

Literacy and Reading Policy: Intent & Implementation

“My tongue is the pen of a skillful writer.” (Psalm 45:1)

At Sherburn, our vision is to send every young person into the world able and qualified to play their full part in it. We believe that literacy is the master key to this goal. By developing the skills, knowledge, and attributes to flourish, we remove the barriers that limit progress and engagement.

Our literacy strategy focuses on four pillars: **Reading, Vocabulary Acquisition, Oracy, and Writing.**

1. Reading and Phonics

We ensure a rigorous, systematic approach to reading that begins with decoding and moves toward deep comprehension.

- **Early Reading:** We teach synthetic phonics daily through the **Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised** program. All children in the primary phase have reading books that are strictly matched to their current phonic knowledge.
 - **Assessment & Tracking:** Progress is monitored every 6–8 weeks using Little Wandle assessments. For older pupils, we use the York Assessment of Reading Comprehension (YARC) to identify reading ages and specific gaps in comprehension.
 - **Intervention:** We utilize a "Keep-up, not Catch-up" model. Interventions are planned precisely to support children in meeting age-related expectations.
 - **Fluency & Enjoyment:** By the end of KS1, our goal is for all children to read fluently and with pleasure. In KS2, pupils access high-quality, diverse texts linked to our cross-curricular themes.
 - **The Reading Model:** Teachers read to their classes daily. This models expert prosody, builds stamina, and exposes children to sophisticated vocabulary beyond their current reading level.
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2. Oracy and Oral Composition

We recognize that children must be able to "say it" before they can "write it."

- **Full Sentence Spoken Language:** From the Foundation Stage, children are explicitly taught and expected to speak in full, grammatically correct sentences.
 - **Think It, Say It:** We use oral rehearsal as a non-negotiable step in the writing process.
 - **Contextual Talk:** Pupils practice talk in various contexts: presentational (sharing work), discursive (debating ideas), and performance (poetry and drama).
 - **Modeling:** Staff model high-level communication, ensuring their own talk is appropriate to the audience and purpose.
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3. Vocabulary Acquisition

Words are the currency of learning. We aim to close the "word gap" through explicit instruction.

- **Tier 2 and 3 Words:** Staff explicitly teach high-frequency academic words (Tier 2) and subject-specific technical terms (Tier 3) across all areas of the curriculum.
 - **Application:** Pupils are encouraged to use this new vocabulary in both their oral contributions and their written work.
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4. Writing and Transcription

We bridge the gap between "the noble theme" of the heart and the physical act of writing.

- **The Writing Process:** Staff model the entire journey of a writer, from initial planning and oral rehearsal to the final, polished piece.

- **Handwriting & Presentation:** We maintain high expectations for transcription. Following our Handwriting Guide, staff model the correct formation and joins to ensure children develop a fluid, cursive style that supports writing speed and automaticity.
- **Accuracy:** We apply our literacy marking approach across the curriculum, ensuring that high standards for spelling, punctuation, and grammar are maintained in every subject.

Performance Indicators

We measure our success through the following benchmarks:

Area	Success Criteria
Attainment	Pupils achieve at least expected standards that match or exceed their chronological age.
Fluency	Pupils read with confidence, expression, and high levels of engagement.
Oracy	Pupils use age-appropriate vocabulary and speak in full sentences for different purposes.
Transcription	Pupils produce legible, fluent writing that reflects our school's handwriting progression.