

**HOWE DELL PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**English Policy**  
**Autumn 2025**  
**Next review: Autumn 2027**

## **Intent**

The study of English is key at Howe Dell as we firmly believe that, through the development of effective spoken and written communication, it is the key to all learning. It enables children to access the wider curriculum and is vital in achieving future success. Learning to read is a priority and we are committed to ensuring that all children leave Howe Dell with not only the necessary skills to read but also with a real love of reading.

Our English curriculum will provide all children with:

- Daily access to a validated phonics and early reading programme, Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised, to ensure that all children have the skills required to decode words
- The opportunity to read fluently and confidently with good understanding of what they have read
- A desire to read widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- Exposure to high quality, appropriately pitched texts during English lessons, including whole school texts which are used by all year groups at the start of each term
- Exposure to a rich, varied vocabulary which is embedded within our English curriculum but also extends beyond into other subject areas through the use of high quality fiction and non-fiction texts with literature links to each subject
- Immersion in a wide range of speaking and listening, drama, reading and writing activities
- The skills to write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their vocabulary and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- Access to a representative English curriculum that allows everyone to see themselves and others in books that reflect the rich diversity of our school community and the society we live in
- Timely support and intervention to enable children to 'keep up' with the curriculum and achieve their full potential

## **Early Years**

Within EYFS at Howe Dell reading is at the heart of our curriculum and our aim is to encourage a love of reading right from the start. The aim is to expose children to a range of books that not only develop a love of reading, but have been chosen specifically to develop their oracy, vocabulary and comprehension. These books will be embedded in our provision through activities, story sessions and on display for children to access independently. Through this, children begin to internalise new vocabulary, language patterns and begin to retell stories. There is cohesion and consistency with our approach to align with the whole school through the use of CUSP Early Foundations resource and story time sessions.

EYFS provision includes dedicated, daily phonics sessions which provide the skills required for children to apply their phonics in independent and supported reading and writing opportunities across the curriculum, such as Drawing Club. Handwriting skills are developed in EYFS through

gross and fine motor skills activities along with pre-writing and mark making skills to develop correct pencil grip.

LONG-TERM SEQUENCE FOR WRITING  
Early Years Foundation Stage – Key Stage 1

	ELGs	Key Vocabulary to be developed in EYFS	How this is achieved in EYFS	Writing in KS1
Area of learning Physical Development Literacy	<p><b>Fine Motor Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold a pencil effectively, tripod grip in most cases.</li> <li>• Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery.</li> <li>• Begin to show accuracy when drawing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poem/ Poet</li> <li>• Rhyme</li> <li>• Syllable/ pattern</li> <li>• Expression</li> <li>• Setting</li> <li>• Sentence</li> <li>• Full stop</li> <li>• Capital letter</li> <li>• Finger spaces</li> <li>• Sense</li> <li>• Explain</li> <li>• First, second etc.</li> <li>• Sequence</li> <li>• First</li> <li>• Then</li> <li>• After that</li> <li>• Finally</li> <li>• Dear/ From</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FMS activities – tweezers, threading, sewing, peg boards, elastic band boards and daily Dough Disco.</li> <li>• Scissor control activities –using self-selected scissors linked to ability.</li> <li>• Copying and creating large and small scale patterns using a variety of materials.</li> <li>• Emergent writing opportunities – FMS, letter formation, whiteboards, GMS, mark making etc.</li> <li>• Practise letter formation in line with Little Wandle Phonics scheme.</li> <li>• Teach writing name, cvc words, labels, captions and sentences.</li> <li>• Model how to memorise a sentence before we write.</li> <li>• Model reading aloud to check writing makes sense.</li> <li>• Opportunities for Circle time – Jigsaw; Discovery RE; sharing news etc. Focus on retelling events in sequence.</li> <li>• Book of the week and story time. Use a variety of fiction and non-fiction books, focus on listening and recall.</li> <li>• Learn a selection of poems, rhyming stories, rhyming song and nursery rhymes.</li> <li>• Retell stories using small world and role play props.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poetry Pattern and rhyme; shape poems and calligrams; and poetry on a theme.</li> <li>• Settings Descriptions and stories with familiar settings.</li> <li>• Instructional writing</li> <li>• Recount from personal experience</li> <li>• Informal letters</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Writing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write recognisable letters</li> <li>• Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing sounds with letters.</li> <li>• Write simple sentences and phrases that can be read by others.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Linked to C&amp;L pupils will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask questions to find out more and to check they understand what has been said to them.</li> <li>• Describe events in some detail.</li> <li>• Use new vocabulary in different contexts.</li> <li>• Engage in non-fiction books</li> <li>• Listen to and talk about selected non-fiction to develop a deep familiarity with new knowledge and vocabulary</li> </ul>		

