

Willow Tree Academy



Literacy Statement of Intent

Literacy Overview

At Willow Tree Academy we believe that a quality Literacy curriculum should develop children's love of reading, writing and discussion. One of our priorities is helping children read and develop their all important comprehension skills. We recognise the culture where children take pride in their writing, can write clearly and accurately and adopt language and style for a range of contexts. We want to inspire children to be confident in the art of speaking and listening and who can use discussion to communicate and further their learning.

We believe that children need to develop a secure knowledge base in Literacy which follows a clear pathway of progression as they advance through the primary curriculum. We believe that a secure basis in Literacy skills is crucial to a high quality education and will give our children the tools they need to participate fully as a member of society.

Reading Statement of Intent

At Willow Tree Academy we value reading as a key life skill and are dedicated to enabling our pupils to become lifelong readers. Children should have the opportunity to be fluent, confident readers who are able to successfully comprehend and understand a wide range of texts. We want pupils to develop a love of reading, a good knowledge of a range of authors, and be able to understand more about the world in which they live through the knowledge they gain from texts.

We prioritise the importance of reading by continuing to deliver letters and sounds upon entering our school in Year 3. Through thorough tracking, we ensure that no child is left behind; those few pupils who find learning to read a challenge are supported through rigorous interventions to cater for their needs.

We understand the importance of parents and carers in supporting their children to develop both word reading and comprehension skills, and so we want to encourage a home-school partnership which enables parents and carers to understand how to enhance the skills being taught in school through good quality texts.

By the end of their time at primary school, all children should be able to read fluently, and with confidence, in any subject in their forthcoming secondary education.



Writing Statement of Intent

At Willow Tree Academy we aim to develop the children's ability to produce well structured, detailed writing in which the meaning is clear and which engages the interest of the reader. Attention is paid throughout the school to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling. To support our teaching of writing, staff refer to Pie Corbett's strategies (Talk for Writing)- which are predominantly used in Lower KS2.

Pupils are taught writing in mixed ability classes; teachers regularly assess and group their pupils according to ability. Ability groups are changed throughout the year to ensure pupils are accessing relevant learning tasks for their ability. All staff will model high expectations of writing and take every opportunity to expand vocabulary to promote a language rich environment.

Focused writing sessions are used to target specific needs of both groups and individuals. Children have opportunities to write at length in extended independent writing sessions in Literacy and across the curriculum. Pupils use a range of resources such as alphabet cards, talking tins, word cards, word lists, writing frames, dictionaries and thesauruses to support their work.

Throughout the curriculum, pupils are given frequent opportunities in school to write in different contexts using quality texts as a model and for a variety of purposes and audiences. There are many opportunities for children to improve their writing inspired by real texts (newspapers, advertisements and websites), drama techniques, use of multimedia texts, visitors, visits and film clips. They may be asked to produce their writing on their own or as part of a group. Children will also be given the opportunity to incorporate computing skills and the use of digital literacy.

Oracy Statement of Intent

Oracy at Willow Tree is the ability to express oneself fluently and grammatically in speech. It is the ability of our children to find their voices both metaphorically and physically. It underpins everything we do, as communicators, but doesn't necessarily happen by chance - and should be planned for strategically. Talk 4 writing is an excellent opportunity to model spoken language but that is not where oracy ends.

Exploratory talk is typical of the early stages of approaching new ideas: it is hesitant and incomplete as it allows the speaker to try out ideas, how they sound, to see what others make of them, to arrange information and ideas into different patterns. The speaker is mainly concerned with organising his or her own thoughts.

In Presentational talk, the speaker's attention is primarily focused on adjusting the language, context and manner to the needs of the audience



Oracy is vitally important as it is the key to expressing ideas, displaying communication skills, academic standards, social mobility employability, wellbeing, self esteem and confidence.

Spelling Statement of Intent

At Willow tree academy we believe that spelling is an essential skill that allows the children to communicate their understanding in all curriculum subjects. In order for pupils to develop into effective and confident spellers, they need to develop and use a range of spelling strategies. For this to be achieved, spelling is taught actively and explicitly with the understanding that the greatest impact on spelling is achieved when children are encouraged to use new spellings, and their associated rules, in their writing. Support is provided, tailored to the specific needs of the child or year group.

Grammar and Punctuation Statement of Intent

Throughout the academy, grammar and punctuation are taught in every Literacy lesson, either as the focus of the lesson, or discretely as part of the writing process. At Willow Tree academy, we believe that introducing children to new grammar and punctuation concepts should be taught in the context of their learning, in line with their unit of work; for example, children in year 1 will learn to report on the events of the Great Fire of London, introducing the past tense with the ‘-ed’ suffix, which is paramount for their learning to excel.

Handwriting Statement of Intent

Handwriting is a taught skill and it is important that teachers are seen to put a high value on teaching and sustaining good handwriting. We believe that children’s self-esteem and pride in their work can be raised by good quality presentation. Our aim in this policy is to teach children correct letter formation, joining and good handwriting habits, so that they can write fluently and legibly and by the end of KS2 to begin to develop a distinctive style.

Phonics Statement of Intent

At Herringthorpe Junior School, we use the Letters and Sounds programme as our approach to teaching reading to those who have reached KS2 and have barriers which have prevented early reading from being fully achieved. We use the National Curriculum spelling appendices to support learners from Y3-6.

We aim to build children’s speaking and listening skills in their own right as well as to prepare children for learning to read by developing their phonic knowledge and skills. We follow a detailed and systematic programme for teaching phonic skills for children based on their entry to KS2; ensuring provision is in place to close gaps for those children who are not fluent readers as they leave their KS1 setting.

