

# English



The National Curriculum for England [www.nc.uk.net](http://www.nc.uk.net)

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# About English in the National Curriculum

## The structure of the National Curriculum

The programmes of study<sup>1</sup> set out what pupils should be taught, and the attainment targets set out the expected standards of pupils' performance. It is for schools to choose how they organise their school curriculum to include the programmes of study for English.

### The programmes of study

The programmes of study set out what pupils should be taught in English at key stages 1, 2, 3 and 4 and provide the basis for planning schemes of work. When planning, schools should also consider the general teaching requirements for inclusion, use of language and use of information and communication technology that apply across the programmes of study.

At each key stage, the requirements cover speaking and listening, reading and writing. Some aspects of each are distinctive, but since language development depends on their interrelatedness, teaching needs to build on the links between them. In particular, there are strong connections between the standard English, language variation and language structure paragraphs in the different sections of the programme of study. Taken together, these provide a coherent basis for language study.

The **Knowledge, skills and understanding** have been developed alongside the relevant parts of the range outlined in **Breadth of study**. Strong links have been made, so that planning can be based on both the range of texts and activities to be provided and the skills and understanding to be developed.

Teaching should ensure that work in speaking and listening, reading and writing is integrated.

The National Literacy Strategy *Framework for teaching* offers detailed guidance on planning and implementing the programmes of study for reading and writing for pupils aged five to 11. The detailed objectives in the *Framework* cover the relevant programmes of study in English. Some aspects of speaking and listening can also be integrated into this teaching. Guidance on planning and progression in speaking and listening can be found in *Teaching speaking and listening at key stages 1 and 2* (QCA, 1999).

Schools may find the DfEE/QCA exemplar scheme of work for key stage 3 helpful to show how the programme of study and attainment targets can be translated into practical, manageable teaching plans.

<sup>1</sup> The Education Act 1996, section 353b, defines a programme of study as the 'matters, skills and processes' that should be taught to pupils of different abilities and maturities during the key stage.

# The programmes of study for English





I am going to the fair  
will I leave my tummy  
there  
floating in the air  
on the roller coaster  
with my flying hair

### The importance of English

English is a vital way of communicating in school, in public life and internationally. Literature in English is rich and influential, reflecting the experience of people from many countries and times.

In studying English pupils develop skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing.

It enables them to express themselves creatively and imaginatively and to communicate with others effectively.

Pupils learn to become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama as well as non-fiction and media texts.

The study of English helps pupils understand how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Using this knowledge pupils can choose and adapt what they say and write in different situations.



## Programme of study: English

## Key stage 1

**In English, during key stage 1** pupils learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They begin to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.

**Speaking and listening: during key stage 1** pupils learn to speak clearly, thinking about the needs of their listeners. They work in small groups and as a class, joining in discussions and making relevant points. They also learn how to listen carefully to what other people are saying, so that they can remember the main points. They learn to use language in imaginative ways and express their ideas and feelings when working in role and in drama activities.

**Building on the early learning goals**

Pupils' prior experience of speaking and listening includes:

- using language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences
- attentive listening and response
- interacting with others in play and to get things done.

Teaching should ensure that work in **speaking and listening, reading and writing** is integrated.

## En1 Speaking and listening

## Knowledge, skills and understanding

**Speaking**

- 1 To speak clearly, fluently and confidently to different people, pupils should be taught to:
  - a speak with clear diction and appropriate intonation
  - b choose words with precision
  - c organise what they say
  - d focus on the main point(s)
  - e include relevant detail
  - f take into account the needs of their listeners.

**Listening**

- 2 To listen, understand and respond to others, pupils should be taught to:
  - a sustain concentration
  - b remember specific points that interest them
  - c make relevant comments
  - d listen to others' reactions
  - e ask questions to clarify their understanding
  - f identify and respond to sound patterns in language [for example, alliteration, rhyme, word play].

**Group discussion and interaction**

- 3 To join in as members of a group, pupils should be taught to:
  - a take turns in speaking
  - b relate their contributions to what has gone on before
  - c take different views into account
  - d extend their ideas in the light of discussion
  - e give reasons for opinions and actions.

**Drama**

- 4 To participate in a range of drama activities, pupils should be taught to:
  - a use language and actions to explore and convey situations, characters and emotions
  - b create and sustain roles individually and when working with others
  - c comment constructively on drama they have watched or in which they have taken part.

**Standard English**

- 5 Pupils should be introduced to some of the main features of spoken standard English and be taught to use them.

