

Hanley St Luke's Church of England Academy

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English Policy

Date reviewed	June 2026
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Subject lead	Mrs Rebecca Forrester and Mrs Hayley Furey
Headteacher	Mrs Zoe Cooper
Governor/Committee (where applicable)	Mrs Julie Salisbury and Mrs Catherine Miah

Our School Vision

Jesus said *"I have come that they may have life and have it to the full."* (John 10:10)

At Hanley St Luke's, we believe that every child is created in the image of God and is precious in His sight. Inspired by Jesus' promise of fullness of life, we seek to enable all to flourish in body, mind, and spirit.

Our School Mission

At Hanley St Luke's we are rooted in God's love and guided by Christian faith, we nurture each child so that they can live life to the fullest. Through the values of **honesty, courtesy, kindness, perseverance, and respect**, we create an inclusive, compassionate, and hope-filled community where all can grow academically, spiritually, morally, and emotionally. We walk together with Christ, helping one another to discover our gifts, develop wisdom, and make a positive difference in God's world.

English Vision at Hanley St Luke's

Our vision at Hanley St Luke's is for our children to be absorbed in a book they are reading, enthusiastically joining in with stories and rhymes and even not wanting a class novel to end because they are enjoying the story so much. During our annual school show, Class Worship and poetry performances, we want our children to shine and ooze confidence when performing in front of their family and school friends. We want to spot future authors when reading children's creative writing where they use language and imagery to really engage the reader and use grammar and punctuation to the greatest effect. We want all of our children to have a love of reading and the confidence to articulate their views, ideas and opinions orally and in their writing.

To support staff in delivering a curriculum in which children can develop a love of reading, have confidence and articulation in their speech and writing and have a love of learning, is at the heart of our English policy and practice.

Implementation of National Curriculum

In the National Curriculum for 5 -11 year olds, English is developed through four key areas:

Spoken Language

Reading – Word Reading & Comprehension

Writing – Transcription & Composition

Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar & Punctuation

The Aims of English as outlined in the National Curriculum English Programmes of Study

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding.
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information.
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage.
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas.
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

Our approach to Spoken Language

The definition we use at Hanley St Luke's:

'Oracy is the range of skills and techniques that we use to express our thoughts verbally, which includes how well we listen, understand and respond.'

From the start of the children's learning journey with us, the spoken word is of central importance to the whole curriculum at Hanley St Luke's. We promote a language-rich curriculum and recognise that the development of speech, language and communication is a fundamental part of our Early Years curriculum and this is built upon throughout school.

In Nursery and Reception, children are screened during the Autumn term using the Communication and Language Screening Tool. This enables us to identify children who may be experiencing difficulties with understanding, speaking or social interaction.

Following the screening process, children may be identified for targeted intervention. Depending on their needs and screening outcomes, children may access either Time to Talk, a 6-week intervention programme, or Early Talk Boost, a 9-week intervention programme. Interventions are delivered in small groups three times per week.

Children in EYFS are re-screened at the end of the Summer term to closely monitor progress and ensure that any ongoing needs are identified and supported appropriately. Following intervention, children's progress is reviewed and, where concerns remain, referrals may be made to Speech and Language Therapy for further support.

In Key Stage 1, children are assessed using the KS1 Talk Boost pre-intervention assessment to identify those who would benefit from additional support. Selected children then access the KS1 Talk Boost intervention programme, which runs for 10 weeks and is delivered three times weekly in small groups.

Explicit teaching of Oracy

As oracy underpins the development of reading and writing, skills are planned for and taught explicitly to ensure the continual development of pupil competence and confidence in spoken language and listening skills.

The Three Spires Trust (TST) Oracy Curriculum, which is based on the principles of Voice 21, is used from Reception to Year 6 and outlines the progression of oracy skills, broken down into these areas:

- **Physical** (What we do with our body and voice)
- **Linguistic** (The words that we choose to use)
- **Cognitive** (The thinking we do and questions we ask)
- **Social and Emotional** (How we interact with others when we communicate)

From the TST progression document, each class has an oracy learning focus every half term (from one of the four skill areas) and this is taught, practised and rehearsed within lessons. The learning focus is displayed on the English working wall.

