



Lady Bay Primary School

English Policy

September 2025

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1. The 'Lady Bay Way' for English

At Lady Bay Primary School, we value literacy as a vital foundation for lifelong learning, independence, empathy, and effective communication. We are committed to developing pupils' reading, writing, speaking and listening skills so they can express themselves clearly and confidently, understand others, and engage meaningfully with the world around them. We recognise that strong literacy skills not only support personal growth but also underpin success across the wider school curriculum, enabling children to access, understand, and enjoy all areas of learning.

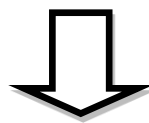
Planning

At Lady Bay teachers plan age-appropriate, topic themed sequences of learning to deliver to the children opportunities to meet the learning objectives for writing outlined in the *EYFS Framework* and the *National Curriculum*. Staff refer to the *Writing Skills Progression Ladder* document when planning units of work. Lessons are taught in three-week blocks (KS2) and two-week blocks (KS1), are text based and follow a sequential structure.

1. Immersion in the text/text type
2. Development of skills
3. Applying skills independently

Our school uses Supersonic Phonic Friends to deliver the early reading objectives outlined in the *EYFS framework* and the *National Curriculum*. The scheme is progressive and sequential and provides opportunities to revisit units in response to the needs of the children.

Reading learning objectives are planned using *Reading VIPERS* from the Literacy Shed. Short texts are selected by teachers to ensure that all the reading skills are taught each half term and the children have the skills modelled to them and then have opportunities to practise and apply those skills independently in discrete reading comprehension sessions. Staff refer to the *Reading Skills Progression Ladder* document to ensure all reading learning objectives are covered either in discrete Reading sessions, in English lessons or in other curriculum subjects.



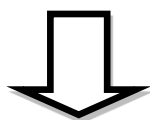
Teaching

At Lady Bay there are 4 formal English writing lessons each week.

English lessons begin with a GPS starter. This activity is a short question or problem for the children to think about before discussion the answer together with the class. GPS starters are not connected to the main learning objective and are based on learning from previous year groups or previously taught objectives from the current learning year. This is to support a spiral curriculum and help the children consolidate learning by continuously recapping knowledge. GPS starters are not recorded in English books but are documented on weekly planning grids.

Children are supported in English lessons in a variety of ways including:

- Scaffolding
- Varied activities
- Resources such as spelling mats or phoneme mats
- Adult support (1:1 or small group)



Assessing

At Lady Bay reading is assessed in a variety of ways. In Foundation and KS1 (and in Year 3 when appropriate) phonics is assessed using an assessment document that is closely matched to the sequence of learning in Supersonic Phonic Friends and also to the Big Cats for Letters and Sounds reading books. This helps teachers identify any gaps in knowledge for timely interventions to ensure rapid catch-up. This document is used up until the children take the PSC. Staff in Y1, Y2 and Y3, continue to use it to track pupils who did not pass.

Children are assessed in phonics at the end of each phonics phase and at other points in the term where necessary. At the end of Year 1, decoding skills are assessed in the Phonics Screening Check. This informs teachers of who will need additional support in phonics in Year 2.

From FS through to KS2, reading is assessed using the Collins Big Cat Reading Assessment. Staff assess children from Yellow band onwards using this document. It assesses their fluency

2. English Curriculum Intent

Our main aim at Lady Bay Primary School is for all children to develop a love of reading as well as the necessary skills needed in life for writing and communicating effectively.

English lessons are taught to children in mixed ability groups. In this approach, all children are exposed to some higher-level thinking questions and problem-solving as well as having the opportunity to work with their peers. Additional intervention is provided for children working below age expectations in reading, writing and spelling, along with extension activities and questions for children working at greater depth.

