

CURRICULUM POLICY – ENGLISH

Policy Information

Date of last review:	September 2025	**Review period:**	Annually
Date ratified by Local Givernors:		**Policy owner:**	Mrs V. Callaghan

Reviews/revisions

Review date	Changes made	By whom
September 2026		

English Vision

At Princefield First School, our children read with fluency, accuracy and understanding. They have a love of reading and develop the vocabulary they need to access the wider curriculum and become confident and competent speakers and writers. They write independently to express themselves and communicate. They can reflect upon their own and others' writing to understand how structure and word choice can affect the tone and impact of the writing.

Intent
At Princefield, we following the statutory guidance for the teaching of English, as set out in the Early Years Framework and Development Matters, the National Curriculum 2014. We follow the Reading Framework (2023) and Writing Framework (2025).

Reading (In addition see separate EY Monster Phonics Policy)
Phonics is taught daily using the Monster Phonics Scheme in our Early Years (as the start of a whole school roll out approach) and the Twinkl phonics scheme in KS1. Both these schemes are DfE accredited phonics schemes. We use Monster phonics reading books in Early Years and Twinkl Reading books in KS1 in line with these schemes.

If a child is struggling to reach age-related expectations, they will be given additional phonics support. Reading is not simply the decoding of marks on the page; it involves the ability to read with understanding, a wide range of different texts, including fiction, non-fiction, real world texts such as labels, captions, lists and environmental print. Competence in reading is the key to independent learning and therefore the teaching of reading is given a high priority by all staff across Princefield school.

In Nursery and Reception, children work within the EYFS framework. In our Nursery, pupils are given an opportunity to familiarise themselves with books. Pupils learn how to hold a book the right way, how to turn pages, how to explore pictures, and are exposed to hearing stories – these are vitally important skills to begin their reading journey. Pupils have at least one adult-led story in each Nursery session.

In Reception, reading is taught through daily phonics lessons and adult-led English sessions as well as a range of other literacy focused whole class and child choice activities.
In KS1 and KS2 our children benefit from whole class and guided reading group sessions, which teach the reading skills of decoding, prosody and comprehension.

Children are taught to use a full range of reading cues: phonics, graphic, syntactic and contextual, to help them to become fluent readers.

At Princefield all of our children explore a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books and a variety of genres and styles, including poetry. They are also given the opportunity and encouragement to read independently in order to build confidence, stamina and fluency.

We recognise the importance of reading for pleasure and all our pupils have a daily adult-read session to model reading prosody and develop our children's experience of a wide range of books, genres and authors and to encourage our children to develop a love of reading from an early age.

Home Reading
We recognise the vital role that families play in supporting early reading development. To strengthen the home–school partnership and reinforce the learning that takes place in school, we provide a carefully planned home reading offer that includes both decodable reading books and high-quality sharing books.

- Decodable reading practice books are sent home regularly and allow children to practise and consolidate decoding skills independently, promoting success and confidence in front of family members.
- Alongside these, we also send home a variety of high-quality children's literature for shared reading experiences. These 'read-aloud' books are designed to foster a love of reading, broaden vocabulary and enrich language exposure beyond what the child can decode independently.

As pupils move through the early stages of acquiring phonics, they practise by reading texts at home, which are book banded and phonically decodable in line with their phonics knowledge, mainly using Collins Big Cat, Rigby Star Phonics, Planet X and Oxford Reading Tree Phonic reading schemes. By aligning home reading with each child's current phonics stage and providing enjoyable shared reading opportunities, we ensure that all families are included in the reading journey. This dual approach supports both technical reading development and a lifelong love of books.

Language and Oracy

At Princefield we place a high focus on developing and enhancing pupils' language skills, as we recognise that "If a child can't say it, a child can't write it".

We teach our children to develop a wide vocabulary by modelling new words and explaining their meaning right from our Early Years. We use 'Wow words' to encourage the use of new vocabulary in a range of contexts.

Our children in all year groups have a range of opportunities to develop their language and oracy skills including peer talking, retelling and creating new stories, drama and performing.

Writing

At Princefield we encourage our children to write from an early age. In our Nursery and Reception children progress through the Development Matters document which outlines the ages and stages of progression for the EYFS curriculum.

Children write for a variety of audiences and purposes across our school. Opportunities for drama and discussion enhance language development and understanding of story features.

In our Early Years, mark making activities are planned to develop children's fine motor skills across different areas of the curriculum and children participate in adult led writing sessions, using the Greg Bottrill 'Scribble Club' ''Drawing Club' and 'Message Centre' in our Early Years to engage and motivate our children to mark make and write for purpose.
In KS1 (Y1) we use Greg Bottrill's 'Curious Quests' to ensure our children are engaged and motivated to write for a purpose, continuing on the writing learnt in our Early Years.

In KS1 (Y2) and KS2 we use 'Talk for Writing' throughout the school. Our long-term planning identifies which genres will be studied in-depth in each year group. The study of that genre will include exploration and analysis of texts; identifying features of the style of writing and SPAG work to support; modelled, scaffolded, guided, edited, redrafted and final pieces.

Our children are also given additional opportunities to write at length in other areas of the curriculum, revisiting genres taught in depth in previous year groups.

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar

Punctuation and grammar are taught across all year groups and revisit and review sessions are planned to enable practice and encourage retention. Children are taught to identify different areas of punctuation and grammar and taught to be able to apply these in their own writing.

Spelling is explicitly taught from Reception and we follow the spelling patterns and rules as laid out in the National Curriculum for each year group. Children engage in a range of activities during the week to reinforce these spelling patterns and rules. Common exception words and high frequency words are also taught. Our pupils have opportunity to practise these learnt spellings at home.

Handwriting *(In addition see separate Letterjoin handwriting Policy)*

Handwriting is taught from Nursery using 'Scribble Club' and 'Story Dough' sessions. Our Early Years children are given opportunities throughout the week to develop and extend their fine motor skills including; threading, tracing, write dance, dough gym etc.

We use 'nip, grip and flip' to teach the correct pencil hold.
Handwriting is taught formally and regularly in all year groups from Reception using 'Letterjoin', with additional time for practice.

IMPACT Assessment

Assessment is central to the success of our English curriculum. We implement a robust and responsive system of formative and summative assessment to track progress, identify learning gaps early, and ensure that no child is left behind in their English learning.

A range of assessments are used to accurately baseline new starters and ensure they are supported at the right level from the outset.

Formative assessment is embedded in daily classroom practice and is used to:

- Monitor pupil understanding during and after phonics / English lessons
- Identify children who require same-day intervention or additional support
- Inform the adaptation of teaching in real time, ensuring children receive timely reinforcement and repeated practice of English skills as needed

Teachers assess through observations, oral responses, and short review tasks, using these insights to guide their instruction and address individual needs throughout the school day.

Assessment outcomes are used to:

- Inform and adapt daily teaching, ensuring phonics / English lessons are tailored to the needs of the class and individuals.
- Track the progress of all pupils, including vulnerable groups and those with SEND.
- Guide same-day interventions and rapid catch-up sessions, so that misconceptions are addressed immediately and children can continue their English learning without falling behind.

Teachers use precise assessment data to plan tailored interventions, helping each child to consolidate key English knowledge and skills with accuracy and confidence.

Summative assessments are conducted regularly across all year groups. These provide:

- Insight for teachers, English Lead, and Senior Leaders to analyse progress and identify specific gaps
- Evidence to guide targeted interventions and adjust teaching strategies.
- Data to support strategic monitoring by SLT, ensuring that trends in attainment are addressed and that vulnerable learners receive appropriate support.

Statutory Assessment – Year 1 Phonics Screening Check

Children in Year 1 sit the national Phonics Screening Check, which assesses their ability to decode using GPC knowledge. Children who do not meet the expected standard resit the check in Year 2. To prepare children and track readiness:

- We use both formative classroom assessments and scheduled summative assessments to evaluate progress.
- Data is used to ensure pupils are on track and to implement additional support where necessary.

- Regular tracking allows teachers and leaders to monitor cohort performance and adjust planning or provision strategically.

Children who are not meeting expected milestones in English are reassessed regularly to monitor their response to intervention.

Evaluating Impact

The impact of our English curriculum is measured through formal assessments and also through what children can remember, apply, and articulate in both familiar and unfamiliar contexts.

Our comprehensive assessment framework, combined with high-quality, structured instruction and targeted intervention, ensures that all pupils are supported to make strong and sustained progress.

At Princefield by using regular assessment, followed by responsive teaching and support/intervention when needed allows us to address individual needs.

By remaining focused on inclusion and equity, we are committed to closing attainment gaps and ensuring that every child develops the English skills necessary for their future learning.

Review of Policy

This policy is reviewed annually by the English Lead and SLT, reflecting changes to statutory guidance, pupil needs, updates, and school context.

V.Callaghan (English Lead) - August 2025

Review September 2026