

Fulwood and Cadley Primary School



English Policy

September 2026

Wish it. Dream it. Do it. Be Unique.

Policy information	
Policy owner	Leesa Pearce
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1. Introduction and Purpose

English sits at the heart of the curriculum at Fulwood and Cadley Primary School. Through reading, writing, speaking and listening, pupils learn to communicate effectively, understand the world around them and access learning across every subject. This policy brings together the school's approach to phonics, early reading, guided reading, reading for pleasure, writing, grammar, punctuation, spelling, handwriting and spoken language within one coherent English curriculum.

The policy replaces the previous separate Primary English Curriculum and Reading policies. It should be read alongside the whole-school Curriculum Policy, Teaching and Learning Policy, Handwriting Policy, SEND Policy and relevant assessment guidance.

2. English Intent

Our aim is for every pupil to become a confident, fluent and enthusiastic reader; an articulate speaker and attentive listener; and a purposeful, increasingly independent writer. English learning is cumulative: important knowledge and skills are revisited, practised and applied with increasing sophistication as pupils move through school.

- Develop secure foundations in phonics, decoding and transcription.
- Develop fluent readers who read accurately, automatically, with expression and understanding.
- Build a rich vocabulary through reading, talk and explicit teaching.
- Develop comprehension so pupils can retrieve, infer, predict, summarise, explain, compare and evaluate.
- Develop writers who can make deliberate choices for audience, purpose and effect.
- Teach grammar, punctuation, spelling and handwriting so that these support rather than inhibit composition.
- Develop confident spoken language, discussion and oral rehearsal.
- Ensure all pupils, including those with SEND and pupils who are disadvantaged, access an ambitious English curriculum.
- Develop independence so pupils know how to draw on prior learning, models and resources before relying on an adult.

3. Our English Curriculum

English is planned so that new learning builds directly on what pupils already know. Concepts are revisited with increasing depth rather than taught once and left behind. For example, dialogue develops from recognising speech and using basic punctuation to deliberately blending dialogue with action and description to reveal character, control pace and advance a narrative.

Teachers use the National Curriculum, EYFS framework, Lancashire English planning and school progression documents to secure coverage and progression. High-quality texts act as drivers for reading, vocabulary, discussion and writing. Planning is responsive: teachers use assessment to identify misconceptions and gaps and adapt teaching without lowering expectations.

Curriculum principle	What it means in English
Cumulative learning	Reading, writing, grammar, spelling, vocabulary and spoken language build on prior learning.
Retrieval	Important knowledge and conventions are revisited deliberately so they remain available for application.
Explicit teaching	Teachers model reading and writing processes, vocabulary, grammar, spelling and handwriting clearly.
Application	Pupils apply taught knowledge in meaningful reading, writing and cross-curricular contexts.
Independence	Scaffolds are gradually withdrawn and pupils increasingly select appropriate strategies and resources themselves.

4. What English Looks Like at Fulwood and Cadley

The following expectations provide a concise overview of the agreed English approach across school. They sit alongside the more detailed sections that follow.

Reading	Writing	Phonics	Across all English
High-quality texts; fluency and comprehension; PM Benchmarking; Y1-4 carousel / Y5-6 whole class; reading for pleasure.	Lancashire teaching sequence; reading to gathering content to modelling to independent writing; weekly mini-model/application; editing and proofreading.	Red Rose Letters and Sounds; daily systematic teaching; half-termly Phonics Tracker assessment; Bounce Back/Fast Track from precise gap analysis.	Explicit vocabulary; modelling; hinge-point questions; adaptive teaching; live feedback; oral rehearsal; independence and Help Yourself First.

5. Spoken Language and Oracy

Spoken language underpins both reading and writing. Pupils need opportunities to hear ambitious language, rehearse ideas aloud, explain thinking, ask and answer questions, debate, perform and present. Teachers explicitly model complete, precise responses and subject-specific vocabulary.

- Talk partners and structured discussion are used to rehearse thinking before writing or whole-class response.
- Oral rehearsal supports sentence construction, vocabulary selection and composition.
- Drama, role play, conscience alley, debate and performance are used where they deepen understanding.
- Pupils are taught to listen actively, build on others' ideas and justify opinions with evidence.
- Vocabulary is deliberately revisited and expected in pupils' spoken as well as written responses.

