

# OAKDENE PRIMARY SCHOOL

## ENGLISH POLICY



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# OAKDENE PRIMARY SCHOOL

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This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of English at Oakdene Primary School.

### Introduction

At Oakdene, we believe that literacy and communication are key life skills which are at the heart of the curriculum. Through the English curriculum, we help children develop the skills and knowledge that enable them to communicate effectively and creatively through spoken and written language and equip them with the skills to become lifelong learners. We want pupils to enjoy and appreciate literature and its rich variety. Literacy is at the heart of all pupils' learning and is central to pupils' intellectual, emotional and social development. It has an essential role across the curriculum that helps pupils' learning to be coherent and progressive.

We recognise that the skills of reading and writing impact across the whole curriculum. Being able to critically evaluate texts, forms part of the fundamental basis of life-long learning. We are committed to raising pupils' aspirations and to widen their horizons through a context rich curriculum that gives purpose to their learning, offers a range of experiences, as well as broadening understanding of the global community. Wherever appropriate, English work is linked to other areas of the curriculum. Reading and writing enables pupils to expand their experiences and opens doors to other worlds.

We believe our teachers must plan, deliver and moderate the teaching of English in order to ensure that expectations are high and those children are able to achieve the best of their ability. We use a variety of teaching strategies such as: teacher demonstration, modelling, explanation, questioning, discussion, guided, shared and group work to develop children's confidence, fluency and independence as readers and writers and in speaking and listening.

The separate skills of English are best developed through work which integrates and links these skills. We seek to provide activities which are interesting and motivating themselves and lead to worthwhile outcomes. Such activities provide the best context for increasing children's knowledge about the English language. It is also necessary to focus separately on aspects of knowledge about the language at times so that children learn what they need to know in a systematic way.

At Oakdene teachers are required to teach a body of material by using the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework for Nursery and Reception pupils and The National Curriculum for Year 1 to Year 6.

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### **Aims**

- To provide quality first teaching that ensures all learners attain success in English.
- To develop in pupils a love of books and high-quality literature that will not only support their learning across the curriculum, but also extend beyond the classroom environment and enrich their lives.
- To explicitly teach reading skills that continually develop children's understanding and enjoyment of texts.
- To develop children's love of reading for pleasure and to read a wide range of books by different authors, challenging themselves within their choices.
- To develop an interest in words and their meanings and developing a growing vocabulary by immersing children in vocabulary rich learning environments.
- To teach children the craft of writing in order to develop the confidence and skills to write well for a range of purposes and audiences; whilst developing their own individual flair.
- Enable children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners.
- Encourage children to listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard.

### **Role of the Teacher**

1. All class teachers are responsible for the planning, preparation, teaching and assessment of English.
2. Children with Special Educational Needs will have their specific needs met through differentiated work in conjunction with targets set out in their SEND Support Plan.
3. The style of classroom organisation and management should ensure a positive vocabulary rich learning environment. Teachers should consider the appropriateness of methods employed given the requirements of the New National Curriculum and school philosophy.
4. Mark children's work following school marking policy to show that children's work is valued, and to inform assessment.
5. The teacher promotes children's self-confidence and sense of achievement through praise, rewards and positive reinforcement in line with the whole school marking and feedback policy.

### **Teaching and Learning**

Teaching and learning of English focuses on acquiring and developing the range of skills needed in order that pupils leave us as fluent and confident readers, writers, speakers and listeners. Learning objectives are taken directly from the National Curriculum and are broken down into smaller, manageable and meaningful steps. Skills are explicitly taught and children are given

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opportunities to practise and master them in different contexts. Our integrated curriculum ensures that learning is contextual and purposeful and teachers plan so that writing opportunities are closely linked to our creative curriculum. Vocabulary enrichment is a priority throughout.

It is essential that the teacher creates an environment which encourages the children to write for a range of purposes and a variety of audiences. Writing experiences should be carefully planned so that they match the needs of the children and classrooms should be well organised and resourced to support independent learning.

### **Role of the English Subject Leader**

1. To take the lead in policy development and the implementation of the New National Curriculum to ensure progression and continuity throughout the school.
2. To monitor the teaching and learning in English, to ensure consistency and progressions throughout school.
3. To take responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central resources and classroom resources.
4. To keep up-to-date with developments in English.
5. To disseminate information to colleagues as appropriate.
6. To identify individual and whole school professional development needs and opportunities. To deliver staff training in relation to English.
7. To identify long term goals in the sustained school improvement plan.

