Mellers Primary School

English Policy September 2026

Nottingham Nursery School & Training Centre

‘Every opportunity to educate everyone forever’

Intent

At Mellers, we believe that language is the foundation of learning. We are committed to developing confident communicators, enthusiastic readers and successful writers through a rich, ambitious and inclusive English curriculum.

We place oracy, reading and writing at the heart of learning, recognising that strong spoken language underpins children’s ability to think, learn and express themselves. Through high-quality literature, explicit teaching and meaningful opportunities to read, discuss and write, pupils develop the knowledge, vocabulary and skills needed to communicate effectively for a range of purposes and audiences.

Our aim is for every child to leave Mellers with a love of reading, a strong command of language and the confidence to use their voice and writing to participate successfully in education and beyond.

Implementation

Speaking and Listening

At Mellers, we believe that spoken language provides the foundation of thinking and learning. We aim to prioritise, foster and develop children’s spoken language by:

- Explicitly teaching new tier 2 and tier 3 words that extend the children’s vocabulary in all curriculum subjects

- Planning collaborative activities which enable children to learn, hear and practise new language, share their thinking and problem solve together

- Promoting high-quality dialogue in the classroom between the teacher and children, and between the children themselves, to support them to develop their thinking, reasoning and use of language

- Ensuring that adults working with the children are modelling and extending children’s language and thinking during interactions and activities

During our English lessons, which are planned using the CLPE's 'Power of Reading' scheme, speaking and listening skills are taught and practised through drama and role play, hot-seating, debates, oral story-telling, reading aloud, performance reading, and book talk. Reader's Theatre supports oracy by enabling pupils to practise fluent, expressive reading while developing active listening, turn-taking and collaborative discussion. Rehearsal and performance help pupils build confidence, improve communication skills and deepen their understanding of texts through talk.

Phonics

Phonics is taught daily in EYFS and Year One using the 'Little Wandle' phonics scheme. All staff who teach using Little Wandle have received the relevant training and have the necessary pedagogical skills and content knowledge. This approach explicitly teaches the children a comprehensive set of grapheme-phoneme relationships for reading and phoneme-grapheme relationships for spelling. Children are regularly assessed, their progress is recorded and those who require additional support in phonics receive daily targeted interventions. In EYFS, children progressively apply their phonics knowledge through reading and writing activities within phonics sessions. Throughout the year, they build towards independently reading and writing simple sentences, applying the grapheme-phoneme correspondences they have been taught.

As pupils move into Key Stage Two, those who have not yet secured the expected phonics knowledge continue to receive targeted Little Wandle catch-up interventions. These sessions are carefully planned to revisit and consolidate previously taught grapheme-phoneme correspondences, enabling pupils to develop the decoding skills required for fluent reading and accurate spelling.

Pupils with SEND also access the Little Wandle programme and intervention pathway where appropriate, with teaching adapted to meet individual needs and ensure success. Through regular assessment and targeted support, we ensure that all children are given the opportunity to develop the phonics knowledge and confidence needed to become successful readers and writers.

Further information regarding the teaching and assessment of phonics can be found in the school's Phonics Policy.

Reading

<u>Reading for Pleasure</u>

Reading for Pleasure lies at the heart of our reading curriculum. We believe that developing a lifelong love of reading is fundamental to children's success, both in school and beyond. Through exposure to a wide range of high-quality and engaging texts, children develop their

imagination, vocabulary, knowledge and understanding of the world. Children are encouraged to explore books, share recommendations and develop their own reading preferences. By fostering a genuine enjoyment of reading, we aim to nurture confident, enthusiastic readers who choose to read for pleasure throughout their lives.

To support this vision, we have adopted the CLPE's 'Power of Reading' approach, which places high-quality children's literature at the centre of teaching and learning. The programme is designed to foster a love of reading while developing pupils' reading, writing, speaking and listening skills through meaningful engagement with carefully chosen texts. By immersing children in rich literature and providing opportunities for discussion, drama, performance and creative response, the 'Power of Reading' approach helps us nurture confident, enthusiastic readers who read not only for learning, but for pleasure.