6. Phonics and Early Reading - Red Rose Letters and Sounds

Systematic synthetic phonics is a core priority. Fulwood and Cadley follows Red Rose Letters and Sounds across EYFS and Year 1, with continued teaching, consolidation and intervention in Year 2 and beyond where pupils require it. Teaching follows the programme's sequence and uses agreed resources and routines consistently.

Stage	Expected practice
Revisit / Review	Revisit previously taught GPCs, decodable words, tricky words and high-frequency words. Selection is informed by assessment and identified gaps.
Explicit Teach / Model	Teach the focus GPC or tricky word explicitly. Model blending to read and segmenting to spell, using agreed Red Rose resources, sound buttons and phoneme frames where appropriate.
Practise	Provide short, focused practice in blending, segmenting, reading and writing. Activities and games remain purposeful and tightly linked to the learning.
Apply	Pupils apply new and previous learning in words, sentences and decodable text, including independent reading and writing.
Check	Use individual responses, mini-whiteboards, oral blending/segmenting and observation to identify who is secure and who needs immediate further teaching.

Assessment and keeping up

Formative assessment takes place every day. In addition, phonics is formally assessed at the start of the year and towards the end of every half term using Phonics Tracker. This half-termly cycle is a whole-school expectation for pupils receiving phonics teaching or catch-up. Assessment is used to identify precise GPC, blending and segmenting gaps. Staff then follow a clear cycle: assess → identify precise gaps → targeted Bounce Back/Fast Track or in-class support → reassess. Pupils who are at risk of falling behind receive prompt additional practice so that gaps are addressed quickly rather than allowed to widen.

Decodable reading

Pupils who are still securing phonics read fully decodable books matched closely to their secure GPC knowledge. The aim is for pupils to experience success, practise taught correspondences and build automaticity. Decodable books are not replaced by books containing untaught code simply to provide variety.

7. Reading Beyond Phonics

Once pupils can decode increasingly automatically, teaching continues to develop fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, critical thinking and enjoyment. Reading is taught explicitly in guided reading, within the reading phase of English units and across the wider curriculum.

Teachers do not teach comprehension as a set of disconnected labels. Pupils are taught how skilled readers make meaning from text and are expected to support responses with evidence. VIPERS terminology may be used as a helpful shared language for Vocabulary, Inference,

Prediction, Explanation, Retrieval and Summarising/Sequencing, but the quality of thinking about the text remains the priority.

Reading knowledge / skill	Progressive expectation
Vocabulary	Understand words in context, explore shades of meaning and authorial choices, and use new vocabulary in discussion and writing.
Retrieval	Locate, select and combine relevant information efficiently.
Inference	Combine stated and implied information and justify interpretations using evidence.
Prediction	Use textual evidence and knowledge of genre, character and events to make and refine predictions.
Summarising / sequencing	Identify key information, sequence events and summarise across sections or whole texts.
Explanation / evaluation	Explain effects of language and structure, compare ideas and viewpoints and increasingly evaluate texts and authorial choices.

8. PM Benchmarking and Home Reading

PM Benchmarking is used to establish and review an appropriate instructional and home-reading level once pupils are ready to move beyond closely matched decodable phonics books. PM Benchmarking is completed at least half termly for pupils using the PM scheme, and sooner where teacher judgement indicates that a pupil is ready to move level or requires a closer review. It is an assessment of reading accuracy/fluency and comprehension, not simply a system for allocating books. Pupils do not move through levels because they have completed a set number of books; movement is based on benchmarking evidence and professional judgement.

Expectation	Fulwood and Cadley approach
Benchmark criteria	A pupil should demonstrate at least 95% reading accuracy/fluency and achieve 3-4 on the comprehension element before the benchmark is considered secure. Teacher professional judgement remains important.
Below PM 15	Pupils remain closely supported by decodable phonics books where appropriate so that reading practice matches secure phonics knowledge.
PM 15 upwards	Pupils are considered sufficiently secure in phonics and fluency to access PM books more independently. Home-reading books are normally read once before changing, with reading recorded by home.
PM 30	PM Level 30 indicates readiness to move to free-reader status, subject to teacher judgement and evidence that comprehension and reading habits are secure.
Re-benchmarking	PM Benchmarking is completed at least half termly for pupils using the scheme, and sooner where needed. Re-benchmarking checks that the level remains appropriately challenging and informs next steps.