A carefully constructed English Curriculum is planned and followed throughout the school. Children are exposed to and immersed in high quality texts covering a wide variety of genres. In English lessons, texts are analysed and deconstructed in order for the children to understand the structure and mechanics of writing. These texts often link to the class topic which promotes the enjoyment of learning and allows children to make links between subjects. Teachers share and model writing, which nurtures the children's fluency and creativity. The children then practise and apply their skills before creating independent pieces of writing. Extended pieces of writing are edited and improved by the individual child using feedback from their teacher or their peers. Throughout the process, the children are taught to read as writers and write as readers.

In all of our English lessons:

- Teachers have a high expectation that all pupils are capable of achieving high standards in English.
- Children are often given a real purpose to write and the units all have hooks in order to engage and inspire the children's thinking and learning.
- Teaching is underpinned by high quality texts and examples of writing are precisely modelled by the teacher with a focus on key skills.
- Grammar, punctuation and spelling skills are practised frequently and consolidated until all children have a firm understanding of how to apply them in to their own work.
- Teachers use questioning in class to develop the children's thinking and explanations, helping children to make literary choices in their writing.
- Structured opportunities for speaking and listening are used to develop children's language skills as well as to support writing and reading.
- Drama techniques are used to help children develop characterisation and the understanding of deeper themes.
- Children are provided with as many enrichment opportunities as possible in order to inspire their learning.
- Children's creativity is also fostered through writing workshops led by our school reading patron.

3. Legal framework

This policy has been created with regard to the following statutory guidance:

- DfE (2013) 'English programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2'
- DfE (2017) 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'

4. Roles and responsibilities

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Appointing an appropriate English subject leader.
- Ensuring that appropriate procedures are in place for reporting and managing accidents.
- Ensuring that effective health and safety procedures are in place.
- Completing a risk assessment.

The English Subject Leader is responsible for:

- Encouraging staff to provide effective learning opportunities for pupils.
- Help to expand on colleagues' areas of expertise in English.
- Organising the deployment of resources and carrying out an annual audit of all related resources.
- Liaising with teachers across all phases.
- Communicating developments in the subject to all teaching staff and the senior leadership team (SLT), as appropriate.
- Leading staff meetings and providing staff members with the appropriate training.
- Organising, providing and monitoring CPD opportunities regarding English skills.
- Ensuring common standards are met for recording and assessing pupils' performance.
- Advising on the contribution of English in other curriculum areas, including cross-curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- Collating assessment data and setting new priorities for the development of English in subsequent years.

The classroom teacher(s) is/are responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with this policy.
- Ensuring progression of pupils' English skills, with due regard to the national curriculum.
- Planning lessons effectively, ensuring a range of teaching methods are used to cover the content of the national curriculum.
- Liaising with the English Subject Leader about key topics, resources and support for individual pupils.
- Monitoring the progress of pupils in their class and reporting this on a termly basis.
- Reporting any concerns regarding the teaching of the subject to the English Subject Leader or a member of the SLT.

- Undertaking any training that is necessary in order to effectively teach English.

The special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) is responsible for:

- Liaising with the English Subject Leader in order to implement and develop specialist English-based learning throughout the school.
- Organising and providing training for staff regarding the English curriculum for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- Advising staff on how best to support pupils' needs.
- Advising staff on the inclusion of English objectives in pupils' individual educational plans.
- Advising staff on the use of teaching assistant (TAs) in order to meet pupils' needs.

The pupil is responsible for:

- Ensuring they complete work on time and to the best of their ability.
- Ensuring they behave in accordance with the Pupil Code of Conduct.

5. Reading

We aim to teach all children essential skills needed in order to become a confident and fluent readers. Children who fail to progress at the expected rate are supported through phonic and reading interventions throughout the school.

There is an emphasis on children learning to decode through daily phonics teaching in the infants and on developing their sight vocabulary for common exception words.

1. Phonics and Early Reading

Reading begins in Foundation Stage through sharing books with simple or no text so that the children can learn how to tell a story using images.

