

English

Curriculum Principles

By the end of Y6, a student of English at Dixons Manningham Academy will:

Students will become confident and proficient speakers and listeners who possess a wide and flexible vocabulary. The ability to communicate clearly, articulate ideas and comprehend others is fundamental to life chances and underpins success in both reading and writing. Spoken language is woven throughout the curriculum so students learn to rehearse, refine and extend their thinking aloud before committing ideas to paper.

Students will read fluently and appreciate a broad range of high-quality literature and non-fiction. They will encounter poetry, plays, novels and short stories alongside letters, speeches, diaries, essays and articles. Through this breadth, students develop the knowledge and stamina needed to navigate complex texts, deepen comprehension and build a rich understanding of the world.

Students will also learn how to craft writing with clarity and intent. Through the PRISM model, they are taught to consider Purpose, Reader, Impact, Structure and Mechanics so every choice they make is deliberate. They learn how voice, language, structure and grammar work together to shape meaning and influence the reader. Whether writing narratives, explanations or arguments, students know how to select features that suit the conventions of the form and the needs of the audience.

Reading is our main focus, in order to access education students need to be highly competent readers as such our curriculum is based on the following:

Reading sits at the heart of our curriculum. To access a full education, students must become highly competent readers so every phase of our provision is deliberately designed to build strong language, secure fluency and confident comprehension.

Reception students begin their journey to fluency through daily Language for Learning sessions, following the NIFDI curriculum. This systematic oral-language foundation ensures that daily Reading Mastery sessions have maximum impact.

KS1 students continue to strengthen spoken language whilst taking part in daily Reading Mastery sessions, also following the NIFDI programme. This consistent structure builds accuracy, automaticity and deep decoding knowledge.

Daily 1:1 reading takes place from the end of Reception to the end of Year 2 for every student. In Years 3–6, all students working below age-related expectations read daily with an adult and all other students are heard at least twice a week.

KS2 students access daily whole-class reading built around demanding, high-quality texts. Lessons centre on explicit modelling of expert reading behaviours, close attention to vocabulary and syntax and purposeful discussion that holds every student accountable for thinking. Carefully chosen non-fiction texts are woven throughout to strengthen background knowledge, broaden perspectives and help students make sense of an ever-changing world.

Targeted intervention is embedded in KS2. Students who cannot yet decode accurately receive daily, precision-taught support that secures the foundational knowledge they need to fully access whole-class reading.

Across the school, Self-Determination Theory shapes the culture of reading. Students are offered meaningful choice, clear pathways to mastery and reading communities that build confidence and belonging. These conditions

ensure that students not only learn to read but also develop the motivation, curiosity and independence needed to thrive as lifelong readers.

Securing proficiency in writing:

Writing is a demanding, highly complex skill. Because writing places significant strain on working memory, our curriculum is deliberately sequenced to manage that load so students can build secure knowledge over time.

From Reception, students are taught handwriting and spelling so these transcription skills become automatic. When transcription is fluent, students can focus their working memory on the real work of composition. Spoken language is central to this process: students rehearse ideas orally while their transcription develops, and oral composition continues to strengthen writing even once they are fluent writers.

Sentence instruction sits at the core of our approach. All writing is built from sentences, so students are taught how grammar and syntax work together to create clarity and meaning. Grammar is never taught in isolation, as this does not support writing fluency. Instead, students apply sentence structures purposefully within real writing so they learn to control tone, emphasis and precision.

Quality is prioritised over length. Students must master the foundations of handwriting, spelling and sentence construction before they are expected to write at length. The Reception year is especially important, establishing the early knowledge that underpins success throughout primary.

Teachers identify early those students who need additional support. From Reception onwards, teaching is adapted to ensure every student can access learning, with increased time, practice and targeted guidance where needed.

Our curriculum concentrates first on securing high-quality transcription and confident sentence control, then gradually expands into broader composition. Within each scheme of work, knowledge is taught, revisited and secured through interleaved Do Now tasks, retrieval practice and repeated application of core skills.

Writing is taught in longer, deeper blocks that focus on fewer things in greater depth. Through the PRISM model (Purpose, Reader, Impact, Structure, Mechanics), students learn to shape writing intentionally. This approach moves them away from memorising disconnected text types and instead helps them understand what makes writing effective.

