



Oakridge Primary School English Policy

Adopted: Chair of Curriculum Committee: Next review date:	Jan 2022 Mrs N Lewis July 2023
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1. Aims and objectives

1.1 At Oakridge, we are constantly striving for excellence in English, in order to ensure that pupils are able to speak and write both fluently and confidently so that they can communicate clearly with others and also to ensure that through accurate reading and listening, they can understand what others are communicating to them. Learners are given the opportunity to learn, develop and apply new skills not just in English lessons but also in a range of exciting and engaging ways and for a variety of purposes across the whole curriculum.

1.2 Learners at Oakridge will learn to:

- speak clearly and confidently with a growing awareness of the needs of the listener.
- listen to and understand the ideas of others and take part in discussions in which they are able to share their ideas with courtesy, explain their understanding and seek clarification where necessary.
- develop as confident, independent and reflective readers who have the skills to make sure that they understand what they read across a range of subjects.
- gain an infectious and life-long passion for reading.
- acquire and use a rich vocabulary through developing an interest in words and their meanings.
- write with skill, accuracy and creativity in both narrative and non-fiction genres and for a range of audiences and purposes
- use planning, drafting and editing/reflecting to improve their writing
- successfully apply their English skills across the curriculum and in all aspects of their learning

2. Teaching and learning style

2.1 At Oakridge, we use a range of engaging, high quality and challenging whole-class texts as the gateway to learning about the English language. Throughout the course of each book-based unit, objectives from the National Curriculum for reading, writing and grammar are taught through links to the whole-class text wherever possible. Whether in reading, writing, grammar, spelling or handwriting, pupils are first explicitly taught a new skill and are then given a

range of opportunities to practice and gain confidence with this skill - this may involve a range of practical, hands-on activities, working alone or with a learning partner - before they are then given meaningful opportunities to apply it across the curriculum. Over the course of each year, pupils have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts, media and stimuli and use a variety of resources such as success criteria, word banks, dictionaries, and thesauruses to support their learning and promote independence. Wherever possible our curriculum encourages meaningful links between English and other subjects, giving the children the opportunity to use and apply their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills across the whole curriculum.

2.2 There are children of differing attainment levels and learning styles in all classes at Oakridge Primary School. We recognise this and ensure that we provide suitable levels of support and challenge for all pupils. In writing, we use success criteria to ensure that all pupils know what is expected of them and what they should do if they wish to challenge themselves further. Teachers and teaching assistants plan support and challenge carefully to ensure that, regardless of ability levels, all pupils are able to demonstrate learning that represents the best of their abilities.

2.3 **Reading** - In KS1, where children are still learning the mechanics of reading. In Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 (where appropriate) children access a range of levelled decodable texts, both fiction and nonfiction as part of the RWI phonics programme. Once confident in reading our decodable books pupils in Year 2 are benchmarked and read levelled books in their guided reading sessions. During this time, pupils read in a small group with the teacher or teaching assistant and focus on the skills necessary to become a fluent and accurate reader. This includes the use of phonic strategies for word reading as well as honing their early comprehension skills. All pupils in Reception and Year 1 will take levelled decodable texts, both fiction and nonfiction in addition to a free choice book. Year 2 will take either a levelled decodable text, book-banded book or AR reading book to share at home with their families. In Year 2 once children are assessed at being secure on white book band, they are able to choose their home reading books from the "Rainbow Readers" selection. These wide-ranging books are not part of a set reading scheme and encourage pupils to make their own choices of reading material, thus encouraging them to become more independent readers. In year 2, pupils who are "Rainbow Readers" take the STAR early literacy assessment, and those who have a scaled score of 775+ begin their Accelerated Reader reading journey.

In KS2, guided reading skills are taught as part of the whole-class reading sessions based on the class book. Pupils use a range of strategies to explore the characters, storyline and authorial techniques including role play, hot-seating, comprehension questions, discussions and partner talk. Throughout the Key Stage they also develop their ability to produce written answers to reading questions. Pupils in Key Stage 2 use Accelerated Reader to track their progress as independent readers. Once they have completed their half-termly STAR reading test and have been given a reading range, they work with their teacher to select books that are at an appropriate level of challenge for them. At Oakridge, we value the contribution that parents make to support

their children as readers. Children are expected to read 5 times a week at home (20 minutes at a time in year 3 building to 30 minutes in year 6) and when they have completed their reading book, they take a book quiz. Pupils are asked to maintain an average of 85% or above on their book quizzes to show that they have engaged with the book and it is at an appropriate level for them to develop as a reader. Weekly meetings are held in each class to celebrate achievements on AR and to set new targets and goals. Pupils also use this opportunity to share recommendations of books they have enjoyed.

2.4 Handwriting - We have adopted “The Handwriting File” cursive handwriting scheme at Oakridge Primary School. The children in Nursery and reception have an awareness of cursive writing then it is taught from Year 1 onwards based on assessments of formation and orientation.

