

NEWSLETTER

Welcome

It's been a quick Spring term, but so much has happened across our English Hub community. We loved seeing so many schools celebrating World Book Day and getting involved in the fun for Red Nose Day—it's always wonderful to see reading, creativity and community spirit shining through in schools.

A big congratulations to our social media giveaway winner, who received a fantastic book bundle for their school. We hope the new books will be enjoyed by lots of young readers!

As we approach the end of term, we look ahead to the Summer term with schools preparing for the busy assessment season. SATs, GCSEs, A Levels and the Phonics Screening Check will all soon be on our minds. With only 8 teaching weeks until the PSC, we are here to support you.

Please see our attached flyer for information about our free Preparing for the PSC session, coming soon.

You'll also find more information about our big summer event, which we're excited to share with you.

We wish you all a wonderful break and look forward to welcoming you back after the holidays. We'll be ready to support you from 13th April, when there will be just 7 teaching weeks to go until the PSC.

Don't forget to follow us on all our social media platforms for the latest updates, resources and future giveaways!



Quick Teaching Tip: Supporting Blending

Blending is one of the most important skills for early readers. Some helpful reminders include:

- Ensure pupils say pure sounds when segmenting and blending so that sounds join together smoothly when reading.
- Provide daily opportunities for oral blending, using quick blending games such as where you segment a word (e.g. get your c-oa-t) and pupils blend it to say the word.
- Timetable an afternoon session to revisit words pupils found tricky during the phonics session later in the day to strengthen recall and confidence.
- Offer short, targeted keep-up sessions for pupils who need extra practice so they can keep pace with the class.

English Hubs Programme Shows Substantial Impact

New research has confirmed that the national English Hubs Programme is having a substantial and lasting impact on early reading in schools. The £100 million initiative, launched in 2018, supports schools to develop high-quality teaching of phonics, early language and reading for pleasure.

A recent Department for Education evaluation found that schools receiving intensive support from an English Hub saw improvements in the proportion of pupils passing the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check, demonstrating the positive impact of expert support, professional development and school-to-school collaboration. ([GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk))

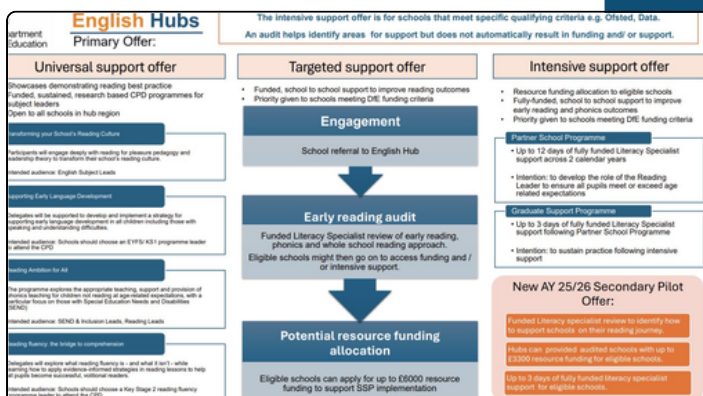
These findings highlight the important role English Hubs continue to play in supporting schools and leaders to strengthen early reading practice and helping more children become confident, fluent readers.

Schools can read the full Department for Education evaluation here:

[English Hubs Programme phonics impact evaluation 2019 to 2025.](#)

If your school would like to get involved with the work of Wensum English Hub or access support for early reading, please

get in touch with the team to find out more.



Exploring Fluency Through Read-Aloud: Our Fonetti Pilot

Following the success of one of our Partner Schools winning the East of England award at the National Read-Aloud Challenge Ceremony, we were delighted this term to launch a Fonetti pilot with our Partner Schools. The aim of the pilot has been to explore how regular read-aloud practice can support the development of reading fluency beyond phonics.

So far, 11 Partner Schools have taken part in the pilot, collectively logging over 230 hours of pure reading time. It has been wonderful to see schools embracing regular opportunities for pupils to read aloud, building confidence, expression, and fluency as they progress from decoding to more fluent reading.