In narrative writing, students learn to craft stories with clear genre features: developed characters, coherent settings, controlled plot structure, purposeful dialogue and precise descriptive detail. They learn how to build atmosphere, manage pacing and make deliberate stylistic choices to shape the reader's experience.

In non-fiction, students learn to write with accuracy, authority and clarity. They study the conventions of each form, exploring organisation, tone, vocabulary, cohesion and the effective use of evidence. They practise applying these features in ways that suit the intended audience and purpose.

Grammar and vocabulary are always taught in context so students see how specific choices shape meaning. This strengthens metacognitive control and helps them make deliberate decisions at both sentence and whole-text level.

Student targets focus on personalised small-step improvements within the PRISM strands. Whether refining structure, strengthening composition, improving clarity or securing mechanical accuracy, each student knows exactly what to practise to move their writing forward

The English curriculum will address social disadvantage by addressing gaps in students' knowledge and skills:

The English curriculum will address social disadvantage by deliberately closing gaps in students' knowledge and skills. By exposing all students to a broad range of high-quality texts across different contexts, cultures, and viewpoints, we build the cultural capital they need to access complex ideas, themes, and moral standpoints with the same confidence as their more advantaged peers.



The PRISM model strengthens this approach in three key ways:

Purpose & Reader — clarity of intent builds powerful communication.

Students learn why a piece of writing exists and who it is for. This levels the playing field by making the implicit explicit: students who may not have cultural or linguistic advantages are taught directly how writers shape meaning, influence readers, and construct viewpoints.

Impact — teaching students to make deliberate choices.

Students learn how vocabulary, grammar, imagery, and structure affect the reader. This empowers those who may have less exposure to rich language outside school by giving them the tools to create impact, not just recognise it.

Structure — giving every student the “architecture” of good writing.

Instead of relying on prior cultural experience to understand how texts work, students are taught clear structural blueprints for stories and non-fiction. This supports disadvantaged students who might otherwise struggle to organise ideas into coherent, effective writing.

Mechanics — securing accuracy so meaning is never lost.

Students gain control over spelling, punctuation, and sentence construction, ensuring they can express complex ideas with clarity. This reduces the achievement gap caused by inconsistent exposure to literacy practices at home.

We fully believe English can contribute to the personal development of students at DMN:

By selecting a wide variety of texts that offer contrasting viewpoints on significant moral issues, the English curriculum creates rich opportunities for students’ moral development. Encountering perspectives beyond those of their immediate communities builds empathy, cultural understanding and a stronger sense of social cohesion.

Across every year group, students also engage with a broad range of non-fiction texts, exploring themes such as social media, healthy lifestyles, sustainability and environmental change. This purposeful exposure strengthens their cultural capital and expands their understanding of the wider world they are growing into.

Motivation is central to our approach. Self-Determination Theory shapes the culture of English, ensuring students experience autonomy, belonging and a clear pathway to mastery. We create a reading community where students feel invested and confident, supported by creative experiences that make reading matter. Competitions, poetry slams and spelling bees add energy to the curriculum, giving students authentic opportunities to celebrate language, share ideas and see themselves as readers and writers.

Regular home reading is also essential. At least twenty minutes of reading each evening is a vital part of students’ success, helping them consolidate fluency, broaden vocabulary and strengthen the background knowledge that underpins deep comprehension across the curriculum.

Homework reinforces this work by helping students revisit and strengthen key learning from class. Short, interleaved practice tasks give students regular opportunities to recall and apply explicitly taught knowledge so it is securely retained and ready for use in future learning.