**Language variation**

- 6 Pupils should be taught about how speech varies:
- in different circumstances [for example, to reflect on how their speech changes in more formal situations]
  - to take account of different listeners [for example, adapting what they say when speaking to people they do not know].

**Breadth of study**

- 7 During the key stage, pupils should be taught the **Knowledge, skills and understanding** through the following range of activities, contexts and purposes.

**Speaking**

- 8 The range should include:
- telling stories, real and imagined
  - reading aloud and reciting
  - describing events and experiences
  - speaking to different people, including friends, the class, teachers and other adults.

**Listening**

- 9 The range should include opportunities for pupils to listen to:
- each other
  - adults giving detailed explanations and presentations [for example, describing how a model works, reading aloud]
  - recordings [for example, radio, television].

**Group discussion and interaction**

- 10 The range of purposes should include:
- making plans and investigating
  - sharing ideas and experiences
  - commenting and reporting.

**Drama activities**

- 11 The range should include:
- working in role
  - presenting drama and stories to others [for example, telling a story through tableaux or using a narrator]
  - responding to performances.

**Note on standard English**

The paragraphs on **standard English**, **language variation**, **language structure** and **language structure and variation in speaking and listening**, **reading** and **writing** provide a coherent basis for language study.

**Note for 5**

When teaching **standard English** it is helpful to bear in mind the most common non-standard usages in England:

- subject–verb agreements (they was)
- formation of past tense (have fell, I done)
- formation of negatives (ain't).

**Reading: during key stage 1** pupils' interest and pleasure in reading is developed as they learn to read confidently and independently. They focus on words and sentences and how they fit into whole texts. They work out the meaning of straightforward texts and say why they like them or do not like them.

The programme of study for English and the National Literacy Strategy *Framework for teaching* are closely related. The *Framework* provides a detailed basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programmes of study for **reading** and **writing**.

#### Building on the early learning goals

Pupils' prior experience of literacy includes:

- knowledge of initial and final sounds and short vowel sounds in words
- stories, poems and other texts
- recognition of some familiar words.

#### Note for 2a

Organisational features in CD-ROMs and web pages include icons, hotlinks and menus.

## En2 Reading

### Knowledge, skills and understanding

#### Reading strategies

- 1 To read with fluency, accuracy, understanding and enjoyment, pupils should be taught to use a range of strategies to make sense of what they read. They should be taught to:

##### Phonemic awareness and phonic knowledge

- a hear, identify, segment and blend phonemes in words
- b sound and name the letters of the alphabet
- c link sound and letter patterns, exploring rhyme, alliteration and other sound patterns
- d identify syllables in words
- e recognise that the same sounds may have different spellings and that the same spellings may relate to different sounds

##### Word recognition and graphic knowledge

- f read on sight high-frequency words and other familiar words
- g recognise words with common spelling patterns
- h recognise specific parts of words, including prefixes, suffixes, inflectional endings, plurals

##### Grammatical awareness

- i understand how word order affects meaning
- j decipher new words, and confirm or check meaning
- k work out the sense of a sentence by rereading or reading ahead

##### Contextual understanding

- l focus on meaning derived from the text as a whole
- m use their knowledge of book conventions, structure, sequence and presentational devices
- n draw on their background knowledge and understanding of the content.

#### Reading for information

- 2 Pupils should be taught to:
- a use the organisational features of non-fiction texts, including captions, illustrations, contents, index and chapters, to find information
  - b understand that texts about the same topic may contain different information or present similar information in different ways
  - c use reference materials for different purposes.

### Literature

- 3 To develop their understanding of fiction, poetry and drama, pupils should be taught to:
- identify and describe characters, events and settings in fiction
  - use their knowledge of sequence and story language when they are retelling stories and predicting events
  - express preferences, giving reasons
  - learn, recite and act out stories and poems
  - identify patterns of rhythm, rhyme and sounds in poems and their effects
  - respond imaginatively in different ways to what they read [for example, using the characters from a story in drama, writing poems based on ones they read, showing their understanding through art or music].

### Language structure and variation

- 4 To read texts with greater accuracy and understanding, pupils should be taught about the characteristics of different types of text [for example, beginnings and endings in stories, use of captions].

### Breadth of study

- 5 During the key stage, pupils should be taught the **Knowledge, skills and understanding** through the following ranges of literature and non-fiction and non-literary texts.