### **Role of Parents and Carers**

1. Attending open days, parent teacher consultations etc. so they stay informed about the English work of the school.
2. Supporting the efforts of teachers in classrooms by offering to help at home if difficulties arise.
3. Assisting children in completion any English homework tasks set within current homework policy.
4. Hearing children read the many books taken home and by encouraging the development of reading skills by using the strategies recommended by teachers and helpful handouts.

### **Reporting to Parents and Carers**

Annual written reports are made to parents in the summer term. Reporting in English focuses on abilities in reading and writing skills, achievements in all areas of National Curriculum English. At the end of Reception, Year 2 and Year 6 results of statutory assessment form part of the reports to parents. Parents' consultations take place in the Autumn term and in the Summer term. Progress in English will be shared through conversations and any

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support needed will be identified. The annual report to parents is sent home during July.

The class teacher will contact parents where there is concern about a child's progress. The SENCO will also be informed. Parents can also liaise with class teachers at any time during the school year to discuss their child's progress.

### **Homework**

Parents should always have information as to the aims and objectives of any homework and the expectations for the child; this will be in line with the current homework policy.

Homework can be used to support English through such tasks as:-

- The learning of Spellings
- Regular reading and discussion of texts

### **Marking Policy**

Feedback to pupils about their own progress in English is achieved through discussion and through the marking of work. Writing will be marked by assessing criteria on the writing checklists for each year group. Refer to whole school marking and feedback policy for more detail.

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### **READING**

#### **Rationale**

The Oakdene Literacy curriculum is designed to foster a love of reading. We believe that reading, and particularly reading for pleasure, has a direct impact on cognitive and social communicative development. Our aim is to develop every child's potential to the point where they are reading at, or above, their chronological age. In addition to a rigorous reading curriculum, we ensure that we provide pupils with high quality phonics teaching so that they are able to speak, read and write fluently, so that they can communicate their ideas, emotions and ambitions to others clearly and effectively. In addition, we aim to equip our children with the skills, knowledge and creativity necessary to proficiently express their thoughts and ideas in written form.

We recognise that being able to read well is a key life skill for all children, whatever their background, and that every child can learn to read with the right teaching and support. We acknowledge that not all children will have had the opportunity to develop a love of reading at home, so this has to be taught and encouraged at school – just like any other area of the curriculum.

#### **Aims**

- To cultivate successful, confident readers who are equipped with a range of strategies with which to decode print and interpret a wide variety of texts.
- To place understanding and enjoyment at the heart of reading, fostering a delight in literature and a love of books.

#### **Objectives**

- To provide a rich and stimulating environment in which children have access to a wide range of books presented in an attractive and inviting way.
- To encourage parents to participate and share in their child's reading.
- To provide individual children with support to help develop their confidence and independence.
- To ensure there is a structured approach to the teaching of reading.
- To ensure there is regular and ongoing assessment to identify individual needs.
- To provide opportunities for children to hear stories read aloud and to allow them to reflect upon their own experiences and the language of the text.
- To provide opportunities for children to ask questions about the text, retell the story and predict what will happen next.
- To ensure that children have opportunities to discuss books they have read, express simple preferences and compare authors.

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- To provide opportunities for children to read their own and other children's texts aloud to the class.
- To provide opportunities for children to find information in books and data bases and are able to pursue an independent line of enquiry, sometimes drawing upon more than one line of enquiry.

### Teaching reading:

**Phonics** Initially we teach reading through phonics. At Oakdene we have produced a booklet to explain our approach to Early Reading and this includes phonics. **Please read this in conjunction with this policy.**

In Key Stage Two, children who need extra support are taught individually or in intervention groups. Our phonics lessons follow the same structure across the school, and this structure is also used to teach spelling rules from Year Two upwards. We also teach 'tricky' words which are not phonetically plausible within phonics lessons. Children are encouraged to use their phonetic knowledge and understanding in reading *and* writing. We find that the children are more confident at using a range of engaging vocabulary in their writing thanks to their phonetic skills, knowledge and understanding.

**Lexia** is also used with specific pupils / groups of pupils from Y1 to Y6. Lexia creates a personalised learning model which develops the following skills: - phonological awareness, phonics, structural analysis, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension.

**Beyond phonics**, one of the main ways we teach reading is through **Guided Reading** in KS1. The children have the opportunity to read a wide variety of texts in small groups and explore them in detail. This is done with adults and then as they grow in independence we encourage the children to lead the groups, with an adult present, asking each other probing questions around the text. Children are taught according to their individual needs and we have a wide variety of texts, fiction and nonfiction for this.

