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# How we teach English at Stradbroke



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## English at Stradbroke

At Stradbroke, learning is the process of acquiring the essential knowledge, skills and behaviours required for a secure and extended understanding. Provision is designed to advance understanding, gradually throughout a key stage. **Lessons** are not an event in themselves. They are part of the process of learning which will carry on over several days or even weeks until a pupil is showing the required level of understanding. Some lessons may involve multiple learning objectives.

## Literacy at Stradbroke

Literacy at Stradbroke follows a clear teaching sequence developed as part of the English Mastery Project lead by Teresa Heathcote – our Literacy Consultant. The ‘rough’ outline for which is listed below:

- **Immersion** – children immerse themselves into the stimulus through drama, role play etc.
- **Analysis** – children become the audience and understand the key features of a WAGOLL (good example) from the genre they will be modelling their writing on. At this stage, the children will be exposed to new language and begin to explore authorial intent and the audience and purpose of the piece of writing. Often children will be exposed to multiple examples of writing and they will be asked to grade/rank them and ascertain their effectiveness in order to provide further models for their writing.
- **SPAG** – children will begin to practice writing for their audience using key spelling, punctuation and grammatical features within context. Tier 2/3 language is deliberately taught and infused throughout the sequence.
- **Plan** – children will orally rehearse their ideas and produce a plan for their writing
- **Draft** – children will apply the skills they have practised and write their first draft
- **Review/Evaluate** – children self/peer assess their writing and pick out what went well and how it could be developed further- refer back to the key features and purpose of their piece
- **Perform/Publish** – children produce their final piece ready to be shared with their intended audience

Teachers have the freedom to adapt this sequence in order to best support the learners in their class and retrieval practice of key concepts (vocabulary and ideas) is embedded throughout. In order to ensure children are grappling with the curriculum and experiencing a desirable level of difficulty, throughout the sequence we encourage children - who grasp concepts quickly – to innovate their writing. They are afforded the opportunity to write from a different perspective, for a different audience, with a different outcome/setting/character etc. This approach helps ensure that, when they are ready, children maintain a conscious control of their vocabulary and grammatical devices.

In order to expose the children to multiple good examples, we have strategically mapped out each genre taught in Reading and Writing so that we can pre-teach key features prior to the children confronting the genre in Literacy. Spacing and retrieval practice help ensure the children have a basic knowledge of the text type and can therefore focus more on the audience, purpose and authorial intent of their writing. See our ‘rough’ overview below:

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Reading	Non-chronological report	Narrative	Persuasive Letter	Narrative	Recount	Narrative
Writing	Traditional tales (known plot)	Non-chronological report	Short content narrative	Persuasive Letter	Short content narrative	Recount (Real events to them!)

This structured and strategic approach allows us to analyse skill progression across school by comparing the quality of similar pieces of writing.

### **Assessment in Literacy**

From Y1-Y6, we use our moderation documents which are in-line with the end of Key Stage assessments (using the following grade descriptors: PKS, WTS, OT and OTHS) to ensure skills develop cumulatively. Moderation occurs within year groups and/or across the school on a termly basis. In addition, all teachers across school (EYFS-Y6) plan from our [Literacy Progression Map](#) and use our [Literacy Coverage Map](#) in order to ensure children experience an appropriate level of challenge and balance of fiction and non-fiction.

In our Foundation Stage, including 2 year olds until the end of reception, children are tracked using 'Development Matters'. This supports early year's practitioners in supporting children to fill any gaps that may be highlighted. At the end of Reception, children are assessed using a national profile, this then provides information for the year 1 teachers as to the literacy levels children are working at.



## Reading at Stradbroke

At Stradbroke, we recognise the importance of reading in developing a child's language. A language rich curriculum forms the basis for children developing better reasoning skills, greater inference and pragmatic abilities. The more words our children can use in the right context, the more academic success they will have and in turn the greater their chances of employment become during adulthood.

Reading at Stradbroke is not limited to Guided Reading lessons: reading forms a fundamental part of the whole curriculum. We recognise that exposing the children to different text types within different subjects helps develop background knowledge: the more complex and interconnected our schema are, the easier it is to make sense of new related information and the better we are able to organise it so that it makes sense.

