



NEWARK HILL ACADEMY

English at the Newark Hill Academy

Newark Hill provides an English rich learning environment where children take pride in their written work. Children work to high and clear expectations and are taught through a variety of teaching styles that interest, inspire and excite our writers. A love of reading is fostered with on-going opportunity to improve and grow as independent readers. Written tasks are purposeful with many cross-curricular links. Newark Hill is committed to raising standards in English and has developed a whole school approach to ensure progression in line with the National Curriculum (2014).

READING

We aim to help children to become readers and to take pleasure in reading throughout their lives. We believe that a close partnership with parents will enhance a child's learning and enjoyment. Learning to read is vitally important, particularly in the early stages. The children take books home with them in order for parents to support by reading at home with them or to them and reflecting on what has been read. Communication with parents is encouraged through Home Learning Journals. Reading is taught through the sharing of books, building of phonological skills and the learning of sight vocabulary. Children read individually as well as in guided group reading sessions. Our reading books are coded to ensure children receive books of the appropriate reading level. In addition to an array of books in the classroom book corners, the academy has two well-equipped libraries and a reading trolley for books to be shared at break times. Reading is celebrated at every opportunity e.g. through rewards, World Book Day and author visits.

WRITING

Writing at the academy is delivered through an exciting and engaging curriculum. Writing skills and grammar are explicitly taught through our writing learning journey. Knowing that reading informs writing, teachers select high-quality, inspiring texts to act as a stimulus for children's own writing. Children are inspired to write in a range of genres: fiction and non-fiction; from myths to newspaper reports. Children work hard to develop their skills producing pieces of written work with a real-life purpose which allow them to be motivated and proud of their achievements. The journey approach puts an emphasis on the full writing process from drafting to editing and finally publishing using oral and written feedback to support them.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

A tremendous amount of learning goes on through children's talk and they are given many opportunities to develop their skills for speaking and actively listening.

Children are involved in imaginative play, talking about their work, sharing ideas, following instructions and asking questions. Skills are then developed through drama, role play, discussion and presentation of work. They are encouraged to listen to other children and adults alike, take turns in conversation and ask questions throughout all areas of the curriculum.

WHAT WE USE

Read, Write, Inc. Phonics

The Read, Write, Inc. Phonics programme has been skilfully adapted by our teachers to provide a clear and consistent approach to the teaching of phonics in Key Stage 1. Read, Write, Inc. is a method of learning centred on pure letter sounds and phonics, designed to create fluent readers, confident speakers and willing writers.

Accelerated Reader

Once children are confident in their reading, they are moved onto the computer-based Accelerated Reader scheme that monitors and manages independent reading while promoting reading for pleasure. This demands a degree of independence where the child chooses a book from the library at the correct level, reads it at home and at school and then takes a quiz on the books to check understanding before moving onto the next book. If children are scoring consistently well in their quizzes they will be moved on to the next level. To further ensure children are assigned to the correct reading level and making good progress children regularly complete online Star Reader tests allowing this to be checked and adjusted as necessary.

Handwriting

Quality presentation and pride in work is very important at the academy. Good handwriting makes a huge impact on this. We follow a cursive handwriting scheme throughout the academy. Children are introduced to letter joins during Key Stage 1 and practise regularly to develop a joined, cursive style. Children are awarded a pen license by the Principal and are allowed to write in pen once a consistent joined, cursive style is achieved.

Grammar

At the beginning of every English session there is a section for the explicit teaching of grammar skills. This is supported by the Nelson Thornes Scheme and supports children in developing their understanding of the grammar rules associated with becoming successful and powerful writers.

Spellings

Each week children are introduced to spellings following a specific spelling rule. In Key Stage 1 these words are linked to the Read, Write, Inc. phonics learning that they have covered during the week. These spelling words are communicated as homework through the Home Learning Journals and are tested in school the following week.

Writing Targets

At the beginning of each new writing journey children assess the skills that they can do confidently and the areas they need to improve on. These are recorded in their books at the start of the unit. The areas to develop become their targets of skills that they will develop and apply to their final piece of written work.

Homework

In addition to spelling and reading homework an English focussed activity is also set by class teachers through the Home Learning Journals which can be completed to consolidate learning and practise skills that children have been learning during their learning journey.