

English

Woodside Academy follows the National Curriculum (2014) for English. It is taught both as a separate subject and through the many other subjects in our topic approach to the curriculum.

Phonics and Reading

Synthetic phonics are taught systematically in Early Years and Key Stage 1 using the Monster Phonics scheme. Children in Early Years and KS1 progress through the banded reading books which are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and the common exception words. This is so that, early on, they experience success and gain confidence that they are readers. In addition, children are invited to select a second book of their choice (in class and/or from the school library) that they have particular interest in and would like to read with or without adult support. We believe this promotes a love for reading as well as extending children's vocabulary. Children are nurtured and have plenty of opportunities to read in school and practise their fluency skills.

Children who complete the Monster Phonics programme and demonstrate fluent reading are then able to select books of their choice from the classroom and school library.

In KS2, each year group has an age-appropriate recommended reading corner filled with a variety of books (classic and modern fiction, war and history, graphic fiction, poetry, moving on and growing up, non-fiction, diversity and emotions, confidence and relationships) that promote a love of reading as well as for information. The books ensure children read a diverse range of texts that are structured in different ways.

Children who are not yet fluent readers will continue to progress through the colour bands but are encouraged to be more independent in the choices they make. If needed, previous bands are revisited so children's learning can be consolidated. Hi-lo books are available for these children.

Shared reading is a top priority across the school. Teachers ensure children are read to everyday, incorporating a range of text types and authors. There are also many big books used for shared reading as well as e-books on the interactive whiteboard.

The school library is regularly visited by each class and children are invited to take home books to share with their family. There is also an allocated time for parents to access the library after school with their children.

Additionally, to further expose children to high quality and challenging texts, daily whole-class guided reading sessions take place in years 2-6. Lessons involve activating children's prior knowledge, exploring tier 2 and tier 3 vocabulary, reading fluency grids, modelling reading aloud, echo/timed reading, discussion and debate, analysis of text, as well as decoding and comprehension skills.

Reading journals are provided for every child at the start of each new academic year to track their reading each week. Children are expected to read outside of school for a minimum of 10 minutes at least five times a week. There is a reading reward system to promote and support home reading. Rewards include books and trips to bookshops.

In Year 6, children can apply to become reading mentors. Reading mentors receive a badge and are responsible for promoting reading across the school. They promote books to other children, read with younger children and ensure the library is kept tidy and resourceful.

Children's reading skills in years 3 -5 are assessed termly using Test Base Reading Comprehension assessments and past SATs papers in Y6. Reading fluency is tracked using Suffolk and Hertfordshire reading assessments.

Throughout the school, we ensure that our lowest 20% of readers are closely monitored and interventions are planned accordingly. Children read to an adult daily and this is recorded in their reading records. Additionally, to improve their comprehension skills, we deliver and believe in the reciprocal reading approach. Children who are not meeting the expected standard and/or are not being read with at home will be also be heard read regularly and will receive targeted interventions.

Writing

Our bespoke writing curriculum is linked to our geography, history, science and wider curriculum. Grammar, spelling and punctuation is linked to each writing unit and is taught contextually. A vast range of genres (fiction, non-fiction and poetry) are covered in each year group to give children the opportunity to explore the features of a range of texts. Marking ladders (that include a list of text features, spelling, punctuation and grammar requirements) are used for extended pieces of writing. Children refer to the ladders when they are writing to ensure they have met the requirements. On completion, children are then given time to identify the requirements set out in the marking ladder in their own work. Furthermore, children use purple polishing pens in years 1-6 to edit and improve their writing. They are also used to self and peer assess their work.

Text types covered at Woodside

Y1 – Non-chronological report, Recount (Letter), Narrative, Instructions, Recount (Postcards), Narrative - retold, Recount (Diary), Persuasive Advert, Poetry (Acrostics, Shape, Riddles), Explanation

Y2 – Non-chronological report, Recount (Letter), Narrative, Instructions, Recount (Postcards), Narrative – Setting Description, Recount (Diary), Persuasive Advert, Poetry (Diamantes, Haiku, Free Verse)

Y3 – Non-chronological report, Recount (Letter), Explanation, Recount (Diary), Narrative, Instructions, Narrative – Character Description, Persuasive Advert, Recount (Magazine Article), Poetry (Clerihews, Limericks, Free Verse)

Y4 – Recount (Letter), Explanation, Poetry (Kennings, Tetractys, Free Verse), Non-chronological report, Persuasive Leaflet, Narrative – Setting Description, Recount (Diary), Biography, Instructions, Narrative – Character Description, Narrative

Y5 – Non-chronological report, Recount (Letter), Explanation, Recount (Diary), Narrative – Characterising Speech, Instructions, Narrative – Character Description, Persuasive Advert, Recount, Narrative, Poetry (Haiku/Senryus, Renga, Free Verse)

Y6 – Recount (Diary), Explanation, Poetry (Ottava Rima, Lambic Pentameter), Recount (Biography), Instructions, Characterising Speech, Letter, Non-chronological report, Narrative, Discussion, Persuasive Leaflet

The Writing Journey

- Diagnostic Task
- Text Deconstruction
- Contextualised Construction
- Reconstruction
- Assess and Feedback

Handwriting is taught using the Letter-join handwriting scheme throughout the school. Handwriting interventions are in place if required. Grammar, punctuation and spelling is assessed using termly assessments (TES Assessments).

We celebrate our talented readers and writers during our celebration assembly each Friday where children receive certificates and prizes.