In Guided Reading, we aim to teach a range of genres and text types: our Reading [Progression](#) and [Coverage Maps](#) outline what we teach across the whole school. As previously mentioned, we pre-teach the text type studied in Literacy the half-term before; this systematic approach helps to embed an understanding of the features of different text types.

In order to ensure that the teaching of reading is as effective as possible, we have adopted research supported methods based on recommendations from the Education Endowment Foundation and the Reading Mastery Project led by our English Consultant - Teresa Heathcote.

Our reading teaching sequence uses a combination of the following approaches:

- The **Reading Strategies (visualisation, read aloud think aloud, activating prior knowledge, gist and understanding key vocabulary)** are taught from Y1-Y6 to encourage students to monitor and overcome barriers to reading comprehension. Children are expected to use their Reading Strategies across the whole curriculum.
- We use **Blooms Taxonomy** and **Barrett's Taxonomy** questioning stems (**Literal comprehension** – recall and recognition, **Reorganisation, Inferential, Evaluation and Appreciation**).
- **Language development** and **authorial intent** sessions.
- In Y1-Y6, we practice **reading fluency** every week.
- Within lessons, we regularly use **Retrieval Practice** – the act of recalling learned information from memory in order support comprehension.

In our Foundation Stage, children are immersed in stories as soon as they start in our 2 year old room (Little Teds). Stories are used to support the whole curriculum and activities often link into the story being read, encouraging children to become immersed in the story itself. Children are encouraged to talk about favourite stories. 'Stories for talking' is a programme used to help develop children's vocabulary and 'Helicopter Stories' encourages children to re-tell their own stories. Pie Corbett is a system used to help children learn and re-tell simple, repetitive stories such as 'The Gingerbread Man' and 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff'. Reading in our Foundation Stage is not about simply reading a book, it is more about learning to enjoy stories and develop vocabulary. By the end of Reception most children are accessing reading books to take home.



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## **Assessment in Reading**

All children are benchmarked at the start of every term in order to ascertain what book band they are working at. Teachers use their discretion to benchmark children more frequently should they feel the need to.

From Y1 to Y6, every term, children complete summative reading assessment papers (Rising Stars Assessments) in order to assess their individual attainment and allow the teacher to plan for future learning.

## **Reading at Home**

Across the whole school, each child has their own reading record which they take home with them each night as well as a banded reading book (and phonetically decodable book, if necessary) and a library book (a reading for pleasure book).

## **Phonics and Early Reading at Stradbroke**

At Stradbroke, we have adopted a clear and consistent approach to teaching phonics and early reading – we use the ‘Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised’ planning scheme. We ensure staff provide fidelity to the teaching framework for the duration of the programme through regular CPD – all staff have received the same initial training and further instructional support.

Phonics and Reading are an integrated part of the timetable beginning from Foundation Stage and throughout Key Stage 1. Children receive high quality daily phonics and reading teaching in small groups suited to their individual needs. They work through the phonics phases 1– 5 and associated book bands as outlined by the ‘Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised’ document before moving onto the Y2 spelling programme as outlined by the National Curriculum.

Regular phonics ‘keep up’ sessions are also timetabled during the afternoons in order to intervene and support children at risk of ‘falling behind’.

In the Foundation Stage, particularly in our 2 year old room and nursery, phonics starts with nursery rhymes, singing, clapping, games, musical instruments for rhythm and recognising our names begin with a particular sound. In preparation for reception and if they are ready, nursery children will start to explore phase 2 phonics.

## **Assessment**

- Children are involved in the formative assessment of their progress in Phonics and receive daily feedback on their development within their teaching group.
- Groups are flexible and children may be moved at any point in between formal assessments where appropriate.
- Children will be assessed at the end of each Phonics Phase to ensure that they are ready to progress.



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- Benchmarks are in place to ensure that a consistent approach to the progression in phonics is applied throughout the school. Children must achieve 80% of the phase before moving on.
- Year One phonics screening in the Summer Term in line with government requirements.

Please see our [Phonics Policy](#) for more information.