#### Literature

- 6 The range should include:
- stories and poems with familiar settings and those based on imaginary or fantasy worlds
  - stories, plays and poems by significant children's authors
  - retellings of traditional folk and fairy stories
  - stories and poems from a range of cultures
  - stories, plays and poems with patterned and predictable language
  - stories and poems that are challenging in terms of length or vocabulary
  - texts where the use of language benefits from being read aloud and reread.

#### Non-fiction and non-literary texts

- 7 The range should include:
- print and ICT-based information texts, including those with continuous text and relevant illustrations
  - dictionaries, encyclopedias and other reference materials.

**Writing: during key stage 1** pupils start to enjoy writing and see the value of it. They learn to communicate meaning in narrative and non-fiction texts and spell and punctuate correctly.

The programme of study for English and the National Literacy Strategy *Framework for teaching* are closely related. The *Framework* provides a detailed basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programmes of study for **reading** and **writing**.

#### Building on the early learning goals

Pupils' prior experience of literacy includes:

- differentiating between print and pictures
- the connections between speech and writing
- the symbolic nature of writing, the sounds and names of letters and how to write them.

#### 2c → ICT opportunity

Pupils could compare print-outs from two different drafts of their own writing to check revisions and improvements.

## En3 Writing

### Knowledge, skills and understanding

#### Composition

- 1 Pupils should be taught to:
  - a use adventurous and wide-ranging vocabulary
  - b sequence events and recount them in appropriate detail
  - c put their ideas into sentences
  - d use a clear structure to organise their writing
  - e vary their writing to suit the purpose and reader
  - f use the texts they read as models for their own writing.

#### Planning and drafting

- 2 Working with the teacher and with others, in order to develop their writing, pupils should be taught to:
  - a write familiar words and attempt unfamiliar ones
  - b assemble and develop ideas on paper and on screen
  - c plan and review their writing, discussing the quality of what is written
  - d write extended texts, with support [for example, using the teacher as writer].

#### Punctuation

- 3 Pupils should be taught:
  - a how punctuation helps a reader understand what is written
  - b the connections between punctuation and sentence structure, intonation and emphasis
  - c to use capital letters, full stops, question marks and to begin to use commas.

#### Spelling

- 4 Pupils should be taught to:

##### Spelling strategies

- a write each letter of the alphabet
- b use their knowledge of sound–symbol relationships and phonological patterns [for example, consonant clusters and vowel phonemes]
- c recognise and use simple spelling patterns
- d write common letter strings
- e spell common words
- f spell words with common prefixes and inflectional endings

##### Checking spelling

- g check the accuracy of their spelling, using word banks and dictionaries
- h use their knowledge of word families and other words
- i identify reasons for misspellings.

### Handwriting and presentation

5 In order to develop a legible style, pupils should be taught:

#### Handwriting

- a how to hold a pencil/pen
- b to write from left to right and top to bottom of a page
- c to start and finish letters correctly
- d to form letters of regular size and shape
- e to put regular spaces between letters and words
- f how to form lower- and upper-case letters
- g how to join letters

#### Presentation

- h the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate their meaning effectively.

### Standard English

6 Pupils should be taught some of the grammatical features of written standard English.

### Language structure

7 In composing their own texts, pupils should be taught to consider:

- a how word choice and order are crucial to meaning
- b the nature and use of nouns, verbs and pronouns
- c how ideas may be linked in sentences and how sequences of sentences fit together.

### Breadth of study

8 During the key stage, pupils should be taught the **Knowledge, skills and understanding** through addressing the following ranges of purposes, readers and forms of writing.

9 The range of purposes for writing should include:

- a to communicate to others
- b to create imaginary worlds
- c to explore experience
- d to organise and explain information.

10 Pupils should be taught the value of writing for remembering and developing ideas.

11 The range of readers for writing should include teachers, other adults, children and the writers themselves.

12 The range of forms of writing should include narratives, poems, notes, lists, captions, records, messages, instructions.

## Programme of study: English

## Key stage 2

**In English, during key stage 2** pupils learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how language works.

**Speaking and listening: during key stage 2** pupils learn how to speak in a range of contexts, adapting what they say and how they say it to the purpose and the audience. Taking varied roles in groups gives them opportunities to contribute to situations with different demands. They also learn to respond appropriately to others, thinking about what has been said and the language used.

Teaching should ensure that work in **speaking and listening, reading and writing** is integrated.