In KS2, children engage in **whole class reading**. Teaching the whole class means that all pupils can read with the teacher more often, moving faster through more or longer texts and benefiting from the teacher's expert explanations, modelling, questioning and feedback. As the children's fluency is stronger from Y3 it allows more integration between 'guided reading', topic-related reading, reading as stimulus for writing, daily reading aloud to the class and following a 'class reader'. A wide range of authors and books are covered throughout the key stage.

Key Stage 2 also follow Ashley Booth whole class reading which enables the children to access a wide range of texts for 3 days a week. The texts are all linked for the week and cover a wide range of genre, themes and authors. Each day the lesson will focus on the skills of reading: VIPERS - vocabulary, inference, prediction, explanation, retrieval, summarising and sequencing.

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### **WRITING**

#### **Rationale**

We believe that Language underpins the whole curriculum. Effective writing comes from access to a wide and enriched Language curriculum encompassing reading, writing and speaking and listening. Through our curriculum, we will help children develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively through spoken and written language and equip them with the skills to become lifelong learners.

Our aim is for children to leave school being able to write with confidence and accuracy for a variety of purposes and audiences whilst developing their own individual flair.

#### **Aims**

- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum which supports coherence, consistency and continuity.
- To raise the self-esteem of children by being sensitive to individual needs, creating a strong and caring approach to the teaching and learning of Language.

#### **Objectives**

- To create a rich and stimulating environment to encourage and support independent writing.
- To provide positive responses and effective support for children when writing.
- Give opportunities for children to reflect on their own writing and the writing of others.
- To increase children's ability to communicate effectively as writers.
- To enable children to express themselves in a variety of styles for a range of purposes and audiences.
- To develop children's ability to plan, draft, organise and structure their own writing in a variety of ways.
- To provide opportunities for children to use and adapt their choice of vocabulary, grammar and style to suit the intended purpose and audience.
- To increase children's knowledge of conventions of written language and control of physical processes of writing.
- A wide range of resources will be used to support pupils and enable them to become independent writers. Dictionaries, thesauruses, common word books, spell checkers, wall displays and prompts will allow the developing writer to concentrate on content.



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### **Classroom Management**

The planning or writing forms an integral part of the overall English planning. It cannot, however, stand alone and needs to work hand in hand with the whole curriculum. It is, therefore, essential that the teacher creates an environment which encourages the children to write for a range of purposes and a variety of audiences. Writing experiences should be carefully planned so that they match the needs of the children and are linked to our creative curriculum.

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### **SPELLING**

#### **Rationale**

We believe that good spelling is an essential skill which allows the children to communicate their understanding in all curriculum subjects. In order for pupils to develop into effective and confident writers they need to develop and use a range of effective spelling strategies. By providing the children with a range of strategies we equip them with the independence to attempt spellings before asking for adult help. We particularly want the children to develop a love of language and the confidence to spell more challenging and ambitious words. In allowing them opportunities to develop a rich and exciting vocabulary, we are enabling them to become effective communicators.

Understanding how to spell correctly is important in supporting children to organise their thinking around language. Knowing how to apply spelling rules and recognising key words is empowering for children.

#### **Aims**

By adopting a consistent approach to the teaching of spelling we aim for the children to develop confidence and accuracy when spelling across the curriculum.

- To assist children into their development as writers.
- To assist children in becoming independent spellers by providing them with relevant activities and resources through a structured and consistent approach.

#### **Objectives**

- Develop and teach the children to use a range of effective spelling strategies and techniques.
- To encourage children to have a go and spell words independently.
- Encourage children to identify patterns in words and spellings
- To teach familiar and frequently occurring words to extend children's sight vocabulary.
- To ensure that children have access to a range of resources to support their development in spelling.
- To encourage children to check their own spellings when revising and proof reading
- Help children to use a range of dictionaries and spell checks effectively
- To ensure that there is ongoing assessment to identify individual needs in spelling.
- Encourage creativity and the use of more ambitious vocabulary in their writing
- Promote a positive and confident attitude towards spelling.
- Help children recognise that spelling is a lifelong skill

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### Classroom Management

The planning of spelling forms an integral part of the overall English planning. It is differentiated through stages of spelling development rather than specific age groups. The schemes of work provide a progressive development of skills which ensures continuity and progression throughout the child's school life. The teaching and learning of spelling also occurs through daily, cross-curricular tasks and children should therefore be encouraged to become independent in their learning. In order to aid this development, all classrooms will be well resourced with a range of dictionaries, thesauruses, word banks and spelling games.

Children will be given a spelling pattern to learn each week linked to the skills progression set out for each year group. They will also be encouraged to learn the key spellings for their year groups and to include them in their writing. Children should always be encouraged to have a go at spellings of which they are unsure. It is important that they believe they *can* spell. Once they have a go in a word book, corrections should lead to new learning and should not simply be a copying out exercise.

