

Upton Junior School



English Curriculum

2026 – 2027

One Childhood- One Chance

Happy, Safe, Successful

Writing and SPaG at Upton

Writing Curriculum Intent

At Upton, we aim to develop confident, creative and purposeful writers who can communicate effectively for a range of audiences and purposes.

Through a rich and engaging writing curriculum, pupils will develop a secure use of language, grammar, punctuation and spelling, enabling them to express their ideas clearly and accurately. We strive to inspire a love of writing by exposing children to high-quality texts, meaningful experiences and diverse opportunities for writing.

Pupils will learn to plan, draft, improve and edit their writing, developing resilience and independence as writers. As they progress through the school, children will build the knowledge, vocabulary and skills needed to write with increasing fluency, imagination and technical accuracy across a range of genres.

Our curriculum aims to ensure that every child leaves Upton as a capable, reflective and ambitious writer, equipped with the skills necessary for success in their future education and life beyond school.

Curriculum Design and Planning Writing Sequences

Our writing curriculum is carefully designed around a gradual release of responsibility model, enabling pupils to move from supported practice to increasing independence as writers.

Learning sequences are planned with clear end points in mind, ensuring that each lesson contributes purposefully towards the intended writing outcome. Success criteria are explicitly linked to the learning intention and provide pupils with a clear understanding of what successful writing looks like. These are referenced throughout the learning sequence to support the children's writing.

Writing units are driven by the progressive development of writing skills. Learning intentions are skills-based and derived from the year group's Viking Assessment Grids. Sequences of lessons are carefully structured to build, practise and apply these skills in meaningful contexts. Viking Assessment Grids are at the heart of planning, and the writing task should be based on what is needed to most effectively build these skills.

Collaboration is central to curriculum design. Year groups work together to create a shared SMART planning sequence that reflects curriculum expectations and intended learning outcomes. Teachers then adapt this planning to meet the specific needs, interests and prior attainment of their pupils, ensuring that all learners can access and succeed within the writing curriculum.

Implementation: Effective Teaching and Learning in Writing

In writing at Upton, high-quality teaching is characterised by effective modelling and a clear focus on the progressive development of writing skills.

Teachers use an 'I do, We do, You do' approach and model the writing process through clear demonstrations and think-aloud strategies, making the decisions and choices of successful writers visible to pupils. Key writing skills are consistently referenced throughout lessons, enabling children to understand how these contribute to effective writing.

Planning is always purposefully planned for, visible and available to pupils throughout the writing process. Planning is modelled on working walls so that the children can refer to it throughout the writing sequence.

Pupils are supported to generate, organise and develop ideas through a range of approaches, including collaborative working walls, partner discussions, shared planning and independent recording.

Learning sequences are carefully structured to provide opportunities for pupils to practise and apply the writing skills, from the Viking Assessment Grids, required for successful independent writing.

Oracy is central to our writing curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to discuss ideas, orally rehearse sentences and articulate their thinking before writing, helping them to develop confidence, fluency and precision in their written work.

Scaffolding is carefully tailored to support pupils whilst promoting independence. Teachers utilise a range of strategies, including word banks, sentence stems, writing frameworks and responsive adult support. Flexible focus groups allow pupils to access targeted support when needed, encouraging them to develop confidence and independence as writers.

Writing journals are used regularly to foster experimentation, creativity and the development of individual writer's voice.

Drafting, revising and redrafting are integral components of the writing process. Pupils are explicitly taught how to evaluate, edit and improve their writing, ensuring that reflection and refinement become embedded habits rather than isolated activities.

Assessment is used purposefully to inform teaching and learning. At key assessment points throughout the year, pupils complete an independent 'Big Write', demonstrating their ability to apply taught skills without support. These pieces are assessed against the relevant Viking Assessment Grid objectives to identify strengths, address gaps and inform future planning.

To celebrate achievement and provide an authentic purpose for writing, pupils complete a published piece each term. These high-quality outcomes showcase pupils' progress as writers and foster a sense of pride, ownership and accomplishment in their work.

Implementation: Effective Teaching and Learning in SPaG

At Upton, Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG) is taught discretely every day to ensure pupils develop a secure understanding of the conventions of written English and can apply these skills confidently across the curriculum.

Pupils engage in three spelling sessions and two punctuation and grammar sessions each week, providing regular opportunities to build, recap and embed key knowledge.

New concepts are introduced through engaging, practical and interactive lessons, with oracy at the heart of learning. Pupils are encouraged to discuss, explain and articulate their understanding, enabling them to develop a deeper grasp of spelling, punctuation and grammatical concepts.