Planning

The school uses the scheme *Supersonic Phonic Friends* for phonics planning and resources. This ensures a consistent approach to the teaching of early reading in EYFS and KS1 (and into KS2 as required.) This scheme follows the teaching progression from 'Letters and Sounds'. The school uses books from *Collins Big Cats for Letters and Sounds* to support early reading.

Delivering

Children are taught phonics in discrete, 20-30 minute sessions each day. These sessions take a 4-part structure: Review, Teach, Practise, Apply. Children have opportunities to apply their phonics knowledge through reading and writing in each session. Phonics is taught by a teacher as a whole class activity with all children taking part. In Foundation, classes are mixed and separated into two teaching groups in order to give less confident learners more support and opportunity to grasp the phonemes at a slower pace. Both teaching groups will cover the same phonemes each week. Children in Year 1 and 2 are taught in their class groups.

Assessing

Teachers carry out formative assessments during sessions through observations to make note of children that are struggling to grasp new phonemes and arrange interventions where necessary. Teachers carry out termly assessments of learning so far which are used to arrange interventions and inform parents. These assessments are done using Collins Big Cat Assessments and start from FS (once they reach 'yellow book band') and go through to Y6.

At the end of Year 1, children are assessed by the Phonics Screening Check (PSC) and those who don't achieve the pass mark will be rescreened at the end of Year 2.

Interventions

Specific interventions are put in place for the children identified as being at risk of falling behind. Interventions at Lady Bay are specific to the children's gaps in skills and knowledge and are reviewed regularly to ensure rapid catch-up.

In Foundation, identified children have specific daily small group or 1:1 intervention sessions with a Teaching Assistant in addition to the main phonics session to help them catch up.

In Year 1, identified children have additional daily practice of phonemes they are struggling to grasp in small groups (usually no more than 6) with a TA as often as possible. Where

children are at risk of falling behind and/or not on track to pass the PSC, parents are informed and are given specific phonemes and tricky words to practise at home.

In Year 2 and 3, the children who did not meet the threshold in the PSC (or retake) have daily phonics practise to help them consolidate their knowledge and develop their fluency.

Supporting Early Reading at Home

Children are given books to take home as soon as they begin to learn to read. Teachers and Teaching Assistants select books for children following the school's book band system (using books from *Collins Big Cats for Letters and Sounds*) which matches the learning taking place in school.

In the Foundation Stage and Year 1, children read on one to one basis with a teacher or teaching assistant using books closely matched to their knowledge of phonics, fluency and comprehension. This allows them to have individually tailored support for developing fluency and independence. Teachers ensure that the children take home books using tricky words and phonemes in the current phase that they are learning in school.

Parents are requested to read school reading books at home with their child at least four times each week and to read the book at least twice. This is to help develop fluency and allow the children to absorb the words that they read. The school holds parents' meetings and workshops in the Autumn Term, along with guidance documents, to share with parents how best to support their children with reading. Teachers can offer additional support to parents by appointment if required.

2. Lady Bay Primary School Approach to Phonics and Reading

	Phonics	Reading Comprehension
Foundation	5 sessions per week	1 x 20 minute whole class reading session each week
Year 1	5 sessions per week	1 x 20 minute whole class reading session each week
Year 2	5 sessions per week with additional phonics sessions for children that did not meet the Phonic Screening Check threshold in Year 1.	1 x 30 minute whole class reading session each week
Year 3	For most children in Year 3, phonics moves onto spelling. Additional phonics sessions for children that did not meet the Phonic Screening Check threshold in Year 2.	1 x 20 minute whole class reading session each week
Year 4		2 x 20 minute whole class reading session each week
Year 5		2 x 20 minute whole class reading session each week

Year 6		2 x 20 minute whole class reading session each week
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3. Reading Comprehension Sessions

Whilst phonics provides children with the essential tools to decode words and read fluently, it is through reading comprehension that they truly begin to understand, interpret, and connect with texts in meaningful ways. Teaching reading comprehension alongside phonics is vital to developing confident, reflective readers who not only decode words but also engage critically with what they read.

