

English at Higher Failsworth

Reading

Foundation Stage

Foundation Stage follow the Read Write Inc. phonics scheme, with children taking part in sessions which are appropriate to their needs at the beginning of their reading journey. A wide range of books are also shared with children throughout Foundation Stage during 'together times' and a love of books and stories is encouraged by all.

Nursery children begin phonics in the spring or summer term before they begin Reception following assessments by the class teacher. All Reception children take part in a daily phonics lesson which focuses on developing their phonological awareness, letter formation and writing simple words and sentences. When children need additional support in their phonics learning one to one sessions led by teaching assistants take place in the afternoons.

Reception children also follow our whole school book banding scheme and will read with a member of Foundation Stage staff at least once a week in an individual reading session. They have access to a wide range of different books including those that will develop their phonetic knowledge and a wider range of picture books. Parents are encouraged to read with and to their children at home and within early morning drop in sessions held in school.

Key Stage 1

Children in Year 1 and 2 follow the Read Write Inc. scheme for phonics. Sessions take place daily and last for 50 minutes. Each child is regularly assessed to ensure they are in the correct group to support their learning and staff monitor their progress closely to ensure children are achieving their potential. Once children have reached the end of the phonics scheme they progress onto comprehension work using high quality fiction texts, poetry and non-fiction. The most able KS1 readers are supported by our intervention teacher during this time each day.

When children require additional support to make progress in phonics, one to one sessions are held for these children at least three times a week. Those children who will be retaking their phonics screening in Year 2 receive extra booster sessions in groups as well as individual support where necessary.

Children in Years 1 and 2 read with their teacher and/ or a teaching assistant individually at least once in a week. They follow the whole school book banding scheme and their progress is carefully tracked and monitored. The main reading schemes used are Rigby Star and Oxford Reading Tree but this is supplemented with a wider range of quality texts which are also book banded.

Children and/or parents may request additional books to take home throughout the week. Teachers carry out ongoing assessments and use this to ensure that the children are reading books of an appropriate level and that learning focuses for individual reading sessions are appropriate for the children to progress well in reading.

Key Stage 2

Book banding and reading for pleasure

At KS2 children's individual books are book banded, with each child regularly assessed to ensure they are accessing reading materials in line with their reading level. All our children are placed on a book band so that they continue to access appropriate texts throughout their time at Higher Failsworth. Our most able readers have a number of challenging texts available to them in the highest book bands so that they are able to read a wide range of complex texts by a number of different authors.

Teachers promote a wide range of authors and book choices for all children during whole class 'reading for pleasure' sessions held at least fortnightly. Reading at home in KS2 is promoted through our 'Reading Stars' initiative where each term the children must read a number of times with an adult at home to reach a set target. Children who achieve this are then celebrated at the end of each term.

Each classroom has a reading area which contains a variety of reading material. Children are also able to visit the school library to support their learning across the curriculum.

Reading skills in KS2

Children in KS2 develop their skills in a number of ways.

This includes:

- Individual reading with the class teacher-with extra sessions for those children who require further support with decoding and blending skills.
- Shared and whole class reading sessions - these sessions are usually based on high quality texts, poetry and non-fiction. Whole class guided reading takes place around 3-4 times a week with each session lasting approximately 45 minutes.

The whole class guided reading sessions will include a strong focus on the following:

- Reading with fluency and expression
- Vocabulary building
- Inference and deduction skills
- Summarising
- Prediction
- Retrieval of key facts and information

KS2 support

Children in KS2 who are struggling with knowledge and understanding of phonics are able to access precision teaching interventions such as 'Toe by Toe' and other reading/spelling interventions led by teaching assistants or Mrs Boden our English intervention teacher. Children in KS2 are also screened termly using the Leicestershire Inference reading scheme. Children needing additional support with this skill take part in additional inference training led by teaching assistants in KS2.

Year 3 children are also able to access daily phonics sessions where this will support their developing phonetic knowledge. Children who need further support with their reading fluency are identified and are supported either by additional individual reading sessions or by one to one 'Catch Up' Literacy sessions which take place twice a week.

Intervention teacher Mrs Boden works alongside class teachers within lessons to boost writing skills, often focusing on specific children who may need further help to achieve their potential in their writing lessons, including our most able writers.

Writing

At Higher Failsworth we aim to ensure that our children are as engaged as possible in their writing and so as each new topic begins we immerse the children in good quality texts through drama, shared experiences and outdoor learning. We feel that this not only helps build the children's enjoyment of writing but also allows them to build vocabulary choices before they begin to write.

We are focused on ensuring that the children's writing is well structured and as a result we teach them to rehearse vocabulary and plan their writing from KS1. These skills are then reinforced and built upon in KS2 with the aim of children becoming more independent and confident writers by the time they reach Year 6. In Year 1 much of the teaching of writing is based around Pie Corbett's 'Talk for Writing' so that they gain a good understanding of oral rehearsal and the structure of sentences before they begin to experiment with a wider range of genres.

Specific writing skills are taught as a whole class through shared and paired writing. Through 'guided writing' sessions the teacher may focus a small group of children on a specific skill and then allow time in the proceeding lessons for the children to apply this independently.

The children are then encouraged to edit and improve their writing. Children make use of 'cloud time' to improve their writing based on the teacher's comments and feedback. This includes the correction of spelling, punctuation and word choices using dictionaries and thesauruses.

Spelling patterns are taught in class as part of English lessons and are then embedded within the children's writing sessions. Children from Year 3-5 also take part in Oldham's Spelling Bee each year which creates excitement around spelling in the whole school community.

Drama and Oracy

There is a strong tradition of public performance and drama at Higher Failsworth both through English lessons and within the wider curriculum. Each year group from Reception to Year 6 creates a musical production every year. Parents are invited to attend these performances, mostly taking place on our stage, which is fully equipped with sound and lighting systems.

Each November Year 5 take part in the Schools Shakespeare Festival at Manchester Contact Theatre where each class produces a thirty-minute production using an abridged version of one of Shakespeare's plays. The experience of performing on a professional stage is thrilling for many of our children and gives an exciting introduction to the works of Shakespeare.

Finally, each year a number of classes take part in the Oldham Choral Speaking competition which encourages enunciation, reading with expression and a love of poetry across school. In the summer term we hold our own school choral speaking competition so that all the children in school have a chance to develop their choral speaking skills.