



ENGLISH POLICY

September 2026

Our Mission Statement:

**"To go further than we thought,
To run faster than we hoped,
To reach higher than we dreamed,
To become the best we are able to be."**

Aims and Objectives

At Helmshore Primary School, we believe that English develops children's abilities to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, so using language to learn and communicate ideas, views and feelings. It enables children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of all genres of text. We believe that children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins and we encourage the use of knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking, listening, reading and writing across a range of different situations.

Our aims and objectives for English are:

- to enable children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners;
- to encourage children to listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard;
- to enable children to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and needs;
- to develop the children's abilities to reflect on their own and others' contributions and the language used;

- to enable children to evaluate their own and others' contributions through a range of drama activities;
- to develop confident, independent readers through the use of the Accelerated Reader Scheme, which focuses on word, sentence and text-level knowledge, and assesses their understanding of what they have read;
- to encourage children to become enthusiastic and reflective readers through the Accelerated Reader programme in which children have contact with a range of challenging and appropriate texts;
- to help children enjoy writing and recognise its value;
- to enable children to write with accuracy and meaning for a wide range of purposes in narrative and non-fiction;
- to increase the children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work.
- to utilise Computing e.g. computers and ipads as a learning tool (to research and to aid spelling, punctuation and grammar activities) as well as present written work in a range of genres.

Teaching and Learning Style

At Helmshore Primary School we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English/cross-curricular lessons, based on the National Curriculum for English. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding in English. We do this through a daily lesson that has a blend of whole-class and group teaching. During these lessons children experience a wide range of whole-class shared reading or writing activities, whole-class focused word or sentence activities, talk-partner activities, guided group or independent activities and whole-class sessions to review progress and learning. Daily focused pacey sessions are also devoted to GPS (Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling), where the children are engaged in activities closely linked to National Curriculum expectations for Grammar. Targeted sessions on spelling, following the No Nonsense Spelling scheme from Y2 to Y6 occur daily. The skills children learn in English are also taught across the curriculum in other subjects, which are personalised to meet the needs of pupils. They have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts and use a range of resources such as dictionaries, thesauruses and visual prompts to support their work. Emphasis is placed on reading quality texts, analysing their structure and key features, and responding to these to develop a range of reading skills. Opportunities are carefully planned to provide modelled and independent short writing outcomes to contribute to an assessment evidence base. As part of the teaching sequence, children explore and gather content to produce a scaffolded (Outcome 1) piece of writing before children then apply the writing skills to an independent

(Outcome 2) piece of writing. This work is used to inform assessment of reading and writing. At Helmshore Primary School, we use Lancashire documents: Key Learning in Writing & Key Learning in Reading for planning, and KLIPS in Reading and Writing for assessment. Children use Computing where it enhances their learning, eg drafting their work and wherever possible we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

There are children of differing ability in all classes at Helmshore Primary School. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of each child. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons it is achieved through scaffolding and challenging via whole class and targeted group work, while in other lessons we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use classroom assistants carefully to support and challenge identified children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals. Appropriate success criteria is tailored for children to achieve.

Phonics and Early Reading

As soon as a child starts in Reception s/he will start to learn Phonics - learning to understand the alphabetic code. This involves learning letter sounds and shapes, hearing and saying the **sounds** in words in the correct order as well as being well on the way to being able to read and write the 44 phonemes (or units of sound) in the English language. We use Bug Club (Phonics Bug) systematically, creatively and thoroughly to give children the best start possible. Actions from the Bug Club (Phonics Bug) program are used carefully and shared with parents to make Phonics teaching engaging and active from Phase 2 to 5. Our handwriting pattern, based on the Phonics Bug pattern for each grapheme ensures consistency.

Once a child has learnt some of the 44 phonemes in Reception (Phase 2 and 3) they will be taught how to blend and segment these to read and write simple words (Phase 4). The vocabulary of phonics (phoneme, grapheme, digraph, etc.) is taught from the beginning.

In Year One, children practise the phonemes learnt in reception and introduce the alternative spellings for many of the sounds (Phase 5). This helps to prepare the children for the statutory Phonics Check at the end of Year One.

Tricky words

Words which are not easily blended are learned by sight. These are known as "tricky words" and are introduced gradually at each phase. These are sent home to be learned so that children can practise reading them with automaticity and

looking for them in books. Tricky words are the first common frequency words for a child to learn to spell and these are a focus in written work until they are all spelled correctly with consistency.

Phonically decodable reading books

Once a child has been introduced to enough of the Phase 2 sounds in the Autumn term of Reception, the children will take home a 'reading' book alongside accessing a range of exciting decodable texts on Phonics Bug. The emphasis of these first books is on language development, using the pictures so children can understand the plot and develop vocabulary. This is an important reading cue which they will use to help them in their reading until they become more confident readers. Initially, we use Bug Club (Phonics Bug) and only fully decodable books (books with only words they can sound out using their growing phonic knowledge for Phases 2-5). Following this, children move to colour-banded reading books to develop their skills and fluency. As the levelled texts progress, they become increasingly more mature in their content and there may come a point in Year 2 when a child begins to work on our Accelerated Reader scheme which consist of working through a wide range of texts of increasing difficulty followed with a short quiz to follow each text to assess their understanding.

The teaching and practice of early reading

The teaching and practice of reading takes place in a variety of ways:

- Shared reading where the teacher uses an Ebook or other form of large text and models good reading to the whole class.
- Guided reading where a group of children work with the teacher who teaches them specific reading skills
- Independent reading; children are encouraged to do this as much as possible in a range of activities, with great importance placed on the enjoyment of reading.
- Individual reading practice might be with the teacher, teaching assistant or an older child as a "buddy".

English Curriculum Planning

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the National Curriculum, along with LPDS support materials for English (2017) which have been personalised via year group curriculum maps. For Reception, the EYFS Framework is used as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for Communication & Language and Literacy (Reading and Writing).

We implement curriculum planning for English in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The National Curriculum for English age-related expectations inform what we teach in the long-term. Our medium-term planning identifies the key objectives for English that we teach to each year group. Termly. These plans define what we teach and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term. The English Subject Leader is responsible for monitoring and reviewing these plans ongoing and annually.

Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan for the teaching of English. This lists the specific Key Learning for each lesson and gives details of how the lessons are to be taught. It also includes details of scaffold and challenge approaches, support and resources. The class teacher designs individual plans and evaluates these daily to inform future teaching, learning and planning. Copies are monitored by the English Subject Leader.

Early Years Foundation Stage

We teach English in Reception classes as an integral part of the curriculum, within the area of learning EYFS Communication & Language and Literacy (Reading and Writing). The format for the daily focused session is similar to that used in the rest of the school, with a sensitive balance of guided and play based activities. We relate all aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the EYFS Framework. We give all children the opportunity to communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and extend their range of vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore, enjoy, learn about, and use words and text in a range of situations. Most aspects of continuous provision include writing opportunities and all play activities are enhanced by accompanying texts (Please refer to the school website 'How we teach Phonics and Reading'). A love of reading is encouraged and inspired from the very beginning.

The Contribution of English to Teaching in Other Curriculum Areas

The skills that children develop in English are linked to, and applied in, every subject of our curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work in school. A cursive handwriting style has been adopted throughout school and is consistently developed through all subjects.

Mathematics

English contributes significantly to the teaching of mathematics in our school. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage develop their mathematical understanding by talking about these areas with adults and other children. Children in both Key Stages are encouraged to read and interpret problems in order to identify the mathematics involved. They explain and present their work to others during plenary sessions and they communicate mathematically through the developing use of precise mathematical language.

Science

English is a key element of all Science activities. Children learn correct scientific vocabulary at an appropriate level throughout school. They use speaking and listening skills to clarify their thoughts and ideas and explain their predictions and conclusions. They are encouraged to write in a scientific way when recording their work.

Computing

The use of Computing enables children to use and apply their developing skills in English in a variety of ways. Children are encouraged to use Computing as a source of information and as a way of enabling them to present their completed work effectively. Children also use the Internet when researching information and use the planning and proofing tools in a word processor when checking their draft work. We promote the use of Computing as a resource for learning, whenever appropriate, for class work and for completing homework tasks. Computing is also used as a tool for pupils (from Y2 to Y6) and staff through the use of the Accelerated Reader programme. Children regularly complete quizzes to assess their understanding of books that they have recently read and monitor their own journey to achieve their personal targets. Staff use this resource to set, monitor and review pupil's reading targets, and to track progress and analyse trends.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship

English contributes to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. We encourage children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues. Older children research and debate topical problems and events. They discuss lifestyle choices and meet and talk with many visitors who work

within the school community. Planned activities within the classroom encourage children to work together and respect each other's views.

Our Pupil Council work contributes significantly to all children's listening to others, self-expression, and conversational skills.

Teaching English to Children with Special Educational Needs

At Helmsore Primary School we teach English to all children, at an appropriate level. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Teachers provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children with SEND. Work in English takes into account of the targets set for individual children in their Individual Provision Mapping (IPMs) and intervention group targets wherever appropriate. Teachers provide help with Communication and Literacy through:

- using texts that children can read and understand;
- using visual and written materials in different formats;
- using Computing;
- using IDL Cloud to assist individual spelling;
- using translators and amanuenses where needed;
- using a range of practical and personalised resources.

Identified children are supported with different aspects of English work through:

- Intervention groups for children with identified needs in each year group.
- SALT groups for children with speech, language and communication needs
- Phonics booster groups for relevant children in EYFS and KS1
- Children in Year 6 are given additional support and preparation for tests through streamed classes and carefully planned revision sessions.
- A successful Reading Buddy system is used where appropriate to support identified children.

Equal Opportunities.

Children irrespective of ability, age, race, gender, sexual orientation and disability are given full access to the English curriculum in accordance with recent legislation. We promote the British values of: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.

Assessment and Recording

Teachers assess children's work in English in several phases. The short-term assessments that are made as part of every lesson help teachers to adjust their daily plans. These short-term assessments are matched closely to the KLIPs. Writing tasks are assessed against year group expectations to record progress and inform areas for development for individual pupils. This information informs future planning and helps staff to meet children's individual needs and achieve year group expectations. Children's progress in English, in relation to their potential, is tracked closely through the use of the online school tracker. Children undertake the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, plus the optional national tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5. Reception Baseline Assessments are carried out in EYFS and Phonics Screening is carried out in Year 1. In EYFS, children's Communication and Language skills are assessed thoroughly but informally through observation and discussion.

Resources

There are a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries and a range of age-appropriate resources. Pupils can choose from a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts organised by ZPD range (linked to the Accelerated Reader scheme) to develop both confidence and a love of books. Infant and Junior library areas contain a range of additional books to support children's individual interests and research. Time is allocated in the school day for children to read, quiz and change books. They are also encouraged to read at home each day, either with a parent/guardian or independently. Reading achievements are celebrated in assembly to promote reading and children are encouraged to achieve their half-term targets to earn a reward.

Access to the Internet is available to support the teaching and learning of English. Appropriate website links and programmes can also be accessed via the school website from home to support their learning. Use of a range of computer programmes, which can be accessed on iPads/netbooks/computers, support reading and writing development.

Wherever possible, English is featured and celebrated in school in a variety of projects, clubs, competitions and events such as World Book Day, National Poetry Day and regular book fairs.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the English Subject Leader, who is working closely with a Senior Consultant for Primary English and Literacy to promote high standards of planning, teaching, learning and assessment in all areas of English. The work of the subject leader and consultant also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The subject leader gives the Headteacher an annual summary report in which they indicate areas for further improvement. Teaching staff regularly undertake work scrutinies led by the subject leader and Headteacher. The named governor responsible for English meets regularly with the subject leader in order to review progress.

The governing body will review this policy in September 2027, or earlier if deemed necessary.

Signed:

Headteacher

Signed:

Chair of Governors

Date: September 2026