English

Curriculum overview

		Cycle 1		Cycle 2		Cycle 3	
Reception	Reading	Recognise familiar words and signs Hear and say Initial letter sounds in words Familiar texts		Segment the sounds in simple words and blend them together Begin to read words and simple sentences Name and sound letters of the alphabet Familiar texts		Read and understand simple sentences, including HFWs Identify rhyming words Re-tell familiar stories Achieved PM Benchmark 3,4 or 5 Familiar texts	
	Writing	Hold pencil between finger and thumb Write letters in name Give meaning to marks		Write name, labels and captions Use clearly identifiable letters to communicate meaning		Write phonetically plausible sentences which can be read by themselves and others Attempts to use capital letters and full stops	
Year 1	Reading	Following Reading Mastery: NIFDI Familiar texts		Following Reading Mastery: NIFDI Familiar texts		Following Reading Mastery: NIFDI Familiar texts	
	Writing	Aut 1	Aut 2	Spr 1	Spr 2	Sum 1	Sum 2
		Fiction: Narrative - Toys	Fiction: Narraive - Lost and Found	Fiction: Narrative - Fairytale	Fiction: Narrative - Selfish Crocodile	Ficiton: Traditional Tale - Little Red Riding Hood	Ficiton: Adventure - The Queen's Hat
		Non-Fiction: Recount -	Non-Fiction: Seasons	Non-Fiction: Letter - Thank you	Non-Ficiton: Non-Chronological Report - Animals	Non-Ficiton: Instructions - How to grow a Unicorn	Non-Ficiton: Report - The Monarch
	GPS	Separation of words with spaces Components of a sentence Introduction to capital letters and full stops to demarcate sentences Developing sentences using 'and' Sequencing sentences to form short narratives Capital letters for names and for the personal pronoun I		Consolidation, combination and extension of learning from previous cycle Introduction to question marks and exclamation marks to demarcate sentences Suffixes that can be added to verbs where no change is needed in the spelling of root words (e.g. helping, helped, helper) How the prefix un– changes the meaning of verbs and adjectives (negation, e.g. unkind, or undoing, e.g. untie the boat)		Consolidation, combination and extension of learning from previous cycles Regular plural noun suffixes –s or –es (e.g. dog, dogs; wish, wishes), including the effects of these suffixes on the meaning of the noun	
Year 2	Reading	Following Reading Mastery: NIFDI Familiar texts		Following Reading Mastery: NIFDI Familiar texts		Following Reading Mastery: NIFDI Familiar texts	
	Writing	Aut 1	Aut 2	Spr 1	Spr 2	Sum 1	Sum 2
		Fiction: Narrative - Story	Fiction: Diary Entry - The Great Fire Of London (Destruction)	Fiction: Narrative - Journeys	Fiction: Narrative - The Rainbow Fish	Fiction: Narrative - Description	Fiction: Narrative - I Do Like to be beside the sea
		Non-Fiction: Instruction - The Tiger Who Came For Tea	Non-fiction: Non-Chronological Report - The	Non-Fiction: Report: How Children Get To School	Non-Fiction: Letter - Apology	Non-Fiction: Biography - About My Friend	Non-Fiction: Recount - Seaside



Great Fire Of
London

GPS

Use of capital letters, full stops, question marks and exclamation marks to demarcate sentences

Questions, statements and exclamations

Present and past tense

Subordination (using when, if, that, because) and co-ordination (using or, and, but)

Use of the suffixes -er, -est in adjectives

Consolidation, combination and extension of learning from previous cycle

Apostrophes to mark where letters are missing in spelling and to mark singular possession in nouns

Use of the suffix -ly to turn adjectives into adverbs

Expanded noun phrases for description and specification (e.g. the blue butterfly, plain flour, the man in the moon)

Formation of adjectives using suffixes such as -ful, -less

Consolidation, combination and extension of learning from previous cycles

Commas to separate items in a list

YEAR 3

Reading	Aut 1	Aut 2	Spr 1	Spr 2	Sum 1	Sum 2
	Fiction: A Bear Called Paddington	Fiction: The Owl Who Was Afraid Of The Dark	Fiction: Charlie And The Chocolate Factory	Fiction: Waggit's Tale	Fiction: The Wind And The Willows	Fiction: Stig of the Dump
	Non-fiction: Supercharged Plants	Non-fiction: Great Fire Of London	Non-Fiction: Bones	Non-Fiction: Isaac Newton	Non-fiction: The Mighty Ocean	Non-Fiction: The Fossil Hunter
	Class Read: Varmints	Class Read: The Firework Makers Daughter	Class Read: George's Marvelous Medicine	Class Read: Nim's Island	Class Read: The River Spirit	Class read: The First Drawing
	Poetry: What is pink? What is Green?	Poetry: My Shadow	Poetry: Skeleton Pete	Poetry: The Adventures of Isobel	Poetry: Grandma and the Sea	Poetry: If All The World Were Paper
Writing	Aut 1	Aut 2	Spr 1	Spr 2	Sum 1	Sum 2
	Writing Progression	Fiction: Narrative - A Night In The Life Of...	Fiction: Fable - The Hare and the Tortoise	Fiction: Narrative - The Adventure of...	Fiction: Narrative - My Memory	Fiction: Narrative - The First Drawing
	Fiction: Narrative - The Animal Orchestra	Non-Fiction: Instructions - How to Spot a...	Non-Fiction: Non-Chronological Report - The Skeletal System	Non-Fiction: Biography - Famous Scientists	Non-Fiction: Report - River	Non-Fiction: Explanation - What's Under Your Feet?



