

Oak CE Primary School

English Curriculum Overview



Our aim at Oak CE Primary School is to develop pupils' spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. We are acutely aware that fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects. We aim to teach and foster within our children the skill and will to read and write; providing them with the means to access and understand the world and make their mark within it.

Our curriculum is constructed upon the fundamental principles outlined in the EYFS Framework and the National Curriculum.

We teach our children to:

1. Speak, listen, read and write fluently to communicate ideas, information and emotion with accuracy and effect.
2. Recognise the joy and benefits of reading and become a self-motivated, avid, critical and independent reader for pleasure and/or purpose.
3. Use a wider range of ambitious vocabulary in spoken and written work to create specific effects, adapting for audience.
4. Develop a clear, legible hand with a swift transcription speed.
5. Spell accurately and use correct grammar and punctuation.



Phonics

Teaching children to read is at the heart of our pedagogy and we prioritise quality instruction to provide children with the skills needed to unlock and access all areas of the curriculum. In EYFS and KS1, systematic synthetic phonics is taught daily, following the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds scheme. Please see separate phonics policy for how we implement this, our rigorous assessment process and interventions utilised to ensure that all pupils learn to read.

EYFS and KS1 Reading

In Early Years and Key Stage One, our primary objective is to lay a solid foundation for the fluent reading necessary to flourish in learning, life and beyond. Our core intention is to develop children's decoding, prosody and comprehension skills to increase automaticity and confidence, providing them with the means to access all areas of the curriculum and their world. The use of systematic synthetic phonics is inherent to children's daily reading lessons. These begin with the direct teaching of the distilled components of fluent decoding; before applying this to the strategic instruction and practice of the key skills of retrieval, sequencing, prediction, inference and expanding their vocabulary.

KS2 Reading

In Key Stage Two, we build upon the foundations built previously to create fluent, expressive readers. Whole class reading is taught daily, using the skills based approach necessary to instil high levels of comprehension and the innate ability to draw meaning from texts and build mental models. Throughout the week, children access their class text and a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts, poems, songs and play scripts linked to their current learning. These texts are then used to explicitly teach children the pertinent strategies to develop their skills, confidence and competence as readers.

Through effective modelling, shared thinking and independent practice, our children will become proficient in:

- Explaining the meaning of words in context
- Retrieving and recoding information
- Summarising the main ideas in a text
- Making inferences and explaining with evidence

- Predicting from stated or implied details
- Identifying how content relates and gives meaning
- Explaining how vocabulary enhances meaning
- Making comparisons within the text

Class Texts

At our school, we are committed to nurturing a genuine love for reading in every child. To achieve this, we have incorporated a daily practice where every class dedicates 15 minutes to reading their class text or a story. This practice serves two important purposes. Firstly, it introduces students to books that may be above their individual reading levels in terms of vocabulary and syntax, or context and theme, thus improving fluency and comprehension. Secondly, research has shown that reading to children has immeasurable benefits, enriching their language skills, comprehension, and imagination.

Whereby classes are reading longer books, to ensure all students remain engaged and connected to the story, we regularly review the novel's content, discuss characters and events, make predictions and links to other texts, and create excitement and suspense about the plot.

Our choice of books is carefully tailored to suit the interests, topics, and needs of each specific class. These texts may also serve as inspiration for future writing units. We believe that this daily reading practice not only enhances literacy skills but also fosters a lifelong passion for reading among our students.

Handwriting

We want all our children to develop a fluent, legible handwriting style, with appropriate speed and stamina. The automaticity of this key transactional skill is imperative for children to access and present information in learning and life. Skills and progression in handwriting are supported through the adoption of the Letter-join handwriting curriculum. In key stage 1 & 2, handwriting is taught daily for 10 minutes and recorded in handwriting books. The teaching of handwriting makes explicit links with phonics and spelling, and is referenced consistently in relation to children's own writing. During the early writing phase, children develop the necessary pencil grip, mark making skills and pre-writing formations, before moving to printing letters, pre-cursive patterns, cursive script and improving their automaticity and fluency through dictation activities.

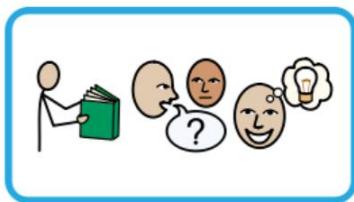


Spelling

At Oak, we teach spelling explicitly and systematically, following the rules and guidance established within the National Curriculum. The utmost importance is placed upon equipping children with the skills and strategies needed to spell accurately, with ever increasing automaticity. Our approach is rooted in the teaching of phonics, morphology and etymology, providing children with the means and opportunities to strategically apply this and expand their lexical store to become accurate spellers. In keys stage 1 & 2, spelling is taught daily, prioritising repeated practice, short-term retrieval, and small-step goal achievement to improve automatic recall and children's self-confidence. Our curriculum adopts the core principles and stages of the Spelling Shed scheme, through their research based pedagogical methodology, and is tailored to meet the needs and stages of our children.



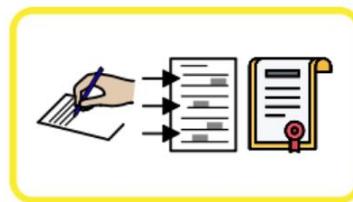
We endeavour to nurture within our children the inspiration, skills and confidence necessary to equip them as young and future writers. Our Writing curriculum follows a three-phase approach:



Engagement and inspiration



Instruction and exploration



Application and consolidation

The writing process is initiated by immersing our students in a high-quality text or stimulus, setting the stage for creative and meaningful writing experiences. We use inspiring texts from the CLPE Corebooks and animations from Literacy Shed Plus to engage children; texts are chosen specifically to reflect children's own experiences and beliefs and also, provide perspectives which are different from their own to broaden their understanding of the world.

Within our daily English lessons, our children discover that assuming the role of a writer empowers them to shape their readers' thoughts, emotions, and actions, by writing for a range of purposes and genres. Through careful instruction and effective modelling, they learn how to craft particular grammar and vocabulary features in line with the age-related expectations laid out in the National Curriculum; and how these features can function most effectively to have the biggest impact upon their reader for the intended purpose.

Children will then be given the opportunity to apply the taught vocabulary, punctuation and grammar features to a piece of independent, extended writing. They follow a consistent sequence of planning, drafting, editing and redrafting their piece of writing in order to consolidate their learning and foster a sense of pride and achievement in their outcome.

We have identified the following six purposes for writing:



inform



entertain



describe



instruct/explain



recount



persuade/discuss

Our sequence of learning is developed so that the predominant purposes for writing are taught simultaneously across all year groups. This enables the processes of standardisation, moderation and assessment to be highly impactful; whilst at the same time providing the commonality necessary for leaders to offer strategic improvements to subject knowledge, pedagogical approach, differentiation and inclusion, and ambitious standards of teaching and learning.