Comprehension skills allow children to grasp deeper meanings, recognise themes, and infer the intentions, thoughts, and feelings of characters. This process nurtures emotional literacy by helping children explore a wide range of human emotions and experiences through story. As they identify with characters and situations, they develop empathy—learning to see the world from perspectives beyond their own.

Furthermore, comprehension opens up the text as a window into the wider world. Through rich discussion, questioning, and reflection, children deepen their understanding of different cultures, histories, and viewpoints. This holistic approach to reading supports their cognitive development while fostering emotional awareness and compassion, equipping them to become thoughtful, informed individuals in an increasingly complex world.

At Lady Bay, reading comprehension is taught weekly in all year groups through discreet sessions with a specific reading skill taught each week. The school uses VIPERS from the Literacy Shed to categorise the different reading skills: Vocabulary, Inference, Predict, Explain, Retrieval, Summaries. Teachers ensure that all reading skills are covered in each half term.

In the reading sessions, there is a great emphasis on discussion and modelling to help the children to understand the text. In Foundation and Year 1, reading sessions are discussion based with a key text being studied over a number of weeks. This is then recorded in a floor book. In the summer term of Year 1, the children may start recording their answers on the sheets provided. From Year 2 onwards, the children discuss the text and respond to questions in a variety of ways including; verbally, writing on whiteboard as well as writing in a reading comprehension book. Children will see the teacher modelling specific reading skills before practising with a partner and then applying the skill independently.

The texts selected for reading comprehension sessions are short texts from Literacy Shed Plus which have questions with a specific focus skill. Teachers ensure that a range of fiction and non-fiction text types (including poetry) are covered over each half term. In KS2, teachers also include extracts of at least three classic texts in order to broaden the children's knowledge of classic literature.

4. Reading Books at Home

Children progress through reading bands, with each book level introducing new reading and comprehension skills. The school library offers a wide range of books for each book band, with each band increasing in length, words per page, range of vocabulary and content.

Teachers will review the children's book band levels at least once per term in KS2 and more frequently in EYFS and KS1. Children's progress through the book bands usually slows during Years 4-6 as the books become longer and so the children take longer to explore and enjoy the books across the breadth of the book band. As children become more fluent and confident in their reading ability, it is important that children are able to understand the books they read and build the stamina to read and enjoy longer texts.

Children take their reading books home each night and bring the book into school with them so that they can practise reading both in school and at home. Children are required to read at home at least four times per week and for this to be recorded in their school reading diary. Children in EYFS and Years 1 must read with an adult. Children in Year 2 and 3 are encouraged to read with an adult at home most of the time. Children in older year groups may choose to read on their own but adults at home must continue to question their child's understanding and engage in discussion with their child about what they have read.

Children are also encouraged to choose a 'reading for pleasure book' from the appropriate library.

5. Assessing Reading

Teachers are constantly assessing and reacting to the children's reading ability through observation in the classroom. Children are given opportunities to read aloud and discuss texts throughout the curriculum. In Foundation and Year 1 children read 1:1 with a teacher each week. In Years 2-6 children read with a teacher at least once per fortnight as part of a Structured Reading process. In all year groups, children that need additional reading practise or assessment will read more often with a Teaching Assistant and also a Literacy Volunteer.

The school carries out formal assessments termly which highlight the children's progress in reading (decoding and comprehension) and informs the next steps for the children. This is also reported to parents. These assessments are done using Collins Big Cat Assessments and start from FS (once they reach 'yellow book band') and go through to Y6.

Children who are identified as working below their current National Curriculum year group expectations (this may include children with Special Educational Needs) are assessed using B-Squared and are given small next steps as targets to progress their learning. Teachers may also refer to the NC objectives of previous year groups.

6. Interventions

Throughout the school, teachers are able to spot where children may be at risk of falling behind and implement appropriate interventions in good time to help the identified children catch up with their peers. Interventions are regularly reviewed and revised.