Home reading expectations

Pupils reading decodable phonics books should read the same book three times at home. Repeated reading develops accuracy, automaticity, fluency and confidence. Once a parent/carer has indicated that the book has been read three times and signed the reading record, the class

team supports the pupil to change the book. Pupils working at PM 15 and above may change books independently and normally read each home reader once, with this also recorded at home. Reading at home is broader than the school reading book. Pupils may read other books, magazines and appropriate texts, and being read aloud to by an adult also counts as valuable reading experience, particularly for younger pupils.

9. Guided Reading

Guided reading is planned so pupils repeatedly encounter high-quality texts, receive explicit teaching and have regular opportunities to read, discuss and respond independently. The structure differs by phase because pupils' reading needs change as they become more fluent and independent.

Phase	Whole-school approach
Year 1-4	A weekly carousel: Day 1 pre-teach/vocabulary and text preparation, often supported by a TA; Day 2 teacher-led guided reading; Day 3 guided questions/comprehension; Day 4 independent comprehension; Day 5 reading for pleasure. Teachers adapt the sequence when the text or pupils' needs require it.
Year 5-6	Whole-class guided reading using appropriately challenging texts. Teaching includes vocabulary, fluency, close reading, retrieval, inference, prediction, summarising, explanation and evidence-based responses. Text is chunked when needed so cognitive demand remains manageable.
Additional support	Pupils who require additional decoding or fluency practice receive targeted support alongside, not instead of, an ambitious reading curriculum. Adults may pre-teach vocabulary, rehearse sections of text or provide an adapted amount of text/questioning while maintaining the same core learning.

Reading does not have to be heard only through a pupil's home-school reading book. Teachers and teaching assistants listen to pupils during phonics, guided reading, English, intervention and other curriculum reading. Reading is a class responsibility, coordinated by the class teacher.

Pupils at risk of falling behind, including the lowest-attaining readers, are identified promptly through phonics, fluency, guided-reading and benchmarking evidence. These pupils receive increased opportunities to read to an adult, precise phonics or fluency catch-up where required, and close monitoring of progress. Where a pupil has been identified for daily reading practice, this is a shared class responsibility and may take place through phonics, guided reading, English, intervention or individual reading.

10. Reading Fluency and Reading for Pleasure

Fluency bridges decoding and comprehension. It is taught deliberately rather than left to develop by chance. Teachers model fluent reading and use approaches such as repeated reading, echo reading, choral reading, paired reading and performance reading. Teaching focuses on accuracy, automaticity, appropriate pace, phrasing, expression and understanding. Pupils who remain dysfluent receive additional practice matched to the barrier identified through assessment.

A strong reading culture is equally important. Every class promotes reading for pleasure through regular teacher read-aloud, attractive and accessible books, the school library and book nooks,

pupil recommendations, author experiences and whole-school reading events. Barrington Stoke and other dyslexia-friendly texts provide additional accessible choices where appropriate.

- Daily opportunities to encounter and enjoy high-quality texts.
- Diverse authors, genres, cultures and perspectives represented across the reading offer.
- Library use develops choice, independence and wider reading habits.
- Teachers model themselves as readers and discuss books authentically with pupils.

11. Writing Curriculum and Teaching Sequence

Writing is taught through a purposeful sequence based on Lancashire English planning. Reading and writing are deliberately connected: pupils first encounter and analyse high-quality models, gather the vocabulary and content they need, observe expert modelling and then apply learning independently.

Phase	Typical approach
Cold write / starting point	Where appropriate, establish what pupils can already do. Use this evidence to identify the precise writing, grammar and transcription knowledge that requires teaching.
Reading - approximately 5 days	Read and respond to high-quality texts. Teach vocabulary, comprehension, text structure and authorial choices that will support the intended writing outcome.
Gathering content - approximately 5 days	Build subject/content knowledge, vocabulary, sentence structures and grammar needed for the outcome. Rehearse ideas orally and through short-burst writing.
Modelled writing - approximately 5 days	Teacher explicitly models composition and decision-making. 'My Turn, Our Turn, Your Turn' may be used. Shared and guided writing allow pupils to rehearse before independent application.
Independent writing - approximately 2 days	Pupils independently apply the taught learning to a purposeful outcome. Teachers use the outcome to assess what has been secured and what needs revisiting.