We are incredibly grateful to Fonetti for giving us the opportunity to run this free pilot and for supporting our ongoing work with schools to develop reading fluency. Early feedback has already highlighted the value of consistent, structured read-aloud practice in helping pupils develop pace, prosody, and confidence in their reading.

A huge thank you also goes to all the schools who have taken part and contributed their time and enthusiasm to the project. Keep your eyes peeled – we will be announcing the winner of the pilot very soon!

Library Funding Opportunity for Primary Schools

Wensum English Hub is excited to share a great opportunity for primary schools to develop or improve their library provision. The [Libraries for Primaries – Schools Funding & Support](#) programme, run by the National Literacy Trust and partners, offers fully funded support to schools across the UK to help boost reading for pleasure.

Through this initiative, eligible schools can access:

- Books, furniture and learning resources to create or enhance a library space
- Training and professional development around reading culture and engagement
- Support in developing a reading-for-pleasure programme tailored to your setting ([HES](#))

This is a fantastic chance to invest in children's literacy, wellbeing, and lifelong love of reading. School leaders interested in applying for the 2025-26 academic year can complete the expression of interest form via the [Libraries for Primaries](#) website. ([librariesforprimaries.org.uk](#))

Share with colleagues, headteachers and literacy leads — don't miss out on this chance to bring more books and joy into your school!



Calling all KS2 Pupils

Primary pupils aged 7–11 are invited to enter the Royal Mint Museum's Short Story Competition, inspired by the theme "Gold". Stories can be up to 500 words and entries are free. ([More info](#))

Prizes include:

- A 2026 half-sovereign gold proof coin for the winner
- £5,000 of books/resources for the winner's school or library
- Framed, illustrated version of the winning story

Deadline: 17 April 2026.

This is a great way to spark creativity, build writing confidence, and inspire young readers and writers.

LIBRARIES
for **PRIMARIES**

2026/27 Support and Funding - Now Open!

Exciting news! With the expansion of the Wensum English Hub programme, our waiting list for support is now open.

Schools across EYFS, KS1, KS2 and Secondary can express interest to access expert literacy support.

We're also offering free briefing sessions throughout the summer term — all dates can be found on our website.

Not only that, but schools that have previously accessed funding and support may be eligible for additional funding in 2026/27.

Complete your Expression of Interest today to be among the first to receive information on this opportunity and our free CPD offer for next academic year!

Summer Conference 2026

Blossoming Beginnings, Brighter Futures

Building inclusive foundations in language and literacy

Join Wensum English Hub for our summer Literacy conference: Blossoming Beginning, Brighter Futures! Explore early language development, inclusive classrooms, and strategies for powerful writing and a love of reading.

Hear from our keynote speakers: Dr Sarah Moseley, Lindsay Pickton, and Jon Biddle.

6th July 2026 9am - 4pm Barnham Broom Hotel, Norfolk, NR9

Booking opens 20th April – places are limited. See flyer for more info.

[Register Here](#)

FREE Events and Booking Details

15th April - Secondary Support and Funding Briefing

17th April - EYFS/Primary Support and Funding Briefing

20th April - Summer Conference sign up opens to all schools

21st April - VNET presents Ready to Write (waiting list only)

23rd April @ 3.45pm - Preparing for the Phonic Screening Check 2026 (Online)

27th April - Reading Fluency: Building the Bridge to Comprehension (Full)

29th April - VNET present Transcription Mastery (waiting list only)

8th May - Secondary Support and Funding Briefing

3rd June @ 3.45pm - Jon Biddle Presents: Building a School Culture that Loves to Read (Online)

6th July - Blossoming Beginnings, Brighter Futures: Summer Conference

Partner School Calendar Dates

23rd March –Planning for PSC Success (RWI schools only)

26th March –Partner and Graduate School SSP data to be submitted

24th April - RWI: Focus on : Yellow, Blue and Grey Storybooks

30th April - Little Wandle: Finishing Strong, Managing transition and preparing for PSC

12th June - Graduation form drafts to be submitted

9th July - Mastery Year Briefing (online)



Department
for Education

English Hubs

Wensum English Hub

Preparing for PSC 2026

Get your pupils and team ready for a
successful phonics screening 2026!