Oracy across the curriculum

Throughout their time at school, there are many opportunities for children to develop their oracy skills throughout the curriculum. These include:

- Oracy activities (for example: hot seating, conscience alley, role play, oral re-telling) when becoming immersed in a text during English and other lessons
- Using ideas from Debate Mate – including our annual 'No Pens Day'
- Opportunities to participate in drama activities, performance poetry and school performances, including performing to an audience
- Leading School Worship and reading in Church
- Taking part in class debates, being a part of the Debate club and engaging in Debate days with other schools in the Trust
- Listening to and participating in stories, poems, rhymes and songs
- Echo, choral, paired and independent reading aloud
- Paired talk (Turn, talk and tell)
- Use of sentence stems to scaffold oral responses in class
- Opportunities for children to talk about and discuss their work
- Reading work aloud to the class

- Collaborative work and reporting back following group work
- Encouraging all children to participate in asking and answering in class
- Encourage speaking in full sentences and using Standard English

Rich Vocabulary Development

The promotion and use of rich cross curricular vocabulary throughout school is planned in all subjects and evident in all areas of learning. Subject specific vocabulary is planned for and taught in every subject and displayed in classes where appropriate.

In Guided Reading, every lesson begins with a vocabulary focus of Tier 2 and Tier 3 words. The words are defined, their origins explored, used in context and a visual image is used to support understanding.

The language acquisition programme, Mrs Wordsmith, is used from Year 2 to Year 5 and children are exposed to daily rich vocabulary which is practiced and rehearsed and is transferrable across subjects.

Inclusion

Widgets are used to support all children in their understanding of new and unfamiliar vocabulary. These are used extensively across the school in lessons, visual timetables and classroom labels.

Our Approach to Reading

At Hanley St Luke's, we understand that competence in reading is the key to independent learning and has a direct effect on progress in all other areas of the curriculum. Reading forms the core of our curriculum. Following the simple view of reading, we ensure that children have the word recognition, fluency and comprehension skills whilst being in a language and vocabulary-rich environment which enables them to 'learn to read' and 'read to learn', ultimately leading to a love of books.

Early Reading and Phonics

Children are taught to use phonic knowledge and skills as **the** route to decode words. From Nursery, we use Super Sonic Phonic Friends as our systematic synthetic phonics programme and children actively engage in daily phonics lessons (see the Phonics policy for further details). Children also receive daily story time where they are exposed to high quality, diverse and language rich books. The children explore rhyme, rhythm and narrative structures. The teachers model reading fluency. A love of stories, joining in with repeated phrases and asking and answering questions about characters and books is promoted.

(See Phonics Policy for more detail.)