<https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/>

<https://primarysite-prod-sorted.s3.amazonaws.com/howe-dell-primary-school/UploadedDocument/27d53d54-4936-454f-898a-295dd698a187/howe-dell-phonics-and-early-reading-policy-updated-jan-2023.pdf>

## Reading Policy

### Intent

It is essential to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to become fluent, confident and skilled readers who are able to understand and make sense of the world in which they live, through the knowledge they gain through texts. Through exposing children to a rich and varied literature spine, we enable them to develop a love of reading, a good knowledge of literature and to understand how reading can open their minds to life-long learning.

### Implementation

At Howe Dell in Key Stage 1 and 2, we teach Reading using ‘Curriculum by Unity Partnership’ (CUSP) resources. CUSP Reading is cohesive and well sequenced, rich in vocabulary and knowledge and encourages pupils to explore and respond to moral, ethical and social questions. It is designed to be highly aspirational and ambitious, supporting pupils to become confident and skilled readers, equipping them with the knowledge and skills required for future success. Built upon the latest research around reading fluency, explicit vocabulary instruction, modelling and key

comprehension strategies, it is a synthesis of excellence evidence-informed practice distilled into consistent and carefully planned practice. Pupils enjoy an in-depth study of carefully selected texts from a literature spine, designed to expose pupils to a breadth of authors, texts, genres and themes. This is combined with the study of bespoke written extracts, aimed at creating breadth of experiences and building conceptual fluency.

## **Organisation of reading books**

EYFS-Y2 Little Wandle phonic matching books, phase 2 to phase 5  
Y2 – Y3 Little Wandle Fluency books

Little Wandle Fluency books are used to support pupils transitioning from phase 5 into reading books with increased content and complexity. This is followed by the use of reading scheme colour book bands. When children are fluent in reading they are encouraged to 'genre reading'. Free choice of genres with teacher direction to ensure a range of genres are read.

## **Little Wandle (Reception – Y6)**

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- Reception Phases 2, 3 and 4.
- Y1 Phase 5 and screening check
- Y2 children re-screened for phonics test
- Little Wandle keep-up, catch-up and Rapid Catch-Up sessions for all pupils unable to decode phonically

## **Daily reading lessons:**

- EYFS & KS1: 3 x reading practice sessions per week and Little Wandle daily direct teaching sessions
- KS2: Daily reading lessons = 5 x 30 min

## **Reading for Pleasure:**

At Howe Dell, we recognise that the teaching of reading goes well-beyond what is taught in our whole class reading lessons. We aim for a love of reading and literature to be at the very heart of our ethos and culture. Some examples of how we are developing a reading culture at our school include:

- Enhancing our communal reading spaces to make high-quality literature and comfortable reading environments accessible to all
- Community reading - community library housed in the main entrance for children and adults
- Daily dedicated time to enjoy diverse literature being read aloud
- Children in EYFS and KS1 choose a weekly 'sharing book' to read together with their families at home
- Every child in school has access to a library book of their choice
- Well-chosen, high quality texts provided in classrooms for pupils to access (taken from the CUSP reading spine) investment in actual books rather than copied sections.
- Using literature linked texts to the CUSP wider curriculum subjects

**Outcomes:** As a result of the high expectations of the reading curriculum, our pupils are encouraged to be life-long readers.

## **Writing Policy**

### **Intent**

At Howe Dell we recognise the effect that a confident, fluent and coherent understanding of writing will have on a pupil's progress, both inside and outside of the school environment. We therefore strive to provide a broad and deep curriculum, which encompasses writing practice, including handwriting, spelling, explicit vocabulary instruction, and writing for different styles, purposes and audiences, as well as focusing on spoken English and oracy. To ensure high quality teaching and learning of writing, all staff members are well informed of planning, assessment, teaching and learning requirements for the writing curriculum. We ensure that all pupils know how to plan, orally rehearse, draft and evaluate their work as well as carry out an effective edit and improve process.

### **Implementation**

To achieve our curriculum aims in writing we use the Herts for Learning Essential Writing teaching sequence resource.

Every sequence is based on a high quality, language rich text. Immersion in the text ensures that all pupils have an exemplar model of the vocabulary and writing style expected as outcomes of the sequence. The sequences are carefully structured and organized across the three terms for each year group (Year 1 to Year 6) to form the long term plan.

Each teaching sequence is expertly designed to allow for the explicit teaching, modelling and rehearsing of writing skills prior to pupils then applying these through extended writing. Pupils learn how to plan, practice and evaluate their work as well as carry out an effective edit and improve process, considering the purpose and audience of their written outcomes. Sequences also include the teaching of Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS) within the context of the unit and focus text; this is in addition to explicit Handwriting and Spelling lessons.

We use Letterjoin resources to explicitly teach letter formation in Key Stage 1, progressing to learning the joins required to write with fluency and accuracy once children have secured correct letter formation in Year 2 and throughout Key Stage 2. Learning is sequenced to ensure sufficient practice and revisits of prior learning. Discrete handwriting lessons are taught three times a week in Key Stage 1 and a minimum of 2 times a week in Key stage 2 for between 15 and 30 minutes.

**Outcomes:** As a result of the high expectations of the writing curriculum, our pupils produce writing which is enriched with vocabulary and accurately utilises much of the grammar necessary to create interesting pieces of work which seek to fully engage the reader.

<https://howe-dell-primary-school.secure-primariesite.net/writing/>

## **Spelling Policy**

### **Intent:**

At Howe Dell, we firmly believe that good spelling is an essential skill which allows the children to communicate their understanding in all curriculum subjects. In order for pupils to develop into effective and confident writers they need to develop and use a range of spelling strategies. Our

pupils are given opportunities to explore and investigate the English language and its patterns so that they acquire deep knowledge about the English spelling system and so that this learning endures. As pupils move through our key stages, we strive for them to:

- use their phonic skills effectively when blending phonemes for reading and when segmenting phonemes for spelling
- have an interest in words, their meanings and their origins, developing a growing vocabulary both for speaking and writing
- write with confidence and creativity, while developing the skills to self-edit, correct and improve
- be imaginative, creative and challenge themselves

## **Spelling Curriculum Structure**

At Howe Dell, following on from the teaching of phonics, we use the Little Wandle Spelling resource in Year 2. We then use the Herts for Learning Essential Spelling resource to teach spelling from Year 3 through to Year 6. This spelling resource focuses on the teaching of spelling so that children understand how to apply patterns, strategies and knowledge to other words and not just to learn a list of words given for that week. It also provides links to prior knowledge and tracks back to related objectives so that teachers can give targeted support to children who are not yet able to spell words from their year group programme of study. Spelling is taught a minimum of three times a week for approximately twenty minutes. Each teaching sequence consists of the consolidation of previous and relevant learning; direct teaching of a spelling rule or sound; meaningful practice and an assessment task at the end.

## **Continuous Professional Development**

All staff regularly attend CPD sessions.





## **Impact**

### **Pupil Book Study**

Senior leaders and subject leaders regularly undertake book studies to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning. This includes sessions with small groups of pupils using questioning to check and ensure information and knowledge is acquired and understood with increasing confidence. Feedback is given to teaching staff to inform future planning.

### **Display Monitoring**

All year groups produce a display inspired by our whole school 'Explore and Engage' units, which allow all children to focus on one text. Texts are chosen for the opportunities they provide to develop spoken language, text engagement and to gauge writing stamina. Our displays allow leaders to ensure there is progression through year groups and provide children with the opportunity to revisit key vocabulary and learning.

	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Year 2</h2> <p>Our teaching sequence in Year 2 began with immersing ourselves in the text, retelling events in order, creating freeze frames of different scenes and generating ideas for dialogue between characters.</p>		<h2 style="text-align: center;">Year 3</h2> <p>Year 3's teaching sequence started by studying the text, discussing likes, dislikes, puzzles and connections. This was followed by a verbal and visual retelling of the text. We then went on to create dialogue between characters, supported by freeze framing.</p>
<p>We then moved on to focus on the use of correct punctuation, conjunctions and adjectives in expanded noun phrases in our sentence writing, before ending with a written fictional narrative that we reviewed and published.</p>		<p>The focus then moved to vocabulary building and descriptive writing, exploring single scenes from the book. This supported year 3 with developing their own story maps following a similar structure to 'Journey'.</p> <p>Their final written outcome was to select a section from their story map to write a fictional narrative that they edited throughout the writing process.</p>	

## Ongoing Teacher Assessment

Teachers assess pupils throughout the term using Teacher Assessment Frameworks (TAFs) to monitor pupils and inform planning for subsequent sessions.