The approximate timings support consistency but are not a rigid formula. Teachers adapt the sequence to the text, genre, year group and evidence of learning. A weekly mini-model followed by an incidental or independent application the next day ensures pupils practise writing regularly, including during reading-heavy phases.

Modelled writing

Modelled writing makes the invisible processes of writing visible. Teachers think aloud, demonstrate how to generate and organise ideas, select vocabulary and grammatical structures, craft sentences, maintain cohesion, spell, punctuate, edit and improve. Models should be ambitious but achievable and should directly prepare pupils for independent application.

Independent writing

Independent outcomes are essential. Pupils should have sufficient knowledge and rehearsal to succeed without adults over-scaffolding the final piece. Working walls, models and previously taught resources remain available where these reflect normal classroom practice, but the writing must represent the pupil's own decisions and application.

Editing and proofreading are explicitly taught as different processes. Editing focuses first on meaning and effectiveness: pupils reread, refine vocabulary and sentence construction, improve cohesion and consider impact on the reader. Proofreading then focuses on accuracy, including spelling, punctuation, grammar and transcription. Editing should improve writing rather than simply make it neater.

12. Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling

Grammar and punctuation are taught explicitly and, wherever possible, in meaningful connection with the writing being developed. Teachers identify a small number of high-value focuses, model them clearly and provide repeated application so pupils understand how grammatical choices affect meaning rather than simply completing isolated exercises.

Spelling is taught progressively in line with National Curriculum expectations and school planning. Phonics remains the first strategy for spelling where appropriate. As pupils progress, teaching develops understanding of spelling patterns and conventions, morphology, word families, prefixes and suffixes, etymology and statutory words. Spelling is not treated as a weekly test in isolation: pupils are expected to apply taught spelling knowledge in independent writing, and teachers use errors in authentic writing to identify what needs revisiting.

13. Handwriting and Presentation

Handwriting is taught explicitly and practised regularly so that transcription becomes increasingly fluent and automatic. Expectations are set out fully in the Handwriting Policy and agreed handwriting scheme.

- Lower-case g, y, j and q are formed without loops.
- The letters b, p and s are only joined in Upper Key Stage 2 when pupils are developmentally ready.
- Daily handwriting practice is used where appropriate to secure formation, size, spacing, joins and fluency.
- Pen licences recognise consistent, secure presentation; provisional licences may be awarded within class before a full licence is presented.
- Reasonable adjustments are made for pupils whose physical, sensory or additional needs affect handwriting.

14. Assessment, Hinge-Point Questions and Responsive Teaching

Assessment is used to improve teaching and learning rather than simply record attainment. Teachers continually check whether pupils have understood the essential learning and respond before misconceptions become embedded.

Hinge-point questions

Hinge-point questions are planned at key points in phonics, reading, grammar and writing instruction. They are designed to reveal whether pupils understand the concept that is essential before moving on. Where possible, distractors reflect likely misconceptions. All pupils should respond, for example through mini-whiteboards, show-me responses, carefully structured answer choices or short oral/written responses.

The response determines what happens next: re-teach → model again → guided practice → independent application → deepen. Hinge questions are therefore a decision point within teaching, not an additional activity.

Area	Key assessment evidence
Phonics	Daily formative assessment; Phonics Tracker at the start of the year and at the end of every half term; statutory Year 1 Phonics Screening Check and re-check where applicable; precise gap analysis, intervention and reassessment.
Reading	Guided-reading responses, fluency observations, PM Benchmarking at least half termly for pupils using the scheme, comprehension tasks, teacher assessment and statutory/standardised assessments where applicable.
Writing	Cold writes where used, short-burst writing, modelled/guided practice, independent outcomes, editing and application across the curriculum.
GPS / spelling	Application in writing as well as discrete checks and assessment.
Monitoring	Book looks, pupil voice, learning walks, assessment information and professional dialogue are used to evaluate curriculum implementation and identify next steps.