Children also have access to their class library, which is regularly refreshed, and the school library.

We work closely with the National Literacy Trust to promote reading, writing and oracy across the school. Through participation in literacy initiatives, events and projects, pupils are encouraged to develop positive attitudes towards reading and communication. We also make the most of opportunities to engage with authors, illustrators and poets through visits, workshops and virtual events. These experiences inspire children as readers and writers, provide valuable insight into the creative process and help to foster a lifelong love of literature.

Mellers has fostered a strong relationship with acclaimed children's author Jasbinder Bilan, a former Mellers' pupil, who is our school reading patron. Through this partnership, pupils have regular opportunities to engage with a published author and gain insight into the writing process. Jasbinder runs an annual writing competition for Year 6 pupils, inspiring them to write creatively and develop confidence in their own authorial voice. She has also worked alongside the school to co-organise Mellers' first writing residential at Lumb Bank, providing gifted and talented writers with a unique opportunity to develop their craft in a setting dedicated to literary creativity. These experiences enrich our English curriculum, raise aspirations and encourage pupils to see themselves as readers and writers.

<u>Guided Reading</u>

Children in EYFS, Year One and Year Two follow the 'Little Wandle' reading scheme whereby they will read with an adult in a small group three times per week. The sessions focus on three key elements: decoding, prosody and comprehension. Children first apply their phonics knowledge to read words accurately, before developing fluency through repeated reading and expressive reading aloud. They then deepen their understanding of the text through high-quality discussion, vocabulary exploration and comprehension activities. This structured approach supports children in becoming confident, fluent and enthusiastic readers.

<u>Fluency</u>

Reading fluency is taught explicitly and practised regularly from Year Two to Year Six, three times a week as a whole class. Children are supported to develop accuracy, automaticity, pace and prosody so that they can read with expression and understanding. Fluency is incorporated into English lessons where appropriate, allowing pupils to rehearse and revisit texts through a range of evidence-informed strategies, including echo reading, choral reading, repeated reading, paired reading and performance reading. These opportunities enable children to deepen their comprehension while building confidence and enjoyment in reading aloud. Fluency practice culminates in a weekly Reader's Theatre session, where pupils perform a text for an audience, applying expression, intonation and characterisation. This not only strengthens reading fluency but also develops speaking and listening skills, confidence and a genuine engagement with literature.

Comprehension

Reading comprehension is developed through high-quality reading experiences planned using the CLPE 'Power of Reading' approach, where carefully selected texts provide meaningful opportunities for discussion, inference and response. Through structured whole-class reading activities, children are taught to explore vocabulary, make predictions, draw inferences, summarise key ideas and justify their ideas using evidence from the text. Comprehension skills are also embedded within fluency practice; as children engage in repeated reading and develop expression, intonation and pacing, they are supported to deepen their understanding of the text through carefully planned comprehension questions and discussion. By combining rich literary conversations, fluency work and creative responses to texts, children become thoughtful, engaged readers who can interpret, analyse and enjoy a wide range of literature.

Reading at Home

We believe that regular reading at home plays a vital role in developing fluency, comprehension and a lifelong love of reading. To support this, we expect all children to read at home and record their reading in their reading diary at least three times each week. Reading may be completed independently, with an adult, or through shared reading experiences, depending on the age and stage of the child. Recording reading in the diary helps to strengthen the partnership between home and school, enabling parents and teachers to celebrate reading success and support children on their journey to becoming confident, enthusiastic readers.