Subsequent lessons recap and build upon prior learning, providing opportunities for pupils to practise, apply and deepen their understanding through a range of contexts, activities and question types.

SPaG learning is closely connected to the wider writing curriculum. Although lessons are taught as discrete units, teachers make explicit links between SPaG knowledge and its application within writing. Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation skills are regularly referenced during the modelling process.

Our SPaG curriculum is designed as a spiral curriculum, where emphasis is placed on the retrieval and embedding of key skills. Through regular retrieval practice and purposeful application, pupils develop fluency, secure long-term retention and the ability to transfer their knowledge independently into their writing.

This approach ensures that spelling, punctuation and grammar become embedded aspects of pupils' everyday communication rather than isolated skills.

Assessment in Writing

At Upton, assessment is an integral part of the writing curriculum and is used to support progress, inform teaching and planning and ensure that all pupils achieve their potential as writers.

Assessment for Learning strategies are embedded throughout lessons, enabling teachers to identify strengths, address misconceptions and respond to pupils' needs. This responsive approach ensures that learning is adapted appropriately and that pupils receive the support and challenge necessary to make progress.

Assessment is used during the planning process to ensure that teaching is closely aligned to pupils' next steps. Viking Assessment Grids are used to support teachers in identifying the knowledge, skills and writing behaviours that pupils have secured and those that require further development. These assessments provide a clear picture of attainment and progression across the writing curriculum.

Formal assessment of writing is completed using the Viking Assessment Grids, providing a consistent approach to evaluating pupils' achievement against year group expectations. The outcomes of these assessments are used to identify gaps in learning, celebrate strengths and inform future curriculum planning. This ensures that subsequent teaching is targeted, purposeful and responsive, enabling pupils to build on prior learning and make sustained progress as writers.

Through a combination of ongoing formative assessment and structured summative assessment, teachers develop a comprehensive understanding of each pupil's development as a writer, ensuring that assessment drives improvement and supports high-quality outcomes for all learners.

Reading at Upton 2026-2027

Reading Curriculum Intent

At Upton, we aim to develop confident, fluent and enthusiastic readers who can access, understand and engage with the world around them. Through a rich and ambitious reading curriculum, pupils develop the vocabulary, knowledge and comprehension skills needed to read with confidence, think critically and respond thoughtfully to a wide range of texts.

We foster a lifelong love of reading by exposing children to a broad range of high-quality fiction, non-fiction and poetry from diverse authors and perspectives. Through our Text-Based Curriculum, carefully chosen core texts provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to develop their reading, speaking and writing skills while exploring ideas, emotions and experiences beyond their own.

Pupils are taught to read with increasing fluency, expression and understanding, developing the ability to retrieve information, make inferences, explain vocabulary, summarise ideas and discuss the choices made by authors. Through rich discussion, oral rehearsal and purposeful reading experiences, children develop confidence in articulating their thoughts and deepening their understanding of texts.

Shared, guided and independent reading, home reading, reading across the curriculum and hearing quality texts read aloud daily all contribute to developing reflective and independent readers. All classrooms have designated reading corners where children can access a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts, including contemporary and classic texts that broaden horizons and build cultural capital.

Where required, pupils receive targeted support through a systematic synthetic phonics approach to secure the foundations of reading.

Reading is the golden thread of our curriculum. We are committed to ensuring every child leaves Upton as a capable, motivated and confident reader, equipped with the skills and knowledge needed for future learning and life beyond school.

Curriculum Design and Planning Reading

Our reading curriculum is carefully designed around the progressive development of reading knowledge and skills. These include fluency, vocabulary development, retrieval, inference, summarising, comparison, understanding authorial choices and responding thoughtfully to a range of texts. Reading sequences are planned with clear learning intentions linked directly to these progressive skills.

Texts are chosen that provide meaningful opportunities to develop pupils' understanding, broaden vocabulary and deepen comprehension. The focus of each lesson is driven by the specific reading skill pupils need to develop, ensuring pupils are taught the knowledge and strategies required to become successful readers.

Year groups collaborate to create shared reading sequences that reflect curriculum expectations, progression and intended outcomes. Teachers then adapt planning to meet the specific needs, interests and prior attainment of their pupils, using ongoing assessment to identify next steps.

Implementation: Effective Teaching and Learning in Reading

At Upton, teachers deliver daily reading lessons that provide explicit teaching of reading skills and strategies. Teachers model effective reading behaviours, demonstrate how skilled readers approach texts and provide opportunities for pupils to practise and apply these skills with increasing independence.