15. Adaptive Teaching, SEND and Intervention

All pupils are entitled to an ambitious English curriculum. Adaptive teaching maintains the intended learning while changing the route, amount of support or mode of access. Teachers use assessment to decide what pupils need now, rather than permanently assigning different work to fixed groups.

- Pre-teach vocabulary or essential background knowledge.
- Chunk texts and instructions while retaining the core meaning and learning intention.
- Use decodable text where pupils still need phonics practice.
- Provide oral rehearsal, sentence stems, visual prompts, models and worked examples.
- Use dyslexia-friendly texts and appropriate presentation adjustments.

- Provide additional guided practice before independent application.
- Use Bounce Back/Fast Track phonics and targeted reading intervention where assessment identifies precise need.
- Remove scaffolds as pupils become secure so support promotes rather than replaces independence.

Teaching assistants work under the direction of the class teacher. The class teacher remains responsible for the progress and learning of all pupils, including pupils receiving intervention.

16. English Across the Curriculum

Reading, writing and spoken language are practised across the wider curriculum. This does not mean every subject becomes an English lesson: subject integrity and disciplinary knowledge remain important. Instead, pupils are taught to use literacy purposefully to access information, explain thinking and communicate subject knowledge.

Non-fiction reading supports pupils to build curriculum knowledge and vocabulary. Writing in foundation subjects provides meaningful opportunities to revisit appropriate genres and conventions. Curriculum loan boxes and the school library provide non-fiction and reference materials that support research, enquiry and independent learning.

17. Learning Environment, Working Walls and Independence

English working walls are active teaching tools. They build as learning develops and may include vocabulary, modelled examples, sentence structures, grammar, authorial choices, success criteria and extracts from shared writing. Pupils are explicitly taught how to use them.

Help Yourself First

Pupils are taught that independence does not mean having no support; it means knowing how to use the support already available. Before relying on an adult, pupils should increasingly be able to revisit previous learning in their books, use the working wall, refer to models and vocabulary, use agreed classroom resources, consult appropriate reference texts or curriculum loan boxes and, when directed, use iPads or digital resources appropriately.

The aim is for pupils to know what to do when they do not immediately know what to do. Adults model these behaviours and gradually withdraw prompts so pupils become increasingly resourceful and self-regulating.

18. Home-School Partnership

Families play an important role in developing confident readers and writers. School communicates clear expectations for home reading and provides guidance where needed. Reading records support communication between home and school but should not become a barrier to reading for enjoyment.

- Decodable books are read three times at home before changing.

- PM 15+ home readers are normally read once before changing.
- Parents/carers sign or note reading in the reading record.
- Other books, magazines and appropriate texts count towards home reading.
- Reading aloud to a child counts as valuable reading, especially for younger pupils.
- Homework may include spellings, reading and appropriate follow-up practice in line with the school's homework expectations.

19. Roles, Monitoring and Review

Role	Responsibility
English Lead	Maintain a coherent English curriculum; support staff; monitor phonics, reading, writing, GPS and handwriting; analyse assessment; lead professional development; and identify whole-school priorities.
Phonics Lead / English Lead	Ensure fidelity to Red Rose Letters and Sounds, assessment consistency and effective catch-up provision.
Class teachers	Plan and teach high-quality English; assess responsively; maintain appropriate reading provision; promote reading for pleasure; and ensure pupils have regular independent application.
Teaching assistants	Support pre-teaching, reading, phonics, guided practice and intervention under teacher direction while promoting independence.
SLT / Curriculum Lead	Evaluate implementation, support subject leadership and ensure English aligns with whole-school curriculum and teaching expectations.
Governors	Monitor the quality and impact of English provision and hold leaders to account for statutory requirements and school priorities.

Monitoring

Monitoring is developmental and evaluates what pupils are learning rather than simply checking compliance. Evidence may include learning walks, book looks, pupil voice, phonics and PM Benchmarking data, half-termly assessment information, independent writing, reading records and professional dialogue. Particular attention is paid to pupils at risk of falling behind and whether additional provision is closing identified gaps.

Review

This policy is reviewed annually, or earlier where statutory guidance or significant school practice changes. The next scheduled review is September 2027.

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