Interventions may include:

- Additional reading practise with Teaching Assistant and Literacy Volunteers who are briefed in the best practise to support young readers.
- Additional small group reading with a Teaching Assistant during assembly time using Reciprocal Reading techniques. This benefits children who are confident decoders but struggle to understand the text and draw meaning from what they read. This group may include (but not exclusively) children with English as an additional language.
- Children with Pupil Premium funding read with their 1:1 tutor in each session
- Children identified as having a particular weakness in reading (including those with Dyslexia) will take part in sessions following the SNIP programme which focuses on helping children over learn words rather than rely on their phonics knowledge.

7.Promoting Reading for Pleasure

Children are given books to read at home. They are expected to read at least 4 times a week and record this in their reading journal.

- Children have the opportunity to listen to stories being read by their teacher. This encourages a love of literature and promotes enjoyment of reading.
- Whole class rewards are in place as an incentive to read at home.
- Pupils participate in World Book Day annually in celebration of their favourite authors and books. We also use a wide range of enrichment activities to promote reading.
- The school has a recommended reading list of books to read before they leave Lady Bay, this is the reading diaries.
- Classrooms have a dedicated reading area/display to promote a love of books and reading. The nature of the reading areas may vary and are dependent on the classroom size and the age of the children in the class.
- Staff make use of the ELS book service and encourage children to read books related to current topics during independent reading sessions.
- The library offers a wide selection of fiction and non-fiction books for the children to take home and enjoy, including Dyslexia friendly books which are clearly identified and accessible for all children.

6. Spoken Language

Opportunities for speaking and listening are embedded throughout the curriculum.

This may include:

- Presenting to peers
- Show and Tell
- Taking part in class assemblies
- Discussions and debates
- Performing poetry and nursery rhymes
- Drama activities and role play
- Christmas/seasonal/end of year performances
- Asking questions
- Working collaboratively

8. Cross-curricular links

The English skills that are developed in English lessons are applied to and in every lesson that is conducted in accordance to the national curriculum. English skills make up the basis for all other future skills.

Mathematics:

In regards to mathematics, English skills contribute greatly. EYFS students encounter patterns, spaces and shapes in English lessons. Further on in their development, pupils will learn a new and wider vocabulary which will include mathematic-specialist terms. Children in KS1 come across stories that involve rhymes that include counting and sequencing.

Science:

Pupils are expected to engage in research during science lessons. English skills are used here for writing a range of reports, and for verbally explaining their findings to the class and to a teacher.

Humanitarian subjects:

Humanitarian subjects include history, geography and religious studies. These subjects require a technical and subject-specific jargon. English skills will be utilised here when learning the new jargon. Researching is also required for these subjects, meaning that the register in which any work is written often needs to be adapted depending upon the task set.

Drama:

English skills are fundamental for oral expression. Effective English skills will ensure a pupil feels confident taking part in group tasks and class discussion/performance.

ICT:

Using computer software, such as Word, develops a pupil's understanding of jargon, lexicon, sentence structure and many grammatical rules.

9. Equal opportunities

All pupils will have equal access to the English curriculum.

Gender, learning ability, physical ability, ethnicity, linguistic ability and/or cultural circumstances will not impede pupils from accessing English lessons.

Children with English as an Additional Language (EAL) or English as a Second Language (ESL) are supported in speaking English as well as reading and writing both through scaffolding in lessons and separate interventions. Please see the school's EAL policy for more information about this.

Where it is inappropriate for a pupil to participate in a lesson due to reasons related to any of the factors outlined above, the lesson will be adapted to meet the pupil's needs and alternative arrangements involving extra support will be provided where necessary.

Cultural and gender differences are positively reflected in lessons and teaching materials used.

10. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the English Subject Leader.

The English Subject Leader will monitor teaching and learning in English at Lady Bay Primary School, ensuring that the content of the national curriculum is covered across all phases of pupils' education.

A named member of the governing board will be briefed to oversee the teaching of English, and meets regularly with the English Subject Leader to review progress.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all teaching staff.