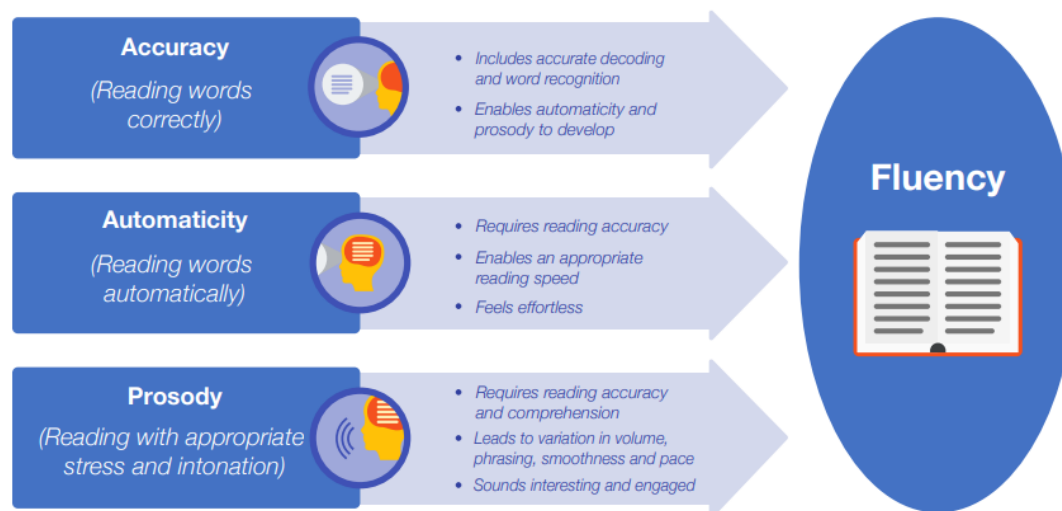
Reading Fluency

Fluency is a clear building block of a developing reader and without proper fluency, children are unable to comprehend what they are reading. The sentences simply do not relate any meaning. This is why we place a huge emphasis on teaching reading fluency at Hanley St Luke's and this is in line with the EEF recommendations and The Reading Framework.

Fluent reading is defined by Hudson, Lane and Pullen as '*...accurate reading of connected text, at a conversational rate with appropriate prosody.*'

Fluency (Accuracy, Automaticity and Prosody) is modelled and taught in Guided Reading and English lessons and whenever reading is used across the curriculum.

Figure 5: Reading fluency



Guided Reading in Reception and KS1

In Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, children receive a Guided Reading lesson four times a week. The children are grouped according to their phonics ability and the book matches the sounds which the children are working at. There is a focus for each day:

Day 1 – Decoding Focus

Day 2 – Fluency Focus

Day 3 – Prosody/Expression Focus

Day 4 – Comprehension Focus

There is an agreed and consistent teacher script which is used during these Guided Reading sessions.

Guided Reading in KS2

From Year 3 to Year 6 (Year 2 from Spring term onwards when children are ready), all children receive a daily whole class Guided Reading session. The main focus of these sessions is to develop fluency, as once children are fluent, they are able to comprehend what they have read. High quality, literary, language-rich and progressive texts have been purposely chosen for each year group to reflect the needs, interests and diversity of our school community.

Every term, each class reads a poetry, fiction and non-fiction text or book. There is a clear and consistent five-day lesson structure and powerpoint. Every lesson begins with a vocabulary focus and then reading fluency is developed through teacher modelled reading, echo reading, choral reading, paired reading and independent reading and the readers theatre. The children engage in orally asking and answering questioning and completing reading skills tasks and text marking in Year 5 and Year 6. One lesson each week in Year 5 and 6 is dedicated to teaching reading comprehension skills. There is also an agreed and consistent teacher script which is used during these Guided Reading sessions.

Inclusivity

All children are exposed to high quality texts and to enable all children to access them, lessons are adapted so that children have opportunities to practice fluency further through pre reading, additional echo and choral reading sessions, picture/word prompts and peer support.

Reading at Home

In Nursery, all children take home a library book each week to share with their families. When children are ready, they also take home a wordless book to help develop their literacy and storytelling skills. From Reception to Year 6, all children take home a reading book matched to their reading

ability. For those children who are on the phonics scheme, the books taken home are phonetically decodable. Once the children are phonetically confident, they move onto our school banded scheme. The children need to be able to read the words with at least 90% accuracy and also be able to understand what has been read. In addition to these books, all children are encouraged to choose a library book to read for pleasure to and with their families. The children can choose a book from the school library or their class library.

The expectation for reading at home and have reading diaries signed by an adult is 3 times a week in Reception and KS1 and 5 times a week in KS2. A daily record is kept of when the children read at home and the percentage of children in a class reading the expected number of times each week is calculated. This expectation is shared with parents at the start of each academic year, with reminders throughout the year.

Daily Reading at Home Rewards

The following rewards are given for daily reading at home:

- Dojo for every time a pupil reads at home and has their diary signed
- Extra playtime for pupils who have read the expected number of times each week
- Extra playtime for the class with the highest percentage of children daily reading
- Termly awards for pupils who have read daily over the term

Story time

To develop a love for reading, all children have 'story time' at least three times a week. Stories chosen match the children's interests or requests. It is a time for children to enjoy books, while providing language rich experiences and opportunities to develop vocabulary, fluency and comprehension skills. Classes visit the school library each week for at least one of their story time sessions.

