

# Grammar Progression

Suggested skills progression to support the teaching of grammar in Year 1 to Year 6



The teaching of grammar has come a long way in primary schools since the introduction of Grammar for Writing in 2002, which heightened the emphasis on word classes, sentence construction and cohesion. The revised curriculum in 2014 then took this further, considerably increasing expectations in relation to the grammar children should learn and use within the primary phase.

The curriculum itself though, is not an absolute. The objectives are structured into the learning for each year group but this only provides a broad overview; schools need to provide the finer detail necessary to ensure a clear skills progression that supports children to build incrementally on prior learning. For example, noun phrases appear in the curriculum in Year 2, Year 4 and Year 6; how is this learning consolidated and built upon in other year groups? Where should complex sentences be taught? The Grammar Appendix refers to 'subordinate clause' as part of the vocabulary children should learn in Year 3 but there are no corresponding objectives. In fact, if following the curriculum only, children could go from using subordinating conjunctions in Year 2; to learning the term 'subordinate clause' in Year 3; then on to using fronted adverbials in Year 4 and relative clauses in Year 5. This means that in theory, they could reach Year 6 not having been taught how to form and punctuate complex sentences at all!

Developing a clear progression for the teaching of grammar is not only crucial in supporting children's skills effectively, it is also a key Ofsted focus. Inspectors consider *'how leaders have ensured that the subject curriculum contains content that has been identified as most useful, and ensured that this content is taught in a logical progression, systematically and explicitly enough for all pupils to acquire the intended knowledge and skills.'* (Ofsted Handbook, 2019)

This grammar progression was written jointly by Integra and The White Horse Federation in response to requests from schools, to help provide some guidance. It is in line with the curriculum but aims to also fill in some of the gaps to help ensure a more sequenced approach to the skills being taught. It is intended that schools adapt the progression as necessary to suit their context, perhaps using it as a starting point for further discussion and development.

**Claire Ridsdale**

English Adviser & KS2 Moderation Manager  
Integra

**Jess Wells**

English Advisory Teacher  
The White Horse Federation

		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
<b>Word Classes and Phrases</b>	Verbs, adjectives, noun phrases & prepositions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers use adjectives to describe nouns orally and in modelled writing. (Children do not have to use adjectives to be EXS)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce the term noun, verb and adjective</li> <li>Introduce the term noun phrase e.g. <b>a dragon</b></li> <li>Expand before the noun using adjectives e.g. <b>a huge dragon; huge and scary dragon; a huge, scary dragon</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand before the noun using adjectives and adverbs e.g. <b>a really scary dragon</b></li> <li>Refine adjective choices in noun phrases to support meaning and avoid repetition</li> <li>Introduce single word prepositions e.g. <b>under, by, on, with, inside</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand after the noun using prepositional phrases e.g. <b>a really scary dragon in the heart of the cave</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand after the noun using relative clauses e.g. <b>the dragon that breathed fire.</b></li> <li>Use a variety of different noun phrase structures to add detail</li> <li>Introduce modal verbs e.g. <b>can, will, should</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand after the noun using infinitives <b>some humans to eat</b>, and non-finite verbs e.g. <b>the dragon soaring majestically</b></li> <li>Use concise noun phrases to qualify and support precision e.g. <b>There are numerous types of Chinese dragons, although horned dragons are thought to be the mightiest.</b></li> <li>Introduce two-word prepositions e.g. <b>thanks to, because of, due to</b></li> </ul>
	Adverbs and adverbial phrases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers model the use of adverbs orally e.g. <b>He was a very hungry caterpillar.</b> (Children do not have to use adverbs to be EXS)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce the term adverb</li> <li>Use adverbs to express manner e.g. <b>quietly, quickly, sadly</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use adverbs to express time e.g. <b>later, soon;</b> and place e.g. <b>beyond, under</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use fronted adverbials for time, manner and place e.g. <b>before long; on the horizon; without hesitating</b></li> <li>Introduce adverbs for frequency e.g. <b>always, often, never</b> and quantity e.g. <b>most, some, hardly</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use adverbs for possibility e.g. <b>certainly, possibly, surely, definitely</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use conjunctive adverbs e.g. <b>however, therefore, nevertheless, meanwhile</b></li> </ul>
<b>Punctuation</b>	Punctuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use full stops and capital letters to demarcate sentences</li> <li>Use capital letters for proper nouns</li> <li>Introduce question and exclamation marks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accurate sentence demarcation, including question and exclamation marks</li> <li>Use commas for lists</li> <li>Use apostrophes for singular possession and contractions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embed commas for lists and apostrophes for singular possession and contractions</li> <li>Use speech marks to mark direct speech</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use apostrophes for plural possession</li> <li>Correct use of all speech punctuation</li> <li>Use commas after fronted adverbials</li> <li>Introduce commas to mark subordinate clauses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embed commas to mark subordinate clauses</li> <li>Use commas to mark non-defining relative clauses</li> <li>Use commas, brackets, dashes for parenthesis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure the use of commas to mark clauses</li> <li>Use hyphens</li> <li>Use colons and semi-colons to mark the boundary between main clauses</li> </ul>