Writing

Transcription and Sentence-Level Writing

Our vision for transcription and sentence-level writing is central to the development of confident and proficient writers. Transcription refers to the skills that enable children to record their ideas accurately in writing, including spelling and handwriting, alongside the

punctuation and sentence construction skills that support effective written communication. We have developed a transcription progression map that identifies the key skills children are expected to learn and master from EYFS to Upper Key Stage Two. This progression has been used to evaluate pupils' needs and inform the development of our long-term writing curriculum, ensuring that essential transcriptional knowledge and skills are taught, revisited and applied in a purposeful and progressive way. These skills are shared with pupils so that they understand their learning goals and can take ownership of their progress. Transcription is taught explicitly and practised regularly through our daily ‘Sentence of the Day’ approach, while teachers continually monitor pupils' written work and address misconceptions through feedback and responsive teaching.

Handwriting

In EYFS, daily opportunities are provided to develop fine motor control, pencil grip and letter formation through a range of carefully planned activities. These experiences lay the foundations for successful handwriting and support children in developing the physical skills required for writing.

Handwriting is taught explicitly three times each week using the Nelson Handwriting scheme to ensure a consistent and progressive approach across the school. Lessons focus on correct letter formation, joins, size and presentation, enabling children to develop a fluent and legible handwriting style. Handwriting is carefully modelled by teachers, who demonstrate the correct formation and joins expected at each stage of learning. Teachers regularly monitor pupils' work and address misconceptions or errors promptly through feedback and responsive teaching, ensuring that high expectations for handwriting and presentation are maintained in every classroom. Through regular practice and consistent reinforcement, pupils develop the automaticity and confidence needed to write efficiently across the curriculum.

Spelling

Spelling is taught progressively throughout the school to ensure that children develop the knowledge and skills needed to write accurately and confidently. In EYFS and Key Stage One, children develop their spelling knowledge through daily phonics lessons using the Little Wandle programme. Children who require additional support, including those in Key Stage Two, access Little Wandle Keep-Up or Catch-Up interventions to secure and consolidate their phonics knowledge. From Years Three to Year Six, children are taught the spelling objectives outlined in the National Curriculum, including the statutory word lists for their year group. Spelling is taught explicitly four times each week, providing regular opportunities for children to learn, practise and apply spelling patterns, rules and conventions. Assessment is used to monitor progress and may include collaborative spelling activities and low-stakes quizzes to identify next steps in learning.

We value the partnership between home and school in supporting spelling development. Children are encouraged to practise and consolidate their spelling knowledge at home using

EdShed, which provides engaging, interactive activities linked to the spelling patterns and rules being taught in class. Regular practice through EdShed helps children to revisit prior learning, develop automaticity and build confidence in their spelling. Parents and carers are encouraged to support and monitor their child's engagement with these activities, helping to reinforce learning and celebrate progress. Through consistent teaching in school and regular practice at home, children develop the spelling knowledge and confidence needed to communicate effectively in their writing.

Grammar and Cohesion

Grammar and cohesion are taught through a carefully sequenced progression that is mapped from the National Curriculum from Year One to Year Six. Through our whole-school grammar and cohesion map, pupils progressively develop their understanding of sentence construction, punctuation, grammatical structures and the ways in which ideas can be linked within and across texts. Learning begins with constructing simple sentences and sequencing ideas, before moving towards paragraph organisation, the use of cohesive devices and, ultimately, the deliberate manipulation of grammar and cohesion to suit audience and purpose. Grammar objectives are purposefully mapped to writing outcomes to ensure full curriculum coverage and are taught within meaningful contexts rather than as isolated skills. Through modelled writing, oral rehearsal, sentence-level practice and independent application, pupils learn how grammatical choices contribute to clarity, cohesion and authorial effectiveness. This approach ensures that grammar becomes a tool for communication, enabling children to write with increasing control, fluency and sophistication as they progress through the school.

The Writing Sequence

Reading is the foundation of our writing curriculum. Through the CLPE Power of Reading approach, children are immersed in high-quality, diverse and engaging texts that inspire and motivate them as writers. Carefully chosen literature provides meaningful contexts for writing and exposes pupils to rich vocabulary, ambitious language structures and a range of authorial techniques.