Assessment

Assessment in reading is ongoing and children are listened to read regularly and to match their needs. This is to ensure that their reading book is matched appropriately to their reading ability. The children's reading levels are tracked carefully.

Summative assessment:

- Termly fluency assessments in KS2 where children's reading pace and accuracy is tracked.
- CLL reading diagnostic assessments from Year 2 to Year 6

These assessments inform planning and reading interventions and support which the children may need. Children with specific reading, speech and language or hearing difficulties are identified and supported through support programmes in school and external help is sought where necessary.

Promoting a love of reading: Our Reading culture

At Hanley St Luke's, our aim is for all children to be able to read for pleasure. To develop a wider enjoyment of reading and a positive reading culture we:

- Have reading areas in every classroom
- Have a brand new and wonderfully stocked library with a wide range of texts available
- Read rich, diverse and multicultural books which our children reflect our school community
- Allow children to take home Reading for Pleasure library books
- Have reading ambassadors and librarians
- Actively celebrate National Poetry Day, Nursery Rhyme Week, National Storytelling Week and World Book Day
- Have a Reading Hut where families can choose and change books daily
- Storytime clubs at lunchtime for KS1 and KS2

- Hold reading competitions and challenges
- Welcome authors and illustrators into school
- Visit the City Central Library (every class visits at least once a year)
- Invite parents into school for family reading workshops and activities
- Engage and celebrate the 100 Stoke Reads

Our Approach to Writing

Writing is taught in a creative and purposeful way from Early Years to Year 6. The Early Learning Goals, National Curriculum, Writing Framework and EEF evidence based recommendations inform our practice.

Writing in the Early Years

Children's fine muscle control and gross motor skills are practiced and developed daily through the programme, 'Squiggle me into a Writer.' Letter formation is modelled and children have the opportunity to write in all areas of provision and in Phonics. There is targeted teacher intervention and guided writing support. The children progress from letter formation, to building CVC words, small captions and then sentences with simple sentence stem starters (such as 'I can see ...').

(See the EYFS Policy for more detail.)

Writing in Key Stage one and Key Stage Two

There is a bespoke annual English Curriculum overview for our school which identifies the key texts for each year group over the year. These texts provide the stimulus for writing and are carefully chosen to match each year group. They are high quality, engaging, progressive and challenging, yet accessible to all learners.

From these texts, planned writing opportunities are mapped out across the year, with each year group producing around 4 to 5 extended pieces of writing each term. As well as these planned writing opportunities, teachers have the autonomy to teach incidental pieces of writing as and when needed over the year and across subjects.

At Hanley St Luke's we have our own bespoke 'Steps to Writing' document which teachers use to plan their lessons from. This document identifies oracy opportunities and text, sentence, punctuation and grammar objectives from the National Curriculum which need to be taught in the build up to the extended piece of writing. This document shows the progression in genres across year groups and within the year group.

Writing Sequence

Each unit of writing is planned for over 2-3 weeks and follows this writing structure which is recommended in the Writing Framework:

- **Planning**

Immersion in reading – class text, other texts linked to text-type being studied (modelled and shared reading, discussion, comprehension and written tasks.

Opportunities for oracy

Unpunctuated sentences / word class and grammar spotter

Teaching of key SPAG knowledge and vocabulary work relevant to the genre of writing explicit.

Writing walls are used to support the vocabulary, word, sentence, punctuation, grammar and text objectives needed for the class.

- **Drafting**

Modelled writing opportunities and time for planning (My turn, our turn, your turn)

Children complete an extended piece of writing- applying key skills

- **Revising**

Children make changes in light of feedback and self and peer evaluation

- **Editing**

Self and peer editing, making changes to ensure writing is accurate and coherent and checking spelling and grammar

- **Sharing**

Present published work for the target audience. Work goes into the children's 'My Writing Journey' presentation folder and moves up with the child into the next year group.