2.5 Phonics and Spelling - Phonics Scheme – Nursery to Year 1

At Oakridge Primary School, we use Read Write Inc, developed by Ruth Miskin. This is a DfE validated systematic synthetic phonics (SSP) teaching programme. This provides a structured and systematic approach to teaching phonics. This has been proven to be a highly effective way to teach children to read and write at an early age. The 44 sounds and corresponding letters are introduced and taught systematically. Children learn to blend sounds to read words. Then they use short ‘ditties’ to practise early reading and writing before being taught more letter-sound correspondences. When reading a word, children recognise the letters (phonemes) and blend together the respective sounds; when writing a word they identify the sounds and write down the corresponding letters (graphemes). Children then begin to read a series of levelled decodable texts, both fiction and nonfiction. Research shows that the progress made by children using this type of approach far exceeds that of children not taught using a synthetic phonics approach.

From Year 2 onwards, we use the Read, Write, Inc spelling scheme. It is a comprehensive programme made up of 15 minute daily lessons which reflects the spelling requirements of the 2014 National Curriculum. The sessions are based on interactive learning where Aliens from an exciting online spelling planet introduce spelling rules and concepts. It uses many of the familiar key teaching strategies, and builds upon activities used in Read Write Inc. Phonics, to maintain progress and help children develop confident spelling. It primarily develops children’s knowledge of word families, how suffixes impact upon root words, and provides mnemonics to remember the trickiest spellings. The teaching revolves around instruction, partner and group practice, and competitive group challenges that help children commit new words to memory.

Alongside this programme the children will also have personalised spellings to learn. To allow children to practise spellings at home, children will bring home a ‘super spelling’ book. This starts during Reception, at the point that children are able to read the words.

3. English curriculum planning

3.1 English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the 2014 English Nation Curriculum as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English.

3.2 We carry out the curriculum planning in English in two phases (medium-term and short-term).

3.3 Our medium-term plans, which we also base on the NC, give details of the main teaching objectives for each term. These plans define what we teach and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of learning across each term.

3.4 Class teachers complete a (short-term) 'unit' plan for the teaching of English (in stages). This may also be 'blocked' as part of our skill based curriculum. The planning lists the final outcome that is expected at the end of each unit of learning as well as learning success criteria for each lesson and gives details of how the lessons are to be taught. It also includes details of differentiation and how other adults in class are to be utilised where appropriate. The class teacher keeps these individual plans and copies are uploaded onto the T Drive. Teachers are expected to reflect daily on plans and amend the next day's teaching when necessary. Planning is also kept electronically and is monitored by the English lead. Written feedback is provided for the individual teacher on the standards and learning feedback and the class teacher and English co-ordinator often discuss these plans on an informal basis.

Success criteria and adaptive checklists are used by pupils to support them during the course of their writing and both children and teachers use these to assess the success of the writing prior to editing and upon completion of the final outcome.

4. The EYFS

The format for the daily English lesson in Reception is similar to that used in the rest of the school. As the reception class is part of the EYFS of the National Curriculum, we relate the English aspects of the children's learning to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals and Development Matters which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged birth to five. All children are given the opportunity to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and extend their range of vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore, enjoy, learn about, and use words and texts in a range of situations.

Within the Foundation Stage RWI phonics is taught. Each day the children take part in a phonics session and the children take home a phonics keyring to consolidate the sound they have been learning. This allows them to practise the sound at home with their parents.

5. Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas

The skills that children develop in English are linked to, and applied in, every subject of our curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their learning in school.

5.1 Knowledge and Understanding of the World - English is essential in the teaching and learning of Knowledge and Understanding of the world. Where appropriate, children apply their English skills through KUW and unit outcomes reflect the children's English skills and knowledge. Children use speaking and listening skills, a wide range of reading skills, research skills across the curriculum, as well as learning how to present their learning in a variety of genres considering the intended audience and purpose.

5.2 Mathematics - English contributes significantly to the teaching and learning of mathematics at Oakridge. Children in the Foundation Stage develop their understanding of number, pattern, shape and space by talking about these areas with adults and other children. Children in Key Stage 1 meet stories and rhymes that rely on counting and sequencing. Children in Key Stage 2 are encouraged to read and interpret problems in order to identify the mathematics involved. They explain and present their learning to others during mini plenary sessions and they communicate mathematically through the developing use of precise mathematical language. These are then written into a maths learning conversations or reflections.

5.3 Computing - The use of ICT enables children to use and apply their developing skills in English in a variety of ways. The children use ICT as a source of information and as a way of enabling them to present their completed learning effectively. During cross curricular learning, children use the internet for research purposes to support and extend their learning across the curriculum.

5.4 Research learning - It is essential that children are taught research and note-taking skills and then given opportunities to apply these skills across the whole curriculum. It is our philosophy that we should not tell children when the Battle of Hastings was and why it took place, but give them the skills to find out. Each Year group has regular access to the library and to topic boxes, which facilitate and give staff the opportunity to teach a range of differentiated research skills. These are planned sessions which build on the key questions

5.5 Personal, social and health education (PSHE), RRR and citizenship - English contributes to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. We encourage all children to take part in class and group discussions and P4C on topical issues. Our children also research and debate issues and events. They discuss lifestyle choices and meet and talk with many