We aim to develop confident, capable and creative writers who can communicate effectively, develop their own unique voice and understand how to write with purpose and impact for a range of audiences. Our long-term English curriculum has been carefully designed to map writing outcomes progressively from EYFS to Year 6, ensuring clear progression in genre knowledge, audience awareness, grammatical content and writing stamina. Writing opportunities are engaging, exciting and varied, giving children genuine reasons to write while allowing them to practise, apply and refine the skills they have learned in class. They are planned around authentic purposes and audiences wherever appropriate, enabling pupils to understand how writers shape language choices to achieve intended effects. Through discussion, drama, reading and rich literary experiences, pupils build the knowledge, confidence and creativity needed to become successful writers.

Our writing curriculum follows a clear sequence that supports children in becoming confident, skilled and independent writers.

1. Immerse:

Each unit begins with a high-quality text from the CLPE 'Power of Reading' programme. Children explore the text through reading, discussion, drama, vocabulary activities and oral rehearsal. Vocabulary is carefully selected and explicitly taught within each writing unit. Children are given multiple opportunities to rehearse, apply and revisit new vocabulary in both spoken and written contexts.

2. Learn the tools for writing:

Children are explicitly taught the vocabulary, language features and grammar skills they will need for the intended writing outcome. Grammar objectives are taken from the National Curriculum and are taught within a meaningful context so that children understand how and why writers use them. Pupils also analyse high-quality model texts (WAGOLLs) to identify the structural, grammatical and language features that contribute to successful writing and consider how these choices are shaped by purpose and audience, and how these techniques can be adapted and applied within their own writing.

3. Plan:

Before writing independently, children are supported to plan and organise their ideas. They are encouraged to consider the purpose, audience and structure of their writing and to draw upon the vocabulary, grammatical knowledge and authorial techniques explored throughout the unit. Planning may take a variety of forms, including story maps, graphic organisers, notes and oral rehearsal.

4. Model, practise and draft:

Teachers explicitly model the writing process, thinking aloud to demonstrate how writers make deliberate choices about vocabulary, sentence construction, grammar and organisation to achieve a particular purpose and impact on the reader. Children then develop their understanding through shared, guided and independent writing, applying the knowledge and skills they have learned throughout the unit. Across each unit, pupils are given regular opportunities to write independently, applying previously taught knowledge, skills and vocabulary without adult support.

5. Edit and improve:

Children are taught to revise their writing by improving content, organisation and vocabulary before editing for spelling, punctuation and grammar accuracy. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on the effectiveness of their writing in meeting its intended purpose and audience.

6. Publish and celebrate:

Once every half term, children produce a published piece of writing. This provides a real sense of purpose, audience and pride in their work while showcasing the progress they have made as writers.

Sentence construction is taught progressively across the school so that pupils develop control over sentence structures and can make deliberate choices to achieve particular effects for different audiences and purposes. Through oral rehearsal, modelled writing and exploration of high-quality texts, pupils learn how authors make deliberate language choices to engage and influence the reader.

Children are provided with regular opportunities to write for sustained periods and across a range of genres. As they progress through the school, pupils develop the stamina required to write independently, applying their transcriptional and compositional skills with increasing fluency and confidence. This structured approach ensures that children develop the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences.

Writing Across the Curriculum

Pupils are provided with opportunities to apply their writing knowledge and skills across the wider curriculum. Expectations for transcription, composition and presentation are consistently maintained across subjects, enabling pupils to write with increasing independence, purpose and accuracy in different contexts.