		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Clauses and Sentences	Main Causes & Sentence Types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write grammatically accurate, simple sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand that a sentence contains a subject and a verb and expresses one idea</li> <li>Use and understand <b>subject/verb</b> and <b>subject/verb/object</b> structure</li> <li>Identify and use orders, statements, questions and exclamations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extend simple sentences with noun and prepositional phrases to add detail.</li> <li>Maintain grammatical accuracy when writing longer simple sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refine the use of simple sentences according to audience and purpose e.g. <b>short sentences to create tension or show surprise</b></li> </ul>		
	Co-ordinating Conjunctions	In each year group, as new conjunctions are taught, ensure that children understand the meaning and function of each word e.g. <b>but/yet = contrast, when/as = time, so/because = consequence, and = addition, or = alternative</b>					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Join ideas using <b>and</b></li> <li>Join main clauses using <b>and</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Join main clauses using <b>but, or, so</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to use <b>but, or, so</b></li> <li>Introduce <b>yet</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use a variety of compound sentences to create variety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce <b>for</b> and <b>nor</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use a range of co-ordinating conjunctions effectively across writing</li> </ul>
	Subordinating Conjunctions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers model the use of <b>because</b> orally (Children do not have to use because to be EXS)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use simple subordinating conjunctions e.g. <b>because, if, when</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extend the range of subordinating conjunctions e.g. <b>as, while, before, after, until (time) and since, as (cause)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consolidate and extend the range of subordinating conjunctions e.g. <b>although, even though, though</b></li> <li>Identify and use a main and subordinate clause</li> <li>Start to write sentences with the subordinate clause at the start/end</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consolidate and extend the range of subordinating conjunctions e.g. <b>unless, whatever, whenever, whereas, even if</b></li> <li>Embed the subordinate clause</li> <li>Develop variety in clause structure, moving the position of the subordinate clause</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consolidate and extend the range of subordinating conjunctions e.g. <b>in order that, provided that, supposing</b></li> <li>Control the use of multi-clause sentences</li> </ul>
	Relative clauses					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use non-defining relative clauses to add information or detail</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use defining relative clauses to qualify</li> <li>Use relative clauses effectively across writing</li> </ul>
Parenthesis					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use words and phrases to add detail or provide explanation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Control and refine the use of parenthesis within sentences</li> </ul>	

		1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Cohesion</b>	<b>General</b>	<p>In all year groups, ensure that basics are taught and that they are a focus for editing and revising:  <b><i>maintaining purpose, audience and form; accurate subject-verb agreement; consistent use of person; standard English; checking for omissions</i></b></p>					
	<b>Tense and verb forms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally accurate use of the simple present and past tense</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accurate and consistent use of the simple present and past tense</li> <li>Use the past <b>e.g. The dragon <i>was flying</i></b> and present progressive <b>e.g. The dragon <i>is flying</i></b> to show actions in progress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce the use of the present perfect <b>e.g. The dragon <i>has eaten</i></b></li> <li>Introduce the use of the past perfect <b>e.g. The dragon <i>had eaten</i></b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consolidate the use of a range of verb forms (simple, progressive, perfect)</li> <li>Introduce non-finite verbs (verbs without a tense) <b>e.g. <i>flying high, to catch</i></b> a dragon</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embed the use of a range of verb forms (simple, progressive, perfect)</li> <li>Control the use of tense, including where different verb forms are used</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Control the use of tense throughout and across writing</li> <li>Use the passive to create empathy, suspense or a formal tone <b>e.g. <i>The house was burnt to the ground; The dragon was caught mid-flight; The creature was last seen</i></b></li> <li>Introduce the subjunctive form <b>e.g. <i>If I were you; were that to be the case</i></b></li> </ul>
	<b>Pronouns</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use personal pronouns e.g. <b><i>I, he, she, they, we</i></b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use personal pronouns e.g. <b><i>I, he, she, they, we, us, you, me, them, it</i></b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use nouns and pronouns to aid cohesion <b><i>within sentences</i></b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use possessive pronouns e.g. <b><i>mine, ours, yours his, hers, theirs</i></b></li> <li>Use nouns and pronouns to aid cohesion <b><i>across the text</i></b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use relative pronouns e.g. <b><i>who, whom, which, whose, that, which</i></b></li> <li>Use a range of nouns and pronouns effectively to avoid repetition or ambiguity and aid cohesion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use reflexive pronouns e.g. <b><i>myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves</i></b></li> <li>Use of a range of nouns and pronouns effectively to avoid repetition and ambiguity and to aid cohesion across the text</li> </ul>
	<b>Paragraphing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write sequences of linked sentences to form short texts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sequence sentences to form a variety of short fiction and non-fiction texts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use paragraphs to group ideas e.g. <b><i>change of setting or character, new topic in non-fiction</i></b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organise content into <b>relevant</b> paragraphs across the text to show a change of focus, time, place or speaker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use a range of devices to link paragraphs <b>across</b> the text <b>e.g. <i>adverbs, adverbial phrases; pronoun chains, connectives</i></b></li> <li>Use a range of cohesive devices <b>within</b> paragraphs e.g. <b><i>connectives; consistent tense and person</i></b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use a range of cohesive devices within and between paragraphs e.g. <b><i>wider range of connectives, referencing, repetition for effect; ellipsis, cohesive nouns</i></b></li> </ul>