

Finham Primary School & Nursery is a vibrant 'child-centred' learning community that is part of a family of schools in Finham Park Multi Academy Trust. We have based our school ethos on 5 key values that enable our children to be better equipped for today and their future.

Teamwork

Respect

Integrity

Enjoyment

Discipline

#### Intent

At Finham Primary School, we have designed a curriculum for children that promotes a love for reading; a passion for writing and the ability to discuss, debate and articulate their thoughts and feelings eloquently through the power of speaking.

By the time that our children leave primary school, we want our children to understand that although reading is necessary for learning – it is also a way to relax and escape from the world. We want our children to understand that although writing is a necessary form of communication – it is also a way to express yourself either privately (through diary writing or poetry), or publicly. We want our children to understand that speech is a way of comforting, inspiring or even disagreeing with others – and that we speak clearly, confidently and without fear. We have high expectations of children with SEND, ensuring that we scaffold the learning so that all children can achieve.

#### Implementation

For each area of English - be that reading, writing (which incorporates spelling and handwriting), or oracy - there are carefully structured units of work that help the children to make huge leaps of progress throughout school when compared with their starting points in Reception.

Everything is rooted in the end of key stage expectations from the National Curriculum; alongside this, we carefully consider what the children in our school need and will respond to best. This means that even though our expectations of children remain the same – we will not always use the same texts or stimuli year in, year out.

Although reading and writing are taught explicitly in English lessons throughout the week, reading and writing underpin the whole curriculum, so these skills are reinforced across all subjects.

At Finham Primary, we teach reading in KS1 and KS2 using a very clear 3-part structure that focuses on both fluency of reading and understanding (comprehension). Children are shown from a very early age that comprehension questions can be presented in different ways. We recognise that the teaching of reading is a partnership of both home and school, so each child has a reading diary and a reading book that is matched to their reading ability. The reading diaries are checked by teachers on a weekly basis and a reading task, "Question of the Week", is sent home to stimulate conversations at home about the books that the children are reading.

Writing is taught through stimulating texts or videos that will fire up the children's imaginations and make them want to write. Class teachers will plan in a 'Hook lesson' at the start of a unit of work. The following lessons look at deconstructing the genre of writing that they are looking at and teachers will teach the skills that the children will need in order to write in that style successfully. Writing is taught through 'magpieing' examples of good words and phrases from the texts of others; modelled and shared writing; careful planning and drafting – and then crucially editing work. Once the unit has been taught, the children

will write an end of unit write which teachers use to carefully assess. The outcomes will inform teachers on what they need to work on in their next unit of work.

Children are taught to read and spell following a structured phonics programme from when they enter school. Children are taught to decode and to learn to read and recognise words by sight. By Year 2, many children have successfully completed the phonics programme and are focused on learning spelling rules outlined in the National Curriculum for their year groups. It is a well-known fact that children learn spellings for a spelling test – but these spellings do not get embedded in their long-term memory. At Finham Primary, we do have spelling tests but they are in the form of dictated sentences. The mechanics of having to remember to use punctuation, finger spaces and spell words correctly emulates what children have to do when they are writing in ‘real life’.

The children at our school are taught to use precursive handwriting in KS1 moving onto continuous cursive handwriting in KS2. This has caused a huge improvement in presentation of the work in books throughout school.

There is a secure understanding throughout school that in order for children to be able to articulate their understanding of what they have read, and to be good writers – they need to be confident speakers. Oracy is developed through carefully chosen activities throughout the school day and across the curriculum, to give children a chance to develop in these areas.

Children are assessed on a day-to-day basis on their reading and writing. Targets are set to move children on and appropriate interventions are set to ensure that children continue to make progress. Children are also assessed termly for reading (more frequently in Year 2 and 6) and at in ‘end of unit writes’, to ensure that they are showing that they can use the writing skills across a range of genres. Using assessment data – be that formative or summative, teachers carefully plan the next steps for their children and share these with the children. This in turn, makes children take responsibility for their learning.

#### Impact

The children at our school leave each year group, prepared for the next stage of their lives: whether that be the next year group or secondary school and beyond. Carefully planned lessons; focusing on children’s interests; careful assessment of children’s work ensures that our children make rapid progress and develop a love for reading and writing.

We have children who are articulate with good reasoning skills, who can hold discussions, listen to different points to view and support their opinions with evidence. Our children love reading – whether that be stories or books in their own time; or to find information and discover new facts. They love writing and can write for different purposes. By the time children leave Year 6, the majority of children are able to communicate for a range of purposes and audiences in writing, including high-quality vocabulary and punctuation.