Adaptive Teaching and Inclusion

We recognise that every child develops as a writer at a different pace and that effective teaching responds to the needs of the learners in front of us. Teaching is therefore adaptive and responsive, with teachers using ongoing assessment to identify strengths, address misconceptions and provide appropriate levels of support or challenge. Lessons are carefully tailored through a range of approaches, including targeted questioning, explicit modelling, scaffolding, guided practice, pre-teaching of key vocabulary and timely intervention. Some pupils with high levels of need (HLN) access additional personalised reading and writing opportunities. These may include one-to-one sessions with a focus on communication, language and interaction, enabling pupils to develop the foundational skills required to access the wider English curriculum.

Children with SEND are supported through carefully adapted teaching, reasonable adjustments and targeted interventions that enable them to access the curriculum and make progress from their individual starting points. Children with English as an Additional Language (EAL) are supported through rich language experiences, explicit vocabulary instruction, visual prompts, oral rehearsal and opportunities to develop and apply their spoken and written English. Where pupils are ready for additional challenge, teaching is adapted to deepen their

understanding and extend their application of writing skills. This responsive approach ensures that all pupils are supported, challenged and enabled to achieve success as writers.

Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of our English curriculum and is used to inform teaching, identify next steps and ensure that all pupils make strong progress.

EYFS and Key Stage One:

Children are assessed in phonics each term through the Little Wandle assessment cycle. Assessment outcomes are used to identify pupils who may require additional support or intervention and to ensure that teaching is responsive to individual needs.

Year Two:

Children complete reading assessments based on the Key Stage One SATs framework. These assessments, alongside teacher assessment, help monitor progress in reading and identify areas for development.

Key Stage Two:

Children complete termly NTS reading assessments. These assessments provide valuable information about pupils' reading fluency, comprehension and understanding and are used to inform future teaching. Pupils in Year 6 also complete the national Key Stage Two reading and Punctuation and grammar assessments, providing an additional measure of attainment and progress.

Transcription

Spelling, punctuation, handwriting and grammar knowledge is assessed regularly through formative assessment, low-stakes quizzes and transcription activities. Assessment information is used to identify gaps in learning and inform future teaching.

Writing:

Writing is assessed against age-related expectations using independent pieces completed throughout the year. Teachers use formative assessment, pupil conferencing, transcription assessments and moderated writing judgements to identify next steps and inform future teaching. Formal teacher assessments are completed each term, drawing on a range of evidence from pupils' independent writing in English lessons and across the curriculum. Regular moderation takes place within and across year groups, enabling teachers to discuss and evaluate pupils' writing, develop consistency in assessment practice and ensure that

judgements are accurate, reliable and in line with national expectations. We also organise an annual writing moderation event between schools in our NST cluster.

Assessment information is used to identify strengths, address misconceptions, inform adaptive teaching and ensure that pupils receive the support and challenge needed to achieve their full potential.

Time allocation

English is a core subject and is given a high priority within the curriculum at Mellers. Pupils will receive five English lessons each week to ensure sufficient time is dedicated to developing speaking and listening, reading and writing skills. Any reduction to this entitlement should only occur in exceptional circumstances where there are significant curriculum demands, such as statutory events, enrichment opportunities or whole-school priorities. In such cases, changes to the English timetable must be agreed in advance with the English Lead and Headteachers to ensure that pupils' access to the English curriculum is not adversely affected.

Computing and digital technology

Digital technology is used purposefully to support and enhance the teaching and learning of English. Pupils are provided with opportunities to use computers and iPads to draft, edit, improve and publish their writing for a range of audiences and purposes where appropriate. Technology also supports the development of reading, spelling and research skills. Children use EdShed to practise and consolidate spelling knowledge both in school and at home, while online texts and resources provide opportunities to develop reading fluency and comprehension. Pupils are also taught to use the internet effectively and safely to research topics, gather information and deepen their understanding across the curriculum. Purple Mash is used where appropriate to support writing, publishing and other literacy-based activities, helping pupils to develop both their English and digital literacy skills.

