



# Curriculum Policy

## English Policy

## 1. Aims

This policy is for the staff in our school. It aims to set out:

- Our approach to teaching, monitoring and assessing English knowledge and skills
- How we will make sure our provision for the teaching of English is of consistently high quality

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements and expectations set out in:

- The National Curriculum programmes of study for English
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice 2014
- The Equality Act 2010

## 3. Our vision for English in our school

Our school aims to develop pupils' skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening. By the time that pupils move on from our school, our aim is for them to:

- Be fluent readers and writers
- Have a love of reading, reading widely for pleasure and information
- Enjoy writing in different contexts and for different purposes and audiences
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting language and style accordingly
- Be curious and creative when it comes to reading and writing, for example by being interested in learning the meaning of new words
- Have a wide vocabulary and understanding of grammar
- Feel confident speaking in class and be able to clearly explain their understanding and ideas
- Listen carefully and sensitively to adults and their peers

## 4. Our guiding principles for the teaching of English

We teach English best when:

- There's a love of reading around the school
- All staff feel they have the knowledge, skills, understanding and professional support they need to teach English effectively
- There's sufficiently detailed and frequent ongoing assessment of pupil progress
- We expose pupils to different types of reading material, such as through stimulating, high-quality and curiosity-inspiring classroom displays, books and other classroom resources
- We involve families in supporting their child's reading and writing
- The English curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced
- We identify where pupils have learning gaps or aren't making the expected progress, and make sure interventions target these
- Teaching resources are available, up to date, varied and diverse, and match pupil and curriculum needs
- We engage pupils in high-quality interactions
- We model new language and accurate grammar to pupils
- We support pupils with speech, language and communication needs through personalised interventions

## 5. Roles and responsibilities

### 5.1 The Co-Headteachers

The Co-Headteachers are responsible for:

- Building a team of expert teachers who know and understand the processes that underpin learning to read and write
- Providing teachers with the appropriate training and resources so that they can competently deliver the English curriculum
- Creating a stimulating school environment where pupils are exposed to different types of reading material, such as through displays, books and other classroom resources

## 5.2 The English lead

Our overall English subject lead is Jenny Mynott who works alongside Frankie Lucas (phonics and reading lead) and Elizabeth Adegbulugbe (writing lead). They're responsible for providing leadership and management for English to secure:

- High-quality teaching and subject knowledge of staff
- A coherently planned and sequenced English curriculum
- Consistent assessment and accurate teacher judgements within English
- Effective use of resources

## 5.3 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- Planning effective English lessons
- Providing opportunities for pupils to apply their English and literacy skills in a variety of ways
- Completing the relevant marking and assessment (see Marking and Feedback policy)
- Making sure that support staff have:
  - Access to planning materials and resources
  - The knowledge and skills they need to support and challenge pupils

## 6. Curriculum

### Reading

- From Nursery to Year 2, pupils receive daily phonics lessons following the Read, Write Inc. programme. This synthetic phonic development program builds on pupils' knowledge to ensure they are able to read with greater fluency and understanding. Pupils will read RWI storybooks and take home RWI book bag books matched to their phonic level to ensure they are fully decodable.
- Pupils continue on the Read, Write Inc. programme until they are fluent with phonics sounds that transfer into their reading. They then become independent readers and can choose books from their classroom, supported by staff, to ensure the books match their reading ability
- In EYFS children engage with stories daily through Talk Through Stories, Helicopter Stories and Poetry Basket.
- From Year 1 to Year 6, the speedy recognition of words and decoding of unfamiliar words, as well as the strategies for understanding a text are explicitly taught in a weekly comprehension lesson. Comprehension skills develop through pupils' experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction texts that have been mapped against each year group.
- The children also make connections between texts and their own experiences.
- We use questioning to ensure pupils reach age-related expectations, and beyond, and that they are well challenged.
- In Key Stage 2, 3 whole class reading sessions take place each week using FRED's teaching.
- There is also one Book Talk session a week to ignite a love of reading and deeper understanding of texts and the final session is on Prosody to teach children how to read with fluency and expression.

