



South Gosforth First School
English - Subject Overview

‘Writing comes from reading, and reading is the finest teacher of how to write.’ – Annie Proulx

English at South Gosforth First School

At South Gosforth First School, we deliver a high-quality English curriculum that has been thoughtfully designed to inspire and engage young learners. Through a rich and diverse selection of texts—including classic literature, contemporary stories, poetry, and non-fiction—children are immersed in language that sparks curiosity and imagination. Our approach nurtures confident, independent readers and writers by building strong foundations in phonics, comprehension, vocabulary, and composition. With carefully sequenced learning and meaningful opportunities for discussion, performance, and creative expression, pupils develop a lifelong love of reading and the skills to communicate effectively in a range of contexts.

We place a strong emphasis on reading to ensure every child can fully engage with the broader curriculum. Our approach to word reading and comprehension is both rigorous and carefully sequenced, fostering fluency, confidence, and a genuine love of reading. Children are introduced to a rich and diverse range of books, genres, authors, and cultural perspectives, all designed to spark imagination and inspire creative writing. We encourage pupils to value each stage of the writing process and to see themselves as emerging authors, writing with purpose for real and meaningful audiences.

Throughout their time at South Gosforth First School, all children will have the opportunity to experience visits to theatres and author events which play a powerful role in nurturing children's love of reading and writing. These encounters inspire children to explore their own ideas, ask questions, and see reading and writing not just as activities in school, but as exciting, creative adventures.

Intent			
How our key drivers are lived through our History curriculum			
Character	Culture	Creativity	Challenge
To develop motivation to read and write for pleasure and enjoyment. To know and use an extensive and rich vocabulary.	To develop skills to read and write across a wide range of curriculum areas in order to develop an extensive knowledge of the world.	To develop an understanding of the craft of writing. To have the opportunity to write for a range of real purposes and audiences as part of their work across the curriculum.	To meet and exceed national expectations in reading and writing. To develop a secure understanding of phonics, grammar, spelling and punctuation and the ability to apply this to their reading and independent writing. To develop fluency and accuracy when reading.



Implementation

EYFS

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

Nursery

Reception

Key Stage One

Literacy

English

Comprehension, Word Reading, Writing

Through the long-term plan themes, adult interactions, continuous provision and enhancements in the classroom our children will:

Nursery

Reading – Word Reading and Comprehension:

- Fill in missing words from well-known rhymes.
- Show a preference for a book, rhyme or song.
- Join in with rhymes and stories.
- Show enjoyment for stories about familiar people.
- Hold a book, turn the pages and indicate an understanding of pictures and print.
- Notice and repeat sounds.
- Begin to be aware of the way stories are structured.
- Show interest in illustrations and print in books and print in the environment.
- Understand that print has meaning.
- Hold a book the right way up and turn pages themselves.
- Describe main story settings, events and principal characters.
- Make suggestions about what might happen next in a story.
- Know that print can have different purposes.

Reception

Reading – Word Reading and Comprehension:

- Show preference for a book, song or rhyme.
- Handle books correctly and follow print from left to right, top to bottom.
- Locate the title.
- Segment and blend words orally.
- Recognise words that rhyme.
- Talk about events and characters in a story read to them.
- Join in with familiar stories and rhymes.
- Link most sounds to letters.
- Begin to blend and segment in order to read vc and cvc words.
- Begin to match spoken word to written word.
- Read some Phase 2 words (including Tricky Words).
- Show interest and answer simple questions about texts.
- Use words they know to check their reading makes sense.
- Read with 1:1 correspondence.



- Know the names of the different parts of a book.
- Talk about events and characters in a book.
- Suggest how a story might end.
- Know that we read English from left to right and from top to bottom.
- Identify signs and symbols in the environment and recall what they mean.
- Tell a story to friends.
- Clap or count syllables in a word.
- Recognise words with the same initial sound.

Writing:

- Randomly scribble on a page, sometimes with both hands.
- Begin to balance when sitting.
- Control the marks on a page.
- Use a range of tools to make marks and show an interest in their own marks and the marks of others.
- Make connections between their actions and the marks being made.
- Distinguish between the different marks they make.
- Tell an adult what the marks mean.
- Draw lines and circles in the air, on the floor or on large sheets of paper, balancing well and using their whole arm or body.
- Copy shapes, letters and pictures.
- Identify sounds from their own name in other words.
- Write some or all of their name.
- Use some of their print and letter knowledge in their early writing e.g. write a pretend shopping list that starts at the top of the page, write a 'm' for mummy.
- Write some letters accurately.



- Read some common irregular words (Phase 2/3).
- Link all sounds to letters.
- Read simple words by blending.
- Demonstrate understanding when talking about what they have read.
- Repeat words or phrases to check their reading.
- Read and understand simple sentences.
- Use phonic knowledge to read and decode regular words.
- Read Phase 2 and Phase 3 words.
- Begin to notice if their reading makes sense.
- Say rhymes by heart.
- Know that illustrations can help to make sense of reading.
- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and know at least 10 digraphs.
- Read words consistent with phonic knowledge by sound-blending.
- Demonstrate an understanding of what has been read to them by re-telling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary.
- Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems during role play.
- Re-read books showing increased accuracy and fluency.