## En1 Speaking and listening

## Knowledge, skills and understanding

**Speaking**

- 1 To speak with confidence in a range of contexts, adapting their speech for a range of purposes and audiences, pupils should be taught to:
  - a use vocabulary and syntax that enables them to communicate more complex meanings
  - b gain and maintain the interest and response of different audiences [for example, by exaggeration, humour, varying pace and using persuasive language to achieve particular effects]
  - c choose material that is relevant to the topic and to the listeners
  - d show clear shape and organisation with an introduction and an ending
  - e speak audibly and clearly, using spoken standard English in formal contexts
  - f evaluate their speech and reflect on how it varies.

**Listening**

- 2 To listen, understand and respond appropriately to others, pupils should be taught to:
  - a identify the gist of an account or key points in a discussion and evaluate what they hear
  - b ask relevant questions to clarify, extend and follow up ideas
  - c recall and re-present important features of an argument, talk, reading, radio or television programme, film
  - d identify features of language used for a specific purpose [for example, to persuade, instruct or entertain]
  - e respond to others appropriately, taking into account what they say.

**Group discussion and interaction**

- 3 To talk effectively as members of a group, pupils should be taught to:
  - a make contributions relevant to the topic and take turns in discussion
  - b vary contributions to suit the activity and purpose, including exploratory and tentative comments where ideas are being collected together, and reasoned, evaluative comments as discussion moves to conclusions or actions
  - c qualify or justify what they think after listening to others' questions or accounts
  - d deal politely with opposing points of view and enable discussion to move on
  - e take up and sustain different roles, adapting them to suit the situation, including chair, scribe and spokesperson

- f use different ways to help the group move forward, including summarising the main points, reviewing what has been said, clarifying, drawing others in, reaching agreement, considering alternatives and anticipating consequences.

### Drama

- 4 To participate in a wide range of drama activities and to evaluate their own and others' contributions, pupils should be taught to:
- create, adapt and sustain different roles, individually and in groups
  - use character, action and narrative to convey story, themes, emotions, ideas in plays they devise and script
  - use dramatic techniques to explore characters and issues [for example, hot seating, flashback]
  - evaluate how they and others have contributed to the overall effectiveness of performances.

### Standard English

- 5 Pupils should be taught the grammatical constructions that are characteristic of spoken standard English and to apply this knowledge appropriately in a range of contexts.

### Language variation

- 6 Pupils should be taught about how language varies:
- according to context and purpose [for example, choice of vocabulary in more formal situations]
  - between standard and dialect forms [for example, in drama, the effect of using standard or dialect forms]
  - between spoken and written forms [for example, the differences between transcribed speech, direct speech and reported speech].

### Breadth of study

- 7 During the key stage, pupils should be taught the **Knowledge, skills and understanding** through the following range of activities, contexts and purposes.

#### Speaking

- 8 The range should include:
- reading aloud
  - presenting to different audiences
  - extended speaking for different purposes.

#### Listening

- 9 The range should include opportunities for pupils to listen to:
- live talks/readings/presentations
  - recordings [for example, radio, television, film]
  - others in groups.

#### Note on standard English

The paragraphs on **standard English**, **language variation**, **language structure** and **language structure and variation in speaking and listening**, **reading and writing** provide a coherent basis for language study.

#### Note for 5

When teaching **standard English** it is helpful to bear in mind the most common non-standard usages in England:

- subject–verb agreement (they was)
- formation of past tense (have fell, I done)
- formation of negatives (ain't)
- formation of adverbs (come quick)
- use of demonstrative pronouns (them books).

**Group discussion and interaction**

- 10 The range of purposes should include:
- a investigating, selecting, sorting
  - b planning, predicting, exploring
  - c explaining, reporting, evaluating.

**Drama activities**

- 11 The range should include:
- a improvisation and working in role
  - b scripting and performing in plays
  - c responding to performances.

## En2 Reading

### Knowledge, skills and understanding

#### Reading strategies

- 1 To read with fluency, accuracy and understanding, pupils should be taught to use:
  - a phonemic awareness and phonic knowledge
  - b word recognition and graphic knowledge
  - c knowledge of grammatical structures
  - d contextual understanding.

#### Understanding texts

- 2 Pupils should be taught to:
  - a use inference and deduction
  - b look for meaning beyond the literal
  - c make connections between different parts of a text [for example, how stories begin and end, what has been included and omitted in information writing]
  - d use their knowledge of other texts they have read.

