

Eastfield Infant and Nursery School

English Policy

Date: September 2025

Review Date: September 2027

English Lead: Claire Worth



1. Rationale

At Eastfield Infant and Nursery School, we believe that a high-quality English education is fundamental to the development of every child. Through the integration of reading, writing, phonics, and handwriting, we aim to foster a lifelong love of literature, clear communication, and confidence in expressing ideas. Our curriculum is built around the systematic synthetic phonics programme **Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised**, supporting our pupils to become fluent, enthusiastic readers and capable writers.

2. Aims

- To develop fluent, confident and independent readers who read for pleasure and for information.
- To support pupils in becoming articulate speakers and attentive listeners.
- To enable pupils to write clearly, accurately, and coherently for a range of purposes and audiences.
- To teach correct letter formation and develop legible, joined handwriting.
- To ensure consistency and progression in the teaching of phonics, reading, writing, and handwriting across EYFS and Key Stage 1.

3. Phonics

We follow **Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised** as our systematic synthetic phonics programme. This is taught daily in discrete sessions from Nursery through to Year 2, with fidelity to the programme to ensure consistency and progression.

- In Nursery, children focus on 'Foundations in Phonics' to develop their listening and attention skills.
- In Reception and Year 1, children are taught daily phonics lessons, moving through Phases 2 to 5.
- In Year 2, children consolidate learning phase 5 and then learn daily spelling lessons with access to additional support or 'Rapid Catch Up' where needed.
- Regular, half termly assessment ensures timely interventions and targeted group work for children needing additional support.

Children take home fully decodable reading books that are matched to their current phonics knowledge, ensuring success and fluency.

4. Reading

Reading is prioritised across our curriculum. Children are taught to decode using phonics and to develop comprehension through a range of strategies including questioning, prediction, and summarising.

- **Shared reading** takes place across all year groups, often linked to high-quality texts and curriculum themes.
- **Guided reading** sessions allow for more focused teaching in small groups.
- **Individual reading** is supported by book banded and phonically decodable books.
- A strong emphasis is placed on reading for pleasure, with regular story time and library visits.

We work closely with families to promote reading at home through reading records, workshops, and home reading books.

Please see the Eastfield 'Phonics and Early Reading' policy for more detail.

5. Writing

Writing is taught through a range of engaging contexts, often linked to high-quality texts and cross-curricular themes. Children learn to plan, draft, edit, and publish their work across a range of genres and for different purposes.

- In the Early Years, children are encouraged to mark-make and develop early writing through role play and continuous provision.
 - Across EYFS and Key Stage 1, children are taught grammar, punctuation, and spelling as part of daily English lessons.
 - Vocabulary development is central to all writing tasks, with rich texts and discussions used to introduce new language.
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6. Handwriting

We aim to ensure children develop fluent, legible, and joined handwriting.

- In Nursery and Reception, children develop fine and gross motor skills as well as correct pencil grip and letter formation.
- From Reception onwards, children are taught handwriting using a progressive sequence linked to phonics and spelling.

- We use a consistent script (e.g., Little Wandle letter formation phrases) to ensure uniformity in letter formation.

Correct posture, paper position, and pencil grip are modelled and reinforced regularly.

Please refer to the 'Good Practice for Handwriting' from the National Handwriting Association for the complete breakdown and Appendix 2 for the progression of Handwriting.

The School uses the letter-join font from the Letterjoin programme. In Year 1 this is pre-cursive and in Year 2 it is cursive.

7. Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

We are committed to ensuring that all pupils, regardless of background or ability, are given the support they need to succeed in English. This includes:

- Targeted interventions for children with SEND or who are working below expected levels.
 - Use of visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic strategies to support different learning styles.
 - High expectations for all learners, with scaffolding and challenge provided appropriately.
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8. Assessment and Monitoring

Assessment in English is continuous and informs planning and intervention.

- Phonics assessments are conducted every six weeks as part of the Little Wandle programme.
- Reading is assessed using phonics checks, comprehension tasks, and teacher observations.
- Writing is assessed against year group expectations and moderated internally and externally.
- Handwriting progress is reviewed termly.

Subject leaders monitor teaching and learning through observations, pupil voice, and book looks to ensure high standards.

9. Parental Involvement

We value the role of parents and carers in supporting English development at home. We provide:

- Reading workshops and phonics information sessions.

- Guidance for home reading and handwriting practice.
 - Regular updates through newsletters, school website, and parent-teacher meetings.
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10. Review

This policy is reviewed every two years by the English Lead and SLT in consultation with staff and governors.

Appendix 1 – English Working Wall example



Deliberate colour choices:

Vocabulary – pink, Velcro

Modelled Sentences – blue

Punctuation – yellow

All other colours to be decided as a Key Stage 1 team before progressing.

Appendix 2 – Handwriting Progression at Eastfield

Below is a general progression, taken from “Penpals” but adapted for “Letter-join”. When working with individuals or the class, please track back as needed.

Overview of Progression

Foundation – Gross & fine motor skills. Use the letter formation chart linked to Little Wandle Letters and Sounds to teach the basic shapes of letters.

Year 1 – Teach the letters with a lead in.

Year 2 – Teach the letter joins

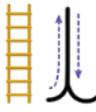
KS1 – Securing the joins, leading to speed and fluency.

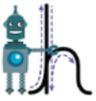
Gross & fine motor skills and patterns (see “patterns” from letterjoin.co.uk).

Either:

- Easy letters, then harder letters (see letterjoin.co.uk).

Or...

 - Long ladder letters: l, i, t, u, j, y

 - One-armed robot letters: r, b, n, h, m, k, p

 - Curly caterpillar letters: c, a, d, o, s, g, q, e, f

 - Zig-zag letters: z, v, w, x (see “Extra Resources/ worksheets/ cursive worksheets” from letterjoin.co.uk).

- Numbers (see “More letters” from letterjoin.co.uk).
- Capitals (see “More letters” from letterjoin.co.uk).
- Diagonal join to ascender e.g. at, all, th, ch, cl
- Diagonal join, no ascender e.g. in, im, cr, tr, dr, lp, mp
- Diagonal join, no ascender, to an anti-clockwise letter e.g. id, ig, nd, ld, ng
- Horizontal join, no ascender e.g. ou, ow
- Horizontal join, no ascender, to anti-clockwise letter e.g. oa, og

- Horizontal join to ascender e.g. wh, ol

When joining, there are 2 different types of letter:

Those that join from tail: abcdefghijklmnpqstuxyz

Those that join from top: orvw

Do ensure children always focus on the 3 levels:

The main body of the letters should all be the same height: aceimnorsuvwxz

Ascenders should all be the same height: bdfhkl (perhaps f and t a little shorter!)

Descenders should all be the same height: fgjpy

Some common problems (but by no means all of them!):

- Not keeping the letters on the line (this should be helped by always using a lead-in). 
- Not keeping to the same line of letter when coming back along it e.g.
- Joining to bottom of letter from horizontal join e.g. 
- Going round bottom of some curly caterpillar letters e.g. 
- Not going all the way round to "one O'clock" on curly caterpillar letters e.g. 
- Too large "i" and "s" e.g. 
- Descenders standing on line (especially j and p) – this should be sorted by joining all letters.

This guidance and progression has purposefully been kept simple so that the teaching of handwriting can be fitted predominantly around the teaching of phonics and spelling.

However...

- Do try to ensure that these key formations and joins are **explicitly taught**.
- Do track back to where the individual or class is at after a formative assessment of handwriting.
- Do ensure that the children know how to join from and to all letters.