Join us for this FREE advisory session, to check that you are fully prepared for the Phonics Screening Check in June 2026. This training session is for phonics reading leaders and Year 1 teachers.

We will focus on

- Hearing best practice in the lead up to the Phonic Screening Check
- Making the most of interventions
- Pre training required prior to administering the check
- How to administer the check and moderations
- On the day routines
- SSP specific guidance
- Practical ideas on how best to prepare your children for the check

23

APRIL 2026

3.45PM-5PM

ONLINE: VIA ZOOM



Contact Us
01603 426438



For more information visit our website:
www.wensumtrust.org.uk/wensumenglishhub



We will also be sharing our top tips leading up to the check and when administering the check to make it go as smoothly as possible.

There will be time for delegates to ask our Hub Lead or Literacy Specialists questions regarding anything phonic screening check related!

Who is it for?

- Phonics leads
- KS1 Leads
- Reading Leads
- Y1 teachers
- Y2 teachers
- ECTs
- Those new to administering the PSC

Scan the QR below to sign up



[or Click here!](#)



Department
for Education

English Hubs

Wensum English Hub

Jon Biddle Presents: Building a School Culture That Loves to Read

Join Jon Biddle for an inspiring
online session on Reading for
Pleasure.

In this session, Jon Biddle explores the importance of Reading for Pleasure and how his school has built a strong reading culture in recent years. He shares practical, sustainable strategies for classrooms and whole schools, reflects on his own reading journey, and invites attendees to consider theirs. Jon also tackles common barriers to nurturing lifelong readers and highlights the powerful impact of graphic novels, sharing favourites and classroom ideas.

3

**JUNE 2026
3.45PM-5PM**

**ONLINE
VIA ZOOM**



**Contact Us
01603 426438**



For more Information visit our website:
www.wensumtrust.org.uk/wensumenglishhub



Jon Biddle is an experienced primary teacher and English lead, and a nationally recognised advocate for Reading for Pleasure. Awarded RfP Experienced Teacher of the Year (2018), he advises Empathy Lab, sits on the UKLA national council, writes for NEU Educate, and shares practical, classroom-ready ideas inspired by his love of children's literature and graphic novels.

SCAN THE QR BELOW TO SIGN UP



[or Click here!](#)

English Hubs

Wensum English Hub

COMING SOON!!



Early Years

- Audits
- Support
- Funding*

*For eligible schools

To be added to the waiting list for more information scan the QR code or [click here!](#)



English Hubs

Wensum English Hub

COMING SOON!!



KS2

- Audits
- Support
- Funding*

*For eligible schools

To be added to the waiting list for more information, scan the QR code or [click here!](#)





Join us for...

BLOSSOMING BEGINNINGS, BRIGHTER FUTURES

Building Inclusive Foundations in
Language and Literacy



Our Keynote Speakers:



DR SARAH MOSELEY

An independent educational consultant, author, and researcher specialising in **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**, literacy, and inclusion.



LINDSAY PICKTON

An experienced Primary English advisor who has supported hundreds of schools, explores the key components of writing—ideas, sentences, spelling and transcription—and explains how understanding these elements helps remove barriers and support children's success in writing



JON BIDDLE

An award-winning primary school teacher, English lead, and leading UK advocate for Reading for Pleasure (RfP), who will discuss strategies for building a whole-school reading culture and effectively engaging parents.

**FREE TO ATTEND - MAXIMUM 2
PLACES PER SCHOOL**

Join Wensum English Hub this summer for an inspiring **FREE** event for schools—whether you've worked with us before or are new to the Hub.

Enjoy engaging keynote speeches on early language, writing and SEND, designed to spark ideas and support literacy in your school.

Meet the Hub team, learn about the support available, and discover our fantastic free CPD opportunities. With a complimentary lunch and time to connect with colleagues, it's a great chance to be inspired and explore how the Hub can support your school!

Free goody bag for all attendees!

**MONDAY 6TH JULY
2026
9AM-4PM**

**BARNHAM BROOM
HOTEL NORFOLK, NR9**

**SCAN OR
CODE TO
BOOK OR
CLICK HERE!**

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