#### Reading for information

- 3 Pupils should be taught to:
  - a scan texts to find information
  - b skim for gist and overall impression
  - c obtain specific information through detailed reading
  - d draw on different features of texts, including print, sound and image, to obtain meaning
  - e use organisational features and systems to find texts and information
  - f distinguish between fact and opinion [for example, by looking at the purpose of the text, the reliability of information]
  - g consider an argument critically.

#### Literature

- 4 To develop understanding and appreciation of literary texts, pupils should be taught to:
  - a recognise the choice, use and effect of figurative language, vocabulary and patterns of language
  - b identify different ways of constructing sentences and their effects
  - c identify how character and setting are created, and how plot, narrative structure and themes are developed
  - d recognise the differences between author, narrator and character
  - e evaluate ideas and themes that broaden perspectives and extend thinking
  - f consider poetic forms and their effects

**Reading: during key stage 2** pupils read enthusiastically a range of materials and use their knowledge of words, sentences and texts to understand and respond to the meaning. They increase their ability to read challenging and lengthy texts independently. They reflect on the meaning of texts, analysing and discussing them with others.

The programme of study for English and the National Literacy Strategy *Framework for teaching* are closely related. The *Framework* provides a detailed basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programmes of study for **reading and writing**.

#### Note for 3a–3e

Retrieving information on screen includes knowing how to:

- use the search and find facilities to skim and scan effectively
- use key words
- summarise information rather than print off large sections of text.

**8 → ICT opportunity**

Pupils could use moving image texts (for example, television, film, multimedia) to support their study of literary texts and to study how words, images and sounds are combined to convey meaning and emotion.

- g express preferences and support their views by reference to texts
- h respond imaginatively, drawing on the whole text and other reading
- i read stories, poems and plays aloud.

**Non-fiction and non-literary texts**

- 5 To develop understanding and appreciation of non-fiction and non-literary texts, pupils should be taught to:
- a identify the use and effect of specialist vocabulary
  - b identify words associated with reason, persuasion, argument, explanation, instruction and description
  - c recognise phrases and sentences that convey a formal, impersonal tone
  - d identify links between ideas and sentences in non-chronological writing
  - e understand the structural and organisational features of different types of text [for example, paragraphing, subheadings, links in hypertext]
  - f evaluate different formats, layouts and presentational devices [for example, tables, bullet points, icons]
  - g engage with challenging and demanding subject matter.

**Language structure and variation**

- 6 To read texts with greater accuracy and understanding, pupils should be taught to identify and comment on features of English at word, sentence and text level, using appropriate terminology [for example, how adjectives and adverbs contribute to overall effect, the use of varying sentence length and structure, connections between chapters or sections].

**Breadth of study**

- 7 During the key stage, pupils should be taught the **Knowledge, skills and understanding** through the following ranges of literature and non-fiction and non-literary texts.

**Literature**

- 8 The range should include:
- a a range of modern fiction by significant children's authors
  - b long-established children's fiction
  - c a range of good-quality modern poetry
  - d classic poetry
  - e texts drawn from a variety of cultures and traditions
  - f myths, legends and traditional stories
  - g playscripts.

**Non-fiction and non-literary texts**

- 9 The range should include:
- a diaries, autobiographies, biographies, letters
  - b print and ICT-based reference and information materials [for example, textbooks, reports, encyclopedias, handbooks, dictionaries, thesauruses, glossaries, CD-ROMs, internet]
  - c newspapers, magazines, articles, leaflets, brochures, advertisements.

**Writing:** during key stage 2 pupils develop understanding that writing is both essential to thinking and learning, and enjoyable in its own right. They learn the main rules and conventions of written English and start to explore how the English language can be used to express meaning in different ways. They use the planning, drafting and editing process to improve their work and to sustain their fiction and non-fiction writing.

The programme of study for English and the National Literacy Strategy *Framework for teaching* are closely related. The *Framework* provides a detailed basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programmes of study for reading and writing.

#### 1 → ICT opportunity

Pupils could compose on screen and on paper.

#### Note for 2a, 2d

On screen this includes using the planning and proofing tools in a word processor (for example, thesaurus, grammar checker).

## En3 Writing

### Knowledge, skills and understanding

#### Composition

- 1 Pupils should be taught to:
  - a choose form and content to suit a particular purpose [for example, notes to read or organise thinking, plans for action, poetry for pleasure]
  - b broaden their vocabulary and use it in inventive ways
  - c use language and style that are appropriate to the reader
  - d use and adapt the features of a form of writing, drawing on their reading
  - e use features of layout, presentation and organisation effectively.