Proof reading, revising and editing

Children are taught to edit their writing using CUPS (Capitalisation, Usage, Punctuation and Spelling) and revise their writing using ARMS (Add, Remove, Move, Substitute).

They are also taught to proof read their own work and a partner's work. Purple pen and green slips of paper are used by the children to show where they have proof read, edited and revised.

Moderation of writing

Writing across the school is moderated on at least 3 occasions over the academic year. Using the end of year expectations for each year group (Year 2 – 6), writing is moderated within Year group phases in school (KS1, LKS2, UKS2) and within Year groups with other local schools and schools in the Trust. Year 2 and Year 6 writing is further moderated using the Teacher Assessment Framework.

Marking and Feedback

The marking of writing is to ensure that the basics are identified and corrected (letter formation, spelling errors, punctuation and capitalisation) and that the children's overall writing composition and style is moved on. Live marking is the most effective form of marking which is used in school.

(See Feedback and Marking policy for more detail).

Teaching of Spelling

Understanding how to spell correctly is important in supporting children to organise their thinking around language. Knowing how to apply spelling rules and recognising key words is empowering for children. Spelling plays a significant part of standardised assessment and is taught throughout the school. We use the National Curriculum as a guideline as to which spellings should be taught in which year group and from Year 2, use the Grammarsaurus 'Morphology' approach in the teaching of spelling. Children are further supported with their spelling through:

- Individualised Star Spelling cards (kept in books and as a source of reference for the children)
- 'Have a Go' sheets (used to practice writing spellings with peers to see which could be correct)
- Marking to identify common or copied spelling errors
- At least one Morning Starter focusing on spelling
- Copies of high frequency words, Y3/4 and Y5/6 spelling lists accessible to children as appropriate.
- Targeted interventions where necessary.

Teaching of Grammar

An understanding of how to use grammar and punctuation correctly, use relevant language and identify word classes and sentence types is taught both in the context of a piece of writing and explicitly in whole class work. Linked to the National Curriculum guidelines for year groups, grammar and punctuation is taught and planned to fit with relevant genres of writing. Using the National Curriculum, we have created a whole school writing progression document which includes the spelling, punctuation and grammar expectations for each year group. At the front of all English books, children have their year group's grammar objectives as well as the previous and following year group's objectives. These are used as a point of reference for children, staff and parents to know the expectations for their year group. Grammar is also taught intrinsically in reading sessions to support reading fluency and comprehension.

Teaching of Handwriting

In the Early Years, children have many opportunities to develop their gross and fine motor skills which are necessary before they begin to use a pencil to write. Teachers in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 carefully model the correct size and orientation of letters and expectations in all lessons, particularly in phonics lessons when applying phonics to writing. In Nursery and Reception, children begin with pre-writing shapes and start the handwriting program (Supersonic Phonics Friends Handwriting Scheme) once they have been taught basics 2 group 5 in phonics lessons.

Through the Supersonic Phonics Friends (SSPF) scheme, teachers model how to write each letter as it is taught. Letter formation is supported through actions and alliterative pictures linked to each letter. Letters are taught in **letter families** rather than alphabetical order.

Children in KS1 have two discreet handwriting lessons each week following the SSPF handwriting scheme. In Key Stage 2, all English lessons begin with the explicit modelling of a letter, letter join or word for all children to practice in their English books. In addition to this, to support with beginning to join letters, Year 3 have an additional handwriting lesson each week.

Once children have the correct letter formation, letter direction and spacing, then they are introduced to cursive handwriting.

(See Handwriting Policy for more detail)

Inclusivity

Our English Curriculum is inclusive and rooted in our Christian Values. All children are exposed to high quality texts and learning is scaffolded to enable them to achieve. There are ambitious expectations for all with adaptive teaching being standard practice. High-quality first teaching is the primary intervention for all pupils. Targeted and purposeful interventions are used to further support those pupils who need them and this is in addition to their high quality first teaching which they will receive.

As stated in the National Curriculum, in order to achieve in life and be the best they possibly can be, our children need to be able to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. We want our children to be able to participate fully as a member of society, being able to express their views and opinions and understand the wonderful world which God created.