Writing:

- Develop use of dominant hand.
- Develop tripod grip.
- Give meaning to marks.
- Name writing.
- Writing labels and captions.
- Writing initial sounds to label characters/images.
- Creating story maps.
- Writing for a purpose – role play.
- Writing cvc words.
- Begin to use phonetically plausible attempts at words.
- Write simple sentences to accompany story maps.
- Write non-fiction fact files.
- Use interesting adjectives to describe characters.
- Begin to use capital letters, full stops and finger spaces between words in a sentence.
- Form lower case and capital letters correctly.
- Innovation of texts.



Year 1- 4						
	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year 1	The Writing Framework - Sentence Level Work Transcription, Dictation & Handwriting Shh! Lift the Flap Book (Sally Grindley)	The Writing Framework - Sentence Level Work Transcription, Dictation & Handwriting Robot and the Blue Bird (David Lucas)	The Writing Framework - Sentence Level Work Transcription, Dictation & Handwriting Sentences linked to Science or Geography work	Information Text (The Tyne Bridge) Model text of an Information Text	The Writing Framework - Sentence Level Work Transcription, Dictation & Handwriting Sentences linked to History work on Queen Elizabeth II	Poetry (Humorous Poems) Dad and the Cat and the Tree by Kit Wright
	Narrative (Conquering the Monster Tale – T4W) Jack and the Beanstalk (Traditional Tale)	Instructions (How to make a decoration – T4W) Model text of instructions	Narrative (Rags to Riches – T4W) Cinderella: An Art-Deco Love Story (Lynn Roberts & David Roberts)		Narrative (Finding Tale – T4W) How to Catch a Star (Oliver Jeffers)	Non-Chronological Report (T4W) Ice Dragon Information Text
Year 2	The Writing Framework – Sentence Level Work Transcription, Dictation & Handwriting The Whales’ Song (Dyan Sheldon)	Poetry ‘London’s Burning’ Range of Firework Poetry	The Writing Framework – Sentence Level Work Transcription, Dictation & Handwriting Sentences linked to Geography topic – Oceans and Continents	Narrative (Losing Tale – T4W) The Comet (Joe Todd)	The Writing Framework – Sentence Level Work Transcription, Dictation & Handwriting Katie Goes to London (James Mayhew)	Poetry The Owl and the Pussycat by Edward Lear



	Information Text (Blue Whale – T4W) Model information text	Recount (The Great Fire of London – T4W) Model text of a recount of a real event	Narrative (Character Flaw – T4W) Bad Nana by Sophy Henn		Instructions (T4W) Instructions by Neil Gaimon Model Instructions Text	Biography (T4W) Little People, Big Dreams 'Florence Nightingale'
Year 3	The Writing Framework – Sentence Level Work Transcription, Dictation & Handwriting Stone Age Boy by Satoshi Kitamura	Persuasive (Advert – T4W) John Lewis Christmas Adverts Adverts for Toys	The Writing Framework – Sentence Level Work Transcription, Dictation & Handwriting Sentences linked to History Topic – The Egyptians	Persuasive (Travel Brochure to visit the Alps – T4W) Model text of a Travel Brochure	The Writing Framework – Sentence Level Work Transcription, Dictation & Handwriting Sentences linked to History Topic – The Vikings	Narrative (Tale of Fear – T4W) Escape from Pompeii
	Information Text (T4W) Model non-chronological report of a Stone Age settlement	Poetry The Night Before Christmas	Narrative (Finding Tale – T4W) Adventure in the Pyramids		Narrative (Conquering the Monster – T4W) Thor and the Giants	Discussion Text (Balanced viewpoint - choosing to live near a volcano – T4W) Model text on Volcanoes
Year 4	The Writing Framework – Sentence Level Work Transcription, Dictation & Handwriting Sentences linked to History Topic – The Romans	Poetry Tell Me a Dragon by Jackie Morris	The Writing Framework – Sentence Level Work Transcription, Dictation & Handwriting Sentences linked to Robinwood Residential Visit	Discussion Text (Improving the local area of Gosforth – T4W) Model discussion text	The Writing Framework – Sentence Level Work Transcription, Dictation & Handwriting Sentences linked to History Topic – The Victorians	Narrative (Meeting Tale – T4W) The Promise by Nicola Davies



	Information Text (T4W) Rotten Romans (Terry Deary)	Explanation Text (T4W) Wallace and Gromit Cracking Contraption video	Narrative (Conquering the Monster Tale – T4W) Theseus and the Minotaur		Biography (George Stephenson – T4W) Model biography text	
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Learning Links Across the Curriculum					
		Maths	Art	History	Science
Year 1		Position and Direction (Hot and Cold Places, Our Local Area)	Gallery Project (Our Local Area, The UK) Take One Picture (The UK)	Bridges and Transport (Our Local Area) Queen Elizabeth II (The UK)	Seasonal Change (Hot and Cold Places, The UK) Animals including humans (Hot and Cold Places) Plants (The UK)
Year 2		Position and Direction (Continents and Oceans) Statistics (London and Nairobi, Continents and Oceans) Measurement (Continents and Oceans)	Life in Colour (Coastal Regions) Map It Out (London and Nairobi)	The Great Fires (London and Nairobi) Explorers (Continents and Oceans) Wings to Fly (Continents and Oceans)	Animals including humans (Coastal Regions, Continents and Oceans) Living things and their habitats (Coastal Regions, Continents and Oceans) Plants (Continents and Oceans) Everyday Materials (London and Nairobi)
Year 3		Position and Direction (North-East Regional Study) Statistics (All geography units) Measurement (Earthquakes and Volcanoes)	Gallery Project (North-East Regional Study) Take One Picture (The Alps) Abstract, shape and space (Earthquakes and volcanoes)	Stone Age to Iron Age (North-East Regional Study) The Vikings (North-East Regional Study, The Alps)	Rocks (The Alps, Earthquakes and Volcanoes) Plants (The Alps) Animals including humans (North-East Regional Study)
Year 4		Position and Direction (Climate Zones and Biomes) Statistics (All geography units) Measurement (Climate Change)	Architecture (All geography units) Take One Picture (Climate Zone and Biomes)	The Romans in Britain (Settlements and Migration) Victorians: Local Study (Settlements and Migration) Ancient Greece (Climate Zones and Biomes)	States of Matter (Climate Change) Living Thing and their habitats (Climate Zones and Biomes, Climate Change) Electricity (Climate Change)



What does a English lesson look like at South Gosforth First School?

					
Clarity of Learning Exemplified The 'Big Learning' is explained and the small steps are highlighted. Children know what they are learning, why they are learning it and how it links to previous learning.	Vocabulary New vocabulary is introduced, explained and modelled. Children have time to rehearse new words in context.	Links to Prior Learning and Retrieval Practice There are opportunities for children to practise what they have already learned through using a range of low stakes strategies.	New Learning Explained and Modelled Teachers provide clear explanations of new knowledge. Images, authentic sources and high-quality texts are used to exemplify and illustrate the new learning.	Independent Practice and Group Work Children have opportunities to practise the new learning through carefully considered tasks. Learning is broken down to minimise cognitive overload, with the use of a 'teach-do' approach.	Assessment for Learning and Feedback Strategies Assessment for learning opportunities are woven in throughout the lesson through careful questioning which makes pupils think deeply. Errors and misconceptions are picked up and addressed as the lesson progresses.

What makes English special at South Gosforth First School?

Year 1	Visit to Northern Stage to see the Christmas production. World Book Day Activities Author Visits
Year 2	Visit to Northern Stage to see the Christmas production. World Book Day Activities Author Visits
Year 3	Visit to Northern Stage to see the Christmas production. World Book Day Activities Author Visits
Year 4	Visit to Northern Stage to see the Christmas production. World Book Day Activities Author Visits



CPD			
Strategy	Who	When	Impact
Subject Leadership Time	Catherine Burnett	Ongoing	Time to review the curriculum provision. Replanned several units of work to ensure progression across the school. Book Looks Planning Scrutiny Learning Walks
Training Day	Catherine Burnett	Autumn Term 2025	Shared new curriculum plans with staff. Discussed the impact of the new Writing Framework and how that feeds into our curriculum. Introduced new structure of Spelling Lessons for Key Stage 2.
GST Subject Leader Networks	Catherine Burnett	3 sessions throughout the academic year	Two sessions a year led by Eve Morton (North Tyneside English Consultant) – sharing DfE and Ofsted updates. Subject leader has access to examples of best practice across the trust and can use this to inform our curriculum practice. Subject leaders can share planning and resources that can then be disseminated in school.
NOQLL	Catherine Burnett	Beginning November 2025	Support all staff in developing pupils' Language and Literacy skills. Support, develop and teach pupils Literacy using evidence-informed approaches. Lead Literacy through curriculum, culture and motivation. Contribute to effective professional development for Literacy, linking it to teaching, the curriculum and assessment across the school.



Impact	
Strategy	Evidence and Findings
Pupil Voice	Key findings from this monitoring in school can be found on internal school documents and is collated by Catherine Burnett (Literacy Subject Leader). This monitoring informs the current 'English Subject Action Plan' which identifies key strengths and areas for development in English, as well as actions taken to improve the subject curriculum and delivery across school.
Book Looks	
Planning Scrutiny	
Lesson Observations	
External Reports eg. SIP/Governors	