The look, cover, write, check strategy should be used to enhance the visual learning memory and show children that they can be successful when learning spellings.

**Look** at the word carefully in such a way that you will remember what you see.

**Cover** the word so that you cannot see it.

**Write** the word from memory, saying it quietly to yourself as you write it.

**Check** what you have written. If incorrect go back and repeat steps.

We understand that children have different learning needs, therefore throughout the school the children will be offered a wide range of spelling activities to provide a stimulus for all learning styles.

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### **HANDWRITING**

#### **Rationale**

We believe that the aesthetic aspects of handwriting should complement and enhance the mechanics of the written word. Whilst we acknowledge the increasing availability and relevance of word processing, we feel that it is imperative that children learn the conventions of penmanship.

#### **Aims**

- To develop a neat, fluent and legible style of handwriting.
- To teach the conventions of letter formation.
- To develop an awareness of appropriate presentation skills and be able to vary the style appropriate to the task in order to communicate effectively.

#### **Objectives**

- To ensure there is a structured approach to the teaching of handwriting.
- To provide individual children with support to develop their own style of handwriting.
- To ensure there is regular and ongoing assessment to identify the needs of individuals.
- To provide opportunities for children to practice and develop their handwriting independently in purposeful and guided practice.
- To ensure that children are taught the correct letter formations and joins on a regular basis.
- To ensure that children have opportunities to practice pattern making with a range of writing implements.
- To ensure that children are aware of the importance of presentation.
- To encourage children to develop a range of writing styles to suit the given task.

#### **Classroom Management**

Children will follow the Nelson Handwriting scheme which helps to deliver the expectations from the national curriculum through a careful progression in hand writing skills. It is designed to help all children develop a confident, legible and personal handwriting. The programme includes resources for pattern practice and motor skills work as well as fun activities to bring handwriting to life.

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Much of the teaching of handwriting is done on an incidental basis with individual or temporary groups to cover a particular learning point. The frequency and length of handwriting lessons are likely to vary according to the age and competence of the pupils. For young children it may be appropriate to have short daily lessons, while older pupils may benefit from one or two longer sessions per week.

### **ORACY**

#### **Rationale**

At Oakdene Primary School, we believe that Speaking and listening are at the heart of language, not only as foundations for reading and writing, but also as essential skills for thinking and communication.

The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. Teachers should therefore ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills. Pupils need to be provided with many and varied contexts for talk, but they also need direct teaching in the skills of speaking and listening. They should be able to use speech with fluency, confidence and clarity.

#### **Aims**

- We aim for every child, regardless of their background, to find their voice for success in school and in life.
- We aim for all children to speak expressively and confidently about a range of topics through class discussions and debates.
- We aim for children to learn through exploratory talk as well as use presentational talk

#### **Objectives**

- To listen, ask and respond to questions, evaluate and respect the opinion of others.
- To provide a range of opportunities for children to talk and listen in formal and informal settings.
- To develop social skills of conversation e.g. eye contact, gestures, turn taking.
- To use drama and role-play to develop confidence when addressing an audience.
- To create an environment in which children feel safe when speaking their thoughts and feelings.

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- Help them to understand the need to adapt their speech to different situations.
- Give them opportunities to evaluate and reflect on their own speech.
- Encourage them to use the vocabulary and grammar of Standard English whenever appropriate.
- To provide high quality adult-child interactions where children are given opportunities to discuss their work, expressing feelings and opinions.
- Use a wide range of explicit and implicit approaches to teaching vocabulary, modelling and extending children's language and thinking during interactions.

### **Classroom management.**

Speaking and listening is an integral part of school life and is key to effective teaching and learning in all subjects. A diverse range of strategies are employed to ensure all children can succeed.

It is essential that a classroom is organised to facilitate talk when appropriate. Ensuring all children experience effective language support requires a considered approach appropriate to the individual needs of the children. Pupils must be aware of the rules of conversation such as turn taking and listening attentively whilst others are talking. They should also be aware of appropriate times to talk and when to be quiet. Children must be given opportunities to work collaboratively in ability, mixed ability, friendship and paired groups.

We carefully track to ensure pupils are on track to reach the expectations of our curriculum through skills, knowledge and communication. The impact of the curriculum is that by the end of the year, the vast majority of children have sustained mastery of the content, knowledge and skills, they remember it all and are fluent in it. Some children will have reached a greater depth of understanding where they can apply their learning.

### **Rights Respecting Schools**

**Article 28:** Every child has the right to an education.

**Article 29:** Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.