Lessons are carefully structured to develop pupils' ability to retrieve information, make inferences, predict, question, clarify, summarise and use evidence from texts to support their responses. Through guided practice and purposeful questioning, teachers support pupils to deepen their understanding and respond thoughtfully.

High-quality classroom dialogue is central to reading lessons. Teachers encourage pupils to articulate their ideas, build on the thinking of others and use subject-specific vocabulary when discussing texts. Vocabulary is explicitly taught, revisited and applied so pupils develop a rich understanding of language.

Fluency is developed through regular opportunities for pupils to hear fluent reading modelled, read aloud and reread meaningful texts with appropriate feedback. Teachers use ongoing assessment for learning and questioning to identify misconceptions, adapt teaching and support pupils' next steps.

Reading for pleasure is central to our approach. Teachers model a love of reading through regular read-aloud sessions, sharing inspiring texts and introducing pupils to a wide range of authors, genres and experiences. Across the year, pupils engage in reading initiatives such as World Book Day and National Poetry Day, alongside opportunities to work with reading ambassadors and reading buddies.

Independent reading is supported through the Accelerated Reader programme. Children complete a Star Reading Test at the beginning of each term to provide a ZPD range, helping guide appropriate book choices. Following completion of a text, pupils complete a Reading Practice Quiz to check understanding and reflect on their reading.

Phonics

Where assessment identifies a need, pupils receive targeted phonics support through the Read Write Inc. programme to secure the foundations of reading.

This includes developing phonemic awareness, applying knowledge of graphemes, digraphs and trigraphs, and building confidence in segmenting and blending to read accurately. Pupils are supported to apply their phonics knowledge when reading and writing, developing accuracy, fluency and confidence.

English Text Overview 2026-2027

Our Reading Spine

Reading is placed at the heart of Upton's curriculum with an emphasis placed on children exploring and being immersed in a range of different text types and authors. Learning is brought alive using a range of different teaching strategies which will inspire the children to become life-long readers. Our aim is to develop every child's reading skill to equip them with the knowledge, vocabulary and skills to succeed in school and beyond, and to promote reading for pleasure and enjoyment. Reading is the key to unlocking every child's potential.

	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Term 1	A selection of picture books including The Green Ship and stories by Anthony Browne	Leon and the Place Between Marcy and the Riddle of the Sphinx	Kensuke's Kingdom	Floodland
Term 2	Stone Age Boy	Poetry I survived the eruption of Mount St Helens	Street Child Lady of Shallot	Skellig
Term 3	Twisted tales	Edward Tulane	The Odyssey of Phoebe Quilliam	Viking Boy

Term 4	Iron Man	The Firework Maker's Daughter	Poetry – Ithaka	Letters From the Lighthouse
Term 5	The Secret Lake	When the Mountains Roared		Rose Blanche and a selection of stand alone writing pieces
Term 6	Charlotte's Web	The Last Bear	(The Last Bear 26-27) Anglo Saxon Boy	Wonder

Handwriting

Handwriting is taught through teacher modelling during bespoke handwriting sessions twice a week. In all year groups, extra handwriting sessions are implemented when needed and at the teacher discretion. Handwriting is modelled in all classrooms and a model of excellence is seen on display in all rooms and around the school. Handwriting follows the Ruth Miskin Read Write Inc Phonics approach and developed throughout the school.

Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined. Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of handwriting, e.g. by ensuring that down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.	Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined. Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of handwriting, e.g. by ensuring that down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.	Write legibly, fluently, with increasing speed by: • Choosing which shape of letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters. • Choosing the writing implement that is best suited for the task.	Write legibly, fluently, with increasing speed by: • Choosing which shape of letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters. • Choosing the writing implement that is best suited for the task.

Vocabulary and Oracy

At Upton oracy plays a prominent role in teaching and learning. The ability to listen actively, speak clearly and communicate articulately is seen as a fundamental part of the learning process. Critically, oracy underpins the development of reading and writing and

is the key to progress in all subjects. We aim to encourage fluent speakers, who are confident to communicate, debate and present in a wide range of situations. Oracy is embedded throughout our lessons. Lessons are talk-rich, and final outcomes are carefully planned to ensure all children can fully participate. At Upton we believe that oracy is a fundamental skill that underpins academic success, supports social and emotional development, and prepares our pupils for the challenges of the future. We want our children to be effective communicators who can express their ideas confidently and engage meaningfully in discussions and debates.

The teaching of vocabulary, in particular, is essential to the development of both written and oratory skills. Key words are selected from the text studied and pupils are shown how they are used in context, progressing to using them within their own writing. From this increasing vocabulary, figurative language can be crafted to create the all-important image in the mind of a reader.