Year 4	GPS	Simple past tense Introduction to paragraphs as a way to group related material Expressing time, place and cause using adverbs (e.g. then, next, soon, therefore) or prepositions (e.g. before, after, during, in, because of) Use of the forms a or an (e.g. a rock, an open box) Formation of nouns using a range of prefixes, such as super-, anti-, auto- Headings and sub-headings to aid presentation		Introduction to inverted commas to punctuate direct speech Expressing time, place and cause using conjunctions (e.g. when, before, after, while, so, because) Subordinate clauses Consolidation, combination and extension of learning from previous cycle		Consolidation, combination and extension of learning from previous cycle Use of the present perfect form of verbs instead of the simple past (e.g. He has gone out to play contrasted with He went out to play)	
	Reading	Aut 1	Aut 2	Spr 1	Spr 2	Sum 1	Sum 2
		Fiction: The Queen Of Darkness	Fiction: The Wild Robot	Fiction: Ra: The Mighty Cat Detective	Fiction: The Wolves Of Willoughby Chase	Fiction: The Eye Of The Serpent	Fiction: The Magic Thief
		Non-Fiction: The Raucous Romans	Non-Fiction: The amazing life of...	Non-Fiction: You'll Never Guess What I found?	Non-Fiction: Amazing Animal Journeys	Non-Fiction: You Don't Have To Be Loud To Be Heard.	Non-Fiction: Monstrous Mills
		Class Read: The Queen Of Darkness	Class Read: Race to the Frozen North	Class Read: The Time Travelling Cat and the Egyptian Goddess	Class Read: Wonder	Class Read: Max And The Millions	Class Read: Oliver Twist (Abridged)
		Poetry: Invictus	Poetry: The Water In The Glass You Are Holding Today	Poetry: A Tiger Tale	Poetry: Mr. Nobody	Poetry: The Sound Collector	Poetry: Regeneration
	Writing	Aut 1	Aut 2	Spr 1	Spr 2	Sum 1	Sum 2
		Fiction: Narrative - Journey	Fiction: Narrative - A Paper Plane	Fiction: Narrative - Myths	Fiction: Narrative - Action	Fiction: Narrative - Mystery	Fiction: Narrative - The legend of...
		Non-Fiction: Biography - Boudica	Non-Fiction: Let Me Show You Round	Non-Fiction: Recount - Ancient Egypt	Non-Fiction: Report on Lewis Latimer	Non-Fiction: Diary - Secrets of a King	Non-Fiction: Letter to Persuade - Saltaire
	GPS	Use of paragraphs to organise ideas around a theme Noun phrases expanded by the addition of modifying adjectives, nouns and preposition phrases Noun phrases expanded by the addition preposition phrases Fronted adverbials Determiners Appropriate choice of pronoun Use of inverted commas and other punctuation to indicate direct speech Standard English forms for verb inflections instead of local spoken forms		Consolidation, combination and extension of learning from previous cycle Commas after fronted adverbials Apostrophes to mark singular and plural possession Appropriate choice of pronoun or noun within and across sentences to aid cohesion and avoid repetition		Consolidation, combination and extension of learning from previous cycles	



Year 5	Reading	Aut 1	Aut 2	Spr 1	Spr 2	Sum 1	Sum 2
		Fiction: A Wrinkle In Time	Fiction: Beowulf	Fiction: Aladdin and the Magic Lamp	Fiction: His Dark Materials	Fiction: The Animals Of Farthing Wood	Fiction: The Explorer
		Non-Fiction: Johannes Kelper	Non-Fiction: WWI - How Did It Start?	Non-Fiction: Eliyas Explains: What Was Prophet Muhammad	Non-Fiction: Can We Really Help Bees	Non-Fiction: Growing and Changing	Non-Fiction: Earth Shattering Events
		Class Read: The Infinite Lives Of Maisie Day	Class Read: Beowulf	Class Read: A Long Walk To Water	Class Read: Street Child	Class Read: Tyger	Class Read: Wildsmith
		Poetry: Night Walker	Poetry: The Christmas Truce	Poetry: The British	Poetry: I Wandered Lonely As A Cloud	Poetry: Death of a Naturalist	Poetry: Eruption of Life
	Writing	Aut 1	Aut 2	Spr 1	Spr 2	Sum 1	Sum 2
		Fiction: Narrative - Adventure	Fiction: Narrative - Mystery	Fiction: Narrative - Fantasy	Fiction: Horror - The Creation of a Monster	Fiction: Narrative - Story	Fiction: Narrative - Adventure
		Non-Fiction: Non-chronological Report - Planets	Non-Fiction: Time Line - The Saxons	Non-Fiction: Biography - How Ancient Civilisations shaped the world	Non-Fiction: Explanation - How it Came to be	Non-Fiction: Manuel - Create a School Meadow	Non-Fiction: Instruction - How to survive a Natural Disaster
	GPS	Relative clauses beginning with who, which, where, when, whose, that, or an omitted relative pronoun Indicating degrees of possibility using adverbs (e.g. perhaps, surely) or modal verbs (e.g. might, should, will, must)		Consolidation, combination and extension of learning from previous cycle Brackets, dashes or commas to indicate parenthesis Linking ideas across paragraphs using adverbials of time, place and number Converting nouns or adjectives into verbs using suffixes Verb prefixes		Consolidation, combination and extension of learning from previous cycles Devices to build cohesion within a paragraph Use of commas to clarify meaning or avoid ambiguity	
Year 6	Reading	Aut 1	Aut 2	Spr 1	Spr 2	Sum 1	Sum 2
		Fiction: Dracula	Fiction: The Highwayman	Fiction: The Twelve Labours of Hercules	Fiction: Skellig	Fiction: Pig Heart Boy	Fiction: I Am David
		Non-Fiction: Tesla	Non-Fiction: The Witch Trails (Pendle Hill)	Non-Fiction: Greek Gods	Non-fiction: The Peppered Moth	Non-Fiction: The Importance of Heart Health	Non-Fiction: The Secrets of The Empire
		Class Read: The Many Worlds of Albie Bright	Class Read: A Christmas Carol	Class Read: Who Let The Gods Out	Class Read: Skellig	Class Read: Clockwork	Class Read: Boy 87
		Poetry: The Tell Tale Heart	Poetry: Matilda Who Told Lies	Poetry: The Listeners	Poetry: What do we do with Variation	Poetry: Before You Know What Kindness Really Is	Poetry: The Journey
	Writing	Aut 1	Aut 2	Spr 1	Spr 2	Sum 1	Sum 2
		Fiction: Narrative - Horror/Mystery	Fiction: Narrative - Adventure	Fiction: Narrative - Portal Story	Fiction: Narrative - discovery	Fiction: Consolidation	Fiction: Narrative - The Arrival



	Non-Fiction: Biography	Non-Fiction: Instruction - How to catch a witch	Non-Fiction: Report - Ancient Greece	Non-Fiction: Non- chronological report - The origin of species	Non-Fiction: Academic Essay	Non-Fiction: Academic Essay
GPS	Punctuation of bullet points to list information Use of the passive to affect the presentation of information in a sentence Use of the colon to introduce a list and use of semi-colons within lists Use of the semi-colon, colon and dash to mark the boundary between independent clauses How words are related by meaning as synonyms and antonyms		Linking ideas across paragraphs using a wider range of cohesive devices: repetition of a word or phrase, grammatical connections, and ellipsis How hyphens can be used to avoid ambiguity Layout devices, such as headings, sub-headings, columns, bullets, or tables, to structure text		The difference between vocabulary typical of informal speech and vocabulary appropriate for formal speech and writing The difference between structures typical of informal speech and structures appropriate for formal speech and writing	