Resources

At Mellers, we believe that all children should experience a rich and varied English curriculum which develops their skills as readers, writers and communicators. High-quality resources are used to support teaching and learning and to ensure progression across all aspects of English. These include the National Curriculum, EYFS Development Matters guidance, the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme, the Nelson Handwriting Scheme, the CLPE Power of Reading approach, and a range of school-developed planning and assessment resources. Staff also draw upon evidence-informed materials, including resources developed

by Nottingham School's Trust advisers, writing scaffolds and high-quality literature, to support pupils' development as successful writers.

Within classrooms, pupils have access to age-appropriate dictionaries, thesauruses, high-quality texts linked to current learning and other resources that support reading and writing. Each pupil is provided with the materials needed to support their learning, including exercise books, reading diaries, handwriting equipment, whiteboards and other resources appropriate to their age and stage of development.

Resources are organised and clearly labelled to promote independence and enable pupils to access writing equipment, books and digital technology with confidence. Computers, iPads and interactive whiteboards are used to support teaching, research, drafting, editing and publishing across the English curriculum.

Learning Environment and Displays

We recognise that the learning environment plays an important role in promoting high standards and positive attitudes towards English. Classroom displays celebrate high-quality writing while also making the writing process visible to pupils. English displays are designed to showcase the different stages of the writing journey so that pupils can see how writing develops over time and understand that effective writing is the result of thoughtful planning, practice and revision.

All classrooms display grammar and spelling strategies appropriate to the year group expectations.

Children's writing from English lessons and across the wider curriculum is regularly celebrated to recognise achievement, raise aspirations and provide authentic audiences for their work. Displays help pupils to take pride in their writing and reinforce the message that writing is valued throughout the school.

Role of the English Subject Leader

To ensure the effective implementation of this policy and to promote high standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing, the English Subject Leader will:

- Review and update the English Policy on a regular basis to ensure it reflects current research, statutory requirements and the needs of the school.
- Monitor the quality of English provision across the school and report outcomes to senior leaders and governors.
- Monitor curriculum planning to ensure coverage, progression and consistency across all year groups.
- Monitor the quality of teaching and learning through lesson visits, learning walks and pupil voice activities, in line with the school's monitoring procedures.

- Use a range of monitoring activities, including work scrutiny, planning reviews, assessment analysis and book looks, to evaluate standards, progress and curriculum implementation.
- Support colleagues in developing subject knowledge, pedagogy and assessment practices through coaching, professional development and the sharing of effective practice.
- Lead the development of English across the school, identifying priorities for improvement and evaluating their impact on pupil outcomes.
- Monitor the effectiveness of interventions and support programmes, including phonics, reading and writing provision.
- Audit and evaluate English resources regularly to ensure they remain relevant, engaging and aligned with the curriculum.
- Promote a culture of reading, writing and oracy across the school through enrichment opportunities, events and partnerships that inspire a love of language and literature.

The English Subject Leader works closely with senior leaders, governors and staff to ensure that all pupils receive a high-quality English education and are supported to become confident communicators, enthusiastic readers and successful writers.

Staff Training

Staff engage in a range of CPD opportunities, including training, professional reading, research groups, coaching and collaboration with external partners, to develop expertise across different aspects of English, including oracy, phonics, reading, fluency, comprehension, transcription and writing. Through this ongoing professional learning, staff reflect upon and refine curriculum planning, adapting long-term plans, progression documents and classroom practice where appropriate to ensure that our English curriculum remains evidence-informed, responsive to pupils' needs and aligned with current research and effective pedagogical approaches.

Impact

At Mellers, pupils develop as confident communicators, enthusiastic readers and successful writers. They leave school with a strong command of spoken and written language, a love of reading and the ability to communicate effectively for a range of audiences and purposes. Through high-quality teaching, assessment and adaptive provision, pupils make strong progress from their starting points and are well prepared for the next stage of their education and beyond. They are equipped with the language, literacy skills and confidence needed to participate successfully in society and become lifelong learners. As a result, pupils are able to articulate their ideas clearly, read widely and fluently, and write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences.

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