## **Reading for pleasure**

- To establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum, each year group has a core set of carefully selected texts that are used as inspiration for writing.
- All pupils are encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live.
- Pupils are regularly encouraged to share their recommendations to the class and wider school community.
- Staff create a sense of awe and wonder through memorable and immersive experiences to launch the start of reading a new text.
- Daily reading aloud creates a classroom community by establishing a known text that can be used as the basis for building on critical thinking skills that are related and unrelated to reading.
- Discussions generated by reading aloud are used to encourage listeners to construct meanings, connect ideas and experiences across texts, use their prior knowledge, and question unfamiliar words from the text.
- Reading aloud gives students an opportunity to hear the teacher model fluency and expression when reading. Reading aloud improves children's information processing skills, vocabulary, and comprehension.
- KS2 children have their own 'reading records' where they can track, review and rate the books they are reading, and record any new and exciting vocabulary which they have learned. These are then used to enrich their writing in the classroom.
- Teachers and supporting staff listen to children read regularly and engage in 'Book Talk' to help them select their next books and encourage exploration of different genres and styles.
- Children are regularly encouraged to share their recommendations to the class and wider school community and all teachers display the book they are currently reading on their classroom door to model 'Teachers as Readers'.
- Reading for pleasure is promoted through visits to our school library; an inspiring and engaging space for children to explore and share books. We also take children to Aylesbury Library to raise awareness of reading and access opportunities outside of school. In school, we welcome visits from well-known authors which inspire the children to write their own stories and we host Book Picnics in the Summer to engage parents in reading with their children. We also celebrate Poetry Day and World Book Day each year, with a range of immersive and fun activities to engage all children with reading.

## **Library**

- Each class has a timetabled opportunity to visit the library to browse the extensive collection of fiction, non-fiction, graphic novels, poetry, plays, newspapers and magazines on offer. Library time slots are for children to browse reading materials, engage in book talk with their peers and teachers, be inspired by the environment and to spend calm time relaxing with a book. Children can fill in a 'Recommended Read' bookmark when they return a book, which will be tucked inside, to persuade others to read the book and to build a community of readers.
- The stock is regularly updated throughout the school year; there is an online document for staff to recommend new stock and a jar in the library for children to add their suggestions to. Children are able to borrow books from the library and the stock is managed by our enthusiastic and dedicated Year 6 Reading Ambassadors. We also have our 'Lunch Lounge' which stocks a range of reading materials for children to relax with during their lunch breaks.

## **Phonics**

- Phonics is taught in Nursery through to Year 2. From Year 3, children who are not yet fluent readers or writers continue with Read, Write Inc. on a personalised programme.
- In Key Stage One Read, Write Inc. phonics is ability-grouped, so all children can benefit from tailored teaching, making maximum progress as a result.
- Nursery children begin to focus on vocabulary through play, sentence-building and questioning. They then move on to 'saying the sound' at the end of the summer term. At Oak Green we focus on reading stories, singing and encouraging lots of role play to develop the children's language skills.
- From Reception the children are assessed in their sounds. We check what sounds the children know and if they are able to read words by sounding out each grapheme and blending it together, for example: c-a-t = cat. When good pencil grip and confident mark making has been established the children then write sounds and words. The children continue to learn how to blend words, read words with speed and write words as they progress through reception.
- In Years 1 and 2 children learn new sounds that may contain 2 or 3 letters; this is called a diagraph 'sh, ch, ee, oy' or a trigraph 'igh, air, ure'. As well as revising and learning new phonic sounds, the children will apply and develop their phonic and reading skills through reading a range of fully decodable fiction/non-fiction phonic books, matched to their phonic progression.
- Children that have not completed the phonics programme in KS2 will be given daily Fast Track Tutoring to help teach any phonic sound gaps and build fluency in order to make accelerated progress with their reading.

## **Writing**

- We use the writing programme 'Ready Steady Write' following the overviews for each year group
- It is taught 4 days per week for one hour from Year 1 to Year 6
- The basic structure is as follows: immerse, analyse, plan, write
- There are 2 writing outcomes in each unit with approximately 13 lessons. Each unit lasts half a term. Each aspect can last between 1 and 5 lessons
- Each session begins with a sentence accuracy task to allow a sentence level focus and a solid teaching of grammar. This is then followed by essential teaching which focuses on a specific text and involves key questions and teacher modelling. Following this, pupils then complete a task which might be independent or guided. The lesson concludes with a plenary which reflects on the learning objective
- All classrooms have an appealing reading area which reflects the current vehicle text and a working wall that is used as part of every lesson.
- Work is recorded in English books following the school's presentation and marking policy.
- Oak Green follows the Read, Write Inc. programme for spelling from Year R to Year 4 and Spelling Shed for Years 5 & 6 with teachers consolidating this within English lessons.
- In Year R-Year 6, cursive handwriting is taught within lessons as well as being timetabled weekly for Year R- Year 4. In KS2 it is practised during early work sessions. The transition from the use of pencil to pen occurs when children in KS2 have shown that they are able to write neatly and with accuracy, across all subject areas. (See separate handwriting policy)
- Writing skills, including spelling and handwriting are modelled by teachers and applied across the whole curriculum
- In EYFS, pupils are taught key writing skills through the 'Get Writing' programme which is part of the phonics programme.