#### Planning and drafting

- 2 To develop their writing on paper and on screen, pupils should be taught to:
  - a plan – note and develop initial ideas
  - b draft – develop ideas from the plan into structured written text
  - c revise – change and improve the draft
  - d proofread – check the draft for spelling and punctuation errors, omissions and repetitions
  - e present – prepare a neat, correct and clear final copy
  - f discuss and evaluate their own and others' writing.

#### Punctuation

- 3 Pupils should be taught to use punctuation marks correctly in their writing, including full stops, question and exclamation marks, commas, inverted commas, and apostrophes to mark possession and omission.

#### Spelling

- 4 Pupils should be taught:

##### Spelling strategies

- a to sound out phonemes
- b to analyse words into syllables and other known words
- c to apply knowledge of spelling conventions
- d to use knowledge of common letter strings, visual patterns and analogies
- e to check their spelling using word banks, dictionaries and spellcheckers
- f to revise and build on their knowledge of words and spelling patterns

##### Morphology

- g the meaning, use and spelling of common prefixes and suffixes
- h the spelling of words with inflectional endings
- i the relevance of word families, roots and origins of words
- j the use of appropriate terminology, including vowel, consonant, homophone and syllable.

### Handwriting and presentation

- 5 Pupils should be taught to:
- write legibly in both joined and printed styles with increasing fluency and speed
  - use different forms of handwriting for different purposes [for example, print for labelling maps or diagrams, a clear, neat hand for finished presented work, a faster script for notes].

### Standard English

- 6 Pupils should be taught:
- how written standard English varies in degrees of formality [for example, differences between a letter to a friend about a school trip and a report for display]
  - some of the differences between standard and non-standard English usage, including subject–verb agreements and use of prepositions.

### Language structure

- 7 Pupils should be taught:
- word classes and the grammatical functions of words, including nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, articles
  - the features of different types of sentence, including statements, questions and commands, and how to use them [for example, imperatives in commands]
  - the grammar of complex sentences, including clauses, phrases and connectives
  - the purposes and organisational features of paragraphs, and how ideas can be linked.

### Breadth of study

- 8 During the key stage, pupils should be taught the **Knowledge, skills and understanding** through addressing the following range of purposes, readers and forms of writing.
- 9 The range of purposes for writing should include:
- to imagine and explore feelings and ideas, focusing on creative uses of language and how to interest the reader
  - to inform and explain, focusing on the subject matter and how to convey it in sufficient detail for the reader
  - to persuade, focusing on how arguments and evidence are built up and language used to convince the reader
  - to review and comment on what has been read, seen or heard, focusing on both the topic and the writer's view of it.
- 10 Pupils should also be taught to use writing to help their thinking, investigating, organising and learning.

#### Note for 9

The selection of a form for writing is closely related to the writer's purpose and the intended reader.

**Note for 11**

Readers could include those contacted through post, fax or e-mail.

**Note for 12**

Each of the forms within this range includes different text types with specific organisational and grammatical conventions.

- 11 The range of readers for writing should include teachers, the class, other children, adults, the wider community and imagined readers.
- 12 The range of forms of writing should include narratives, poems, playscripts, reports, explanations, opinions, instructions, reviews, commentaries.

# The attainment targets for English



# About the attainment targets

An attainment target sets out the ‘knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils of different abilities and maturities are expected to have by the end of each key stage’<sup>1</sup>. Except in the case of citizenship<sup>2</sup>, attainment targets consist of eight level descriptions of increasing difficulty, plus a description for exceptional performance above level 8. Each level description describes the types and range of performance that pupils working at that level should characteristically demonstrate.

The level descriptions provide the basis for making judgements about pupils’ performance at the end of key stages 1, 2 and 3. At key stage 4, national qualifications are the main means of assessing attainment in English.

Range of levels within which the great majority of pupils are expected to work		Expected attainment for the majority of pupils at the end of the key stage	
Key stage 1	<b>1–3</b>	at age 7	<b>2</b>
Key stage 2	<b>2–5</b>	at age 11	<b>4</b>
Key stage 3	<b>3–7</b>	at age 14	<b>5/6<sup>3</sup></b>

## Assessing attainment at the end of a key stage

In deciding on a pupil’s level of attainment at the end of a key stage, teachers should judge which description best fits the pupil’s performance. When doing so, each description should be considered alongside descriptions for adjacent levels.

Arrangements for statutory assessment at the end of each key stage are set out in detail in QCA’s annual booklets about assessment and reporting arrangements.

<sup>1</sup> As defined by the Education Act 1996, section 353a.

<sup>2</sup> In citizenship, expected performance for the majority of pupils at the end of key stages 3 and 4 is set out in end of key stage descriptions.

<sup>3</sup> Including modern foreign languages.

## Attainment target 1: speaking and listening

### Level 1

Pupils talk about matters of immediate interest. They listen to others and usually respond appropriately. They convey simple meanings to a range of listeners, speaking audibly, and begin to extend their ideas or accounts by providing some detail.

### Level 2

Pupils begin to show confidence in talking and listening, particularly where the topics interest them. On occasions, they show awareness of the needs of the listener by including relevant detail. In developing and explaining their ideas they speak clearly and use a growing vocabulary. They usually listen carefully and respond with increasing appropriateness to what others say. They are beginning to be aware that in some situations a more formal vocabulary and tone of voice are used.

### Level 3

Pupils talk and listen confidently in different contexts, exploring and communicating ideas. In discussion, they show understanding of the main points. Through relevant comments and questions, they show they have listened carefully. They begin to adapt what they say to the needs of the listener, varying the use of vocabulary and the level of detail. They are beginning to be aware of standard English and when it is used.

### Level 4

Pupils talk and listen with confidence in an increasing range of contexts. Their talk is adapted to the purpose: developing ideas thoughtfully, describing events and conveying their opinions clearly. In discussion, they listen carefully, making contributions and asking questions that are responsive to others' ideas and views. They use appropriately some of the features of standard English vocabulary and grammar.

**Level 5**

Pupils talk and listen confidently in a wide range of contexts, including some that are of a formal nature. Their talk engages the interest of the listener as they begin to vary their expression and vocabulary. In discussion, they pay close attention to what others say, ask questions to develop ideas and make contributions that take account of others' views. They begin to use standard English in formal situations.

**Level 6**

Pupils adapt their talk to the demands of different contexts with increasing confidence. Their talk engages the interest of the listener through the variety of its vocabulary and expression. Pupils take an active part in discussion, showing understanding of ideas and sensitivity to others. They are usually fluent in their use of standard English in formal situations.

**Level 7**

Pupils are confident in matching their talk to the demands of different contexts. They use vocabulary precisely and organise their talk to communicate clearly. In discussion, pupils make significant contributions, evaluating others' ideas and varying how and when they participate. They show confident use of standard English in situations that require it.

**Level 8**

Pupils maintain and develop their talk purposefully in a range of contexts. They structure what they say clearly, using apt vocabulary and appropriate intonation and emphasis. They make a range of contributions which show that they have listened perceptively and are sensitive to the development of discussion. They show confident use of standard English in a range of situations, adapting as necessary.

**Exceptional performance**

Pupils select and use structures, styles and registers appropriately in a range of contexts, varying their vocabulary and expression confidently for a range of purposes. They initiate and sustain discussion through the sensitive use of a variety of contributions. They take a leading role in discussion and listen with concentration and understanding to varied and complex speech. They show assured and fluent use of standard English in a range of situations and for a variety of purposes.

## Attainment target 2: reading

### Level 1

Pupils recognise familiar words in simple texts. They use their knowledge of letters and sound–symbol relationships in order to read words and to establish meaning when reading aloud. In these activities they sometimes require support. They express their response to poems, stories and non-fiction by identifying aspects they like.

### Level 2

Pupils' reading of simple texts shows understanding and is generally accurate. They express opinions about major events or ideas in stories, poems and non-fiction. They use more than one strategy, such as phonic, graphic, syntactic and contextual, in reading unfamiliar words and establishing meaning.

### Level 3

Pupils read a range of texts fluently and accurately. They read independently, using strategies appropriately to establish meaning. In responding to fiction and non-fiction they show understanding of the main points and express preferences. They use their knowledge of the alphabet to locate books and find information.

### Level 4

In responding to a range of texts, pupils show understanding of significant ideas, themes, events and characters, beginning to use inference and deduction. They refer to the text when explaining their views. They locate and use ideas and information.

**Level 5**

Pupils show understanding of a range of texts, selecting essential points and using inference and deduction where appropriate. In their responses, they identify key features, themes and characters and select sentences, phrases and relevant information to support their views. They retrieve and collate information from a range of sources.

**Level 6**

In reading and discussing a range of texts, pupils identify different layers of meaning and comment on their significance and effect. They give personal responses to literary texts, referring to aspects of language, structure and themes in justifying their views. They summarise a range of information from different sources.

**Level 7**

Pupils show understanding of the ways in which meaning and information are conveyed in a range of texts. They articulate personal and critical responses to poems, plays and novels, showing awareness of their thematic, structural and linguistic features. They select and synthesise a range of information from a variety of sources.

**Level 8**

Pupils' response is shown in their appreciation of, and comment on, a range of texts, and they evaluate how authors achieve their effects through the use of linguistic, structural and presentational devices. They select and analyse information and ideas, and comment on how these are conveyed in different texts.

**Exceptional performance**

Pupils confidently sustain their responses to a demanding range of texts, developing their ideas and referring in detail to aspects of language, structure and presentation. They make apt and careful comparison between texts, including consideration of audience, purpose and form. They identify and analyse argument, opinion and alternative interpretations, making cross-references where appropriate.

## Attainment target 3: writing

### Level 1

Pupils' writing communicates meaning through simple words and phrases. In their reading or their writing, pupils begin to show awareness of how full stops are used. Letters are usually clearly shaped and correctly orientated.

### Level 2

Pupils' writing communicates meaning in both narrative and non-narrative forms, using appropriate and interesting vocabulary, and showing some awareness of the reader. Ideas are developed in a sequence of sentences, sometimes demarcated by capital letters and full stops. Simple, monosyllabic words are usually spelt correctly, and where there are inaccuracies the alternative is phonetically plausible. In handwriting, letters are accurately formed and consistent in size.

### Level 3

Pupils' writing is often organised, imaginative and clear. The main features of different forms of writing are used appropriately, beginning to be adapted to different readers. Sequences of sentences extend ideas logically and words are chosen for variety and interest. The basic grammatical structure of sentences is usually correct. Spelling is usually accurate, including that of common, polysyllabic words. Punctuation to mark sentences – full stops, capital letters and question marks – is used accurately. Handwriting is joined and legible.

### Level 4

Pupils' writing in a range of forms is lively and thoughtful. Ideas are often sustained and developed in interesting ways and organised appropriately for the purpose of the reader. Vocabulary choices are often adventurous and words are used for effect. Pupils are beginning to use grammatically complex sentences, extending meaning. Spelling, including that of polysyllabic words that conform to regular patterns, is generally accurate. Full stops, capital letters and question marks are used correctly, and pupils are beginning to use punctuation within the sentence. Handwriting style is fluent, joined and legible.

**Level 5**

Pupils' writing is varied and interesting, conveying meaning clearly in a range of forms for different readers, using a more formal style where appropriate. Vocabulary choices are imaginative and words are used precisely. Simple and complex sentences are organised into paragraphs. Words with complex regular patterns are usually spelt correctly. A range of punctuation, including commas, apostrophes and inverted commas, is usually used accurately. Handwriting is joined, clear and fluent and, where appropriate, is adapted to a range of tasks.

**Level 6**

Pupils' writing often engages and sustains the reader's interest, showing some adaptation of style and register to different forms, including using an impersonal style where appropriate. Pupils use a range of sentence structures and varied vocabulary to create effects. Spelling is generally accurate, including that of irregular words. Handwriting is neat and legible. A range of punctuation is usually used correctly to clarify meaning, and ideas are organised into paragraphs.

**Level 7**

Pupils' writing is confident and shows appropriate choices of style in a range of forms. In narrative writing, characters and settings are developed and, in non-fiction, ideas are organised and coherent. Grammatical features and vocabulary are accurately and effectively used. Spelling is correct, including that of complex irregular words. Work is legible and attractively presented. Paragraphing and correct punctuation are used to make the sequence of events or ideas coherent and clear to the reader.

**Level 8**

Pupils' writing shows the selection of specific features or expressions to convey particular effects and to interest the reader. Narrative writing shows control of characters, events and settings, and shows variety in structure. Non-fiction writing is coherent and gives clear points of view. The use of vocabulary and grammar enables fine distinctions to be made or emphasis achieved. Writing shows a clear grasp of the use of punctuation and paragraphing.

**Exceptional performance**

Pupils' writing has shape and impact and shows control of a range of styles maintaining the interest of the reader throughout. Narratives use structure as well as vocabulary for a range of imaginative effects, and non-fiction is coherent, reasoned and persuasive. A variety of grammatical constructions and punctuation is used accurately and appropriately and with sensitivity. Paragraphs are well constructed and linked in order to clarify the organisation of the writing as a whole.