



# English at Northowram Primary School

Inspiring Success Beyond Expectation



## Intent

At Northowram, we put reading at the heart of our curriculum. We understand that proficient readers are able to unlock learning across all subjects, therefore reading is prioritised above all else. We strive to ensure all children leave our school confident readers, who read often for both pleasure and information. We begin as soon as children enter our setting, giving them the skills needed to read easily, fluently and with good understanding. These skills are continued and practised throughout their journey through the key stages. We emphasise the acquisition of new vocabulary to support understanding and encourage use in their written work.

Our aim for writing is that children are confident writers, who are undeterred by task. They can write clearly and accurately, ensuring that they adapt their language and style in order to match audience and purpose. At Northowram, we want children to be proficient at spelling. This means they confidently use their phonics knowledge, knowledge of spelling rules and etymology (origins of words.)

We aim for all children to be able to speak confidently and listen intently to others.

## Implementation

We use phonics as a way to begin each child's reading journey, using Ruth Miskin Phonics Scheme (RML.) These daily phonics sessions are taught discretely and time is devoted during the day to provide intervention sessions where needed. Children are regularly assessed to ascertain progress. Children read books linked to their phonics level and these are also sent home to read. Each year, teachers invite parents into school to take part in a phonics session to help them see what this looks like during the school day and how they can help at school. In Year 2, children begin to move to the PM book scheme, which further supports children's reading but these books include words not necessarily phonic based and continue using these throughout Year 3. In the final years at school, children access Accelerated Reader. Children choose books independently within a given range and then complete quizzes to assess how well they have understood what they have read. Teachers track progress using reports from the program. Children are encouraged to read in order to add words to their classes word count totals and trying to become a 'word millionaire.' Throughout school, children are listened to regularly. Classes are analysed to support children who need to be reading daily to a staff member, twice a week or fortnightly. Each child has a reading record that is used by staff and parents are encouraged to add to this as well. Children and parents know that they should be reading 20 minutes per night as homework and that this can be independent reading, reading aloud to a parent or a mixture of both.

Our English curriculum is text-led, this means books have been carefully chosen for each year group and have been designed to enrich the children's 'reading diets'. Our long term curriculum strives to include a mixture of authors and include important themes that aid deep discussion. There is time built in to our Geography, Science and History units of work to read around the subject, increasing children's familiarity with how these type of texts are written as well as supporting vocabulary acquisition. Children also begin these lessons already knowing something about the topic being studied for that lesson. There is also dedicated time in the timetable for a class novel. This is where children are read to and hear their teacher modelling how to read aloud.

Writing is linked to the text-led books. Teachers use rich texts to stop at different points and write for a given purpose. They embed writing skills that are needed for tasks within the teaching element of the writing unit and children are given opportunities to practise these skills within lessons or in dedicated punctuation and grammar sessions. Having a secure and legible handwriting style is essential for enabling the child to focus on language and sentence structure, therefore daily sessions happen in every year group. Formation of letters is secured within Early Years and KS1. Learning to join begins in Year 2 and consolidated in Year 3. Similarly, daily spelling sessions are also built into the day. Oxford Owl is the scheme used in school, which uses a mixture of video and written activities to deliver the National Curriculum 2014. Homework consists of spelling, punctuation and grammar and this supports in consolidating understanding of what has been taught in lessons. Within these writing units, children are encouraged to predict and discuss themes as well as responding to what they have read. Children are asked for their points of view as well as listening to those around them.

## Impact

To be successful, all children will have mastered the phonic code by Christmas of Year 2. Reading in other subjects will be cemented within the afternoon units and be happening as normal practise. Older children will be quizzing regularly and achieving 80% or higher on the quizzes. Progress is measured by teachers using Accelerated reader and termly Rising Stars assessments and the results of these are sent home termly to parents. Similarly, phonic assessments will be taking place regularly and results acted upon accordingly, for example moving children between different groups depending on need and informing parents when needed. Children will have shown in their writing, the specific skills identified to show they are working at the expected standard for their year group. Spelling, grammar and punctuation is assessed in written pieces as well as termly assessments using Rising Stars and past SATS papers in Y2 and Y6.

Our school's KS2 results currently show in reading and writing we are above national standards meaning that the majority of children leave our school with a good level of reading and writing ability. Our ambition is to be within the top 10% by 2030.