## **6.2 Cross-curricular links**

We facilitate cross-curricular learning of English skills, making sure that the links with other curriculums are natural and not forced. This is achieved through activities in other subjects such as:

- Annotating sources
- Group discussions
- Comprehension
- Topic research in Geography, History and Science

### **6.3 Adaptations and scaffolding**

We will provide suitable adaptations to make sure that every pupil makes maximum progress in English by:

- Recognising where some pupils need specific help with their English skills, e.g. if they are dyslexic
- Providing resources such as phonics mats and writing frames to scaffold pupils' learning
- Identifying pupils who would benefit from more support in an area of their English learning, and running small intervention groups for targeted support each week to aid their progress and attainment. We will monitor these closely to move pupils in and out of these groups as needed
- Making sure pupils who need it are extended through the use of additional, more-demanding and open-ended tasks and planned challenges within each lesson

### **7. Marking and feedback**

Feedback will clearly explain to pupils what they're doing well, and what they need to do next to continue to improve their work related to the learning objective. (See Marking and Feedback policy)

## **8. Monitoring, assessment and moderation**

### **8.1 Monitoring**

We monitor teaching and learning of English in our school to make sure that all of our pupils make the best possible progress from their starting points.

The English team will monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' learning through:

- Conducting learning walks
- Reviewing marking and feedback
- Pupil progress meetings following assessment points
- Gathering input from the school council
- Planning scrutinies
- Book scrutinies

### **8.2 Assessment**

We track pupils' progress using a combination of formative and summative assessment

Our pupils will sit the following formal assessments:

- The phonics screening check at the end of year 1
- National Curriculum tests in the summer term at the end of KS2

### **8.3 Moderation**

We standardise writing samples every term to:

- Demonstrate how pupils' work meets National Curriculum attainment targets for KS1 and KS2, to help with assessment
- Make sure staff have a consistent approach to marking pupils' work

- We refer to the Standards and Testing Agency (STA)'s exemplification materials for KS1 and KS2 to support with this.
- We moderate within and across year groups and take up opportunities to moderate with other schools

## **9. Resources**

### **9.1 Books**

We will select and use books that:

- Engage pupils emotionally
- Cover a wide range of subjects
- Elicit a strong response, such as curiosity, anger, excitement, laughter or empathy
- Have a strong narrative that will sustain multiple readings
- Extend pupils' vocabulary
- Have illustrations that are engaging and reflect children from all backgrounds and cultures
- Help pupils connect with who they are
- Help pupils to understand the lives of people whose experiences and perspectives may be different from their own
- Include stories set in both the UK and around the world
- Include both modern and traditional stories
- Include fiction and non-fiction
- For children on phonics programme the books are fully decodable to their current phonic ability

It's unlikely that just 1 book will meet all of these criteria, but our full selection as a whole will.

Once we've chosen our books, we will:

- Identify a core set of stories for each year group
- Refresh the list regularly (at least once a year), as new books are published and as our school welcomes new teachers
- Encourage teachers to familiarise themselves with the stories their pupils will know from previous years
- Share the list with parents, and explain its purpose, so they can buy or borrow the books

### **9.2 Book corners**

When visiting their book corner, pupils will be able to:

- Browse the books
- Revisit the ones the teacher has read to them
- Borrow books to read or re-tell at home
- Spend time there

When arranging the book corner, teachers will:

- Avoid displaying too many books at once
- Choose a space in the classroom that is well lit and of an adequate size
- Display books pupils have listened to recently, at their eye level on outward-facing shelves
- Make the books look attractive and easy to find – removing any that are dull and dog-eared, unless these are particularly well-loved
- Refresh the display to highlight topics, titles or authors that might engage pupils
- Involve pupils in this process by getting them to help return books to the central school library
- Keep any books that have been previously read in extra boxes for pupils to read and retell again, at school and at home

## **10. Review**

This policy will be reviewed every year by the English lead. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

## **11. Links with other policies**

This policy links with the following policies and procedures:

- Curriculum policy
- SEN/SEND policy and information report
- Marking and Feedback policy
- Assessment policy
- Behaviour policy
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy