

## **Key Stage 3**

At Key Stage 3, during English lessons, pupils are given the opportunity to read whole texts, novels, poetry, plays and non-fiction texts from a wide variety of genres, historical periods and cultures. They analyse the context, language, form and structure of these texts as well as having opportunities to form their own opinions and views about them and the issues which they explore.

Texts are chosen based on their quality in terms of language, form and structure and also that they explore important issues like racism, war and conflict, immigration, or represent a particular genre like the Gothic genre.

Pupils continue to develop their reading skills on the basis of VIPERS but this is less explicitly taught and pupils will begin to learn the technical vocabulary to use when analysing texts.



## **Key Stage 4**

At Key Stage 4 pupils follow the AQA English Language GCSE, AQA Step Up to English Entry Level award and/or AQA Functional English at Level 1/2 as appropriate for their individual needs. They may also read whole texts or carefully chosen extracts from texts which are used as a resource for pupils in order to practice their reading skills. On occasion, they may be used as a context for written or spoken language texts.

At all key stages, pupils can access texts in a variety of ways: reading the text themselves, audiobooks, human reader or a combination of these.

All video resources are watched with subtitles turned on to support reading even when pupils are watching a video resource.

## **Writing**

*“By committing to every child as a writer, we are saying to each child, “You have a voice. You have a power. You can be a citizen, a dreamer, a person whose voice and story can never be forgotten.” (Paths to Literacy. Pam Allyn)*

Writing enables pupils to be in touch with the world. It helps pupils to practice the language of literacy. Absorbing and understanding written language through reading can help to develop writing skills and development.

## **Key Stage 2**

At Key Stage 2, pupils learn the basics of written language.

Handwriting is taught explicitly, where needed and pupils learn to touch type using Nessy Fingers.

Spelling is taught in context using Word Shark for topic-based vocabulary cross all subject areas. Progress is monitored using the Word shark programme.

Writing skills in English are taught within the context of the class text. Pupils will learn how to choose the correct form, tone, structure and ambitious vocabulary for a range of text types, both fiction and non-fiction, poetry. They will have the opportunity to create traditional texts on paper and digital texts when appropriate.

## **Key Stage 3**

At Key Stage 3, pupils' access some of the explicitly taught 'Skills for Writing' courses: units 1-6. However, writing skills continue to be delivered in context through the study of Literature texts where pupils are encouraged to write creatively and in a wide variety of transactional styles, building upon the skills from Key Stage 2.

## **Key Stage 4**

At Key Stage 4 pupils further their skills in descriptive and narrative writing as well as writing to present a viewpoint.



## Assessment

The following tools are used in the assessment of English:

- Marking and feedback in books, files or on digital work stored on Microsoft Teams.
- Verbal feedback
- Work shark programme assessments
- Accelerated Reader STAR tests

At Key Stage 3, pupils are assessed according to the whole school assessment policy on a termly basis against the National Curriculum learning objectives in reading, writing and spoken English. In addition to this, their progress in specific programmes such as, Nessy Fingers, Word shark and Accelerated Reader is monitored using the systems provided by those programmes. On this basis, subject specific targets are set and reviewed each term.

Formative assessment can take many different forms and usually consists of immediate verbal and written feedback each lesson on an individual basis. The class teacher will show pupils how they have achieved the lesson intent or how they could improve if they have not. The teacher will explain the next steps for each pupil.

At Key Stage 4, pupils are assessed both against the National Curriculum and against the relevant examination or award assessment criteria.

Pupils are given regular, individual feedback both written and verbal.

Key stage 4 pupils will receive regular approximate exam grades based on individual set pieces of assessment undertaken throughout the course.

## Impact

By the end of year 11, pupils can communicate at least at a functional level and are prepared for the next stage of their journey whether that is post – 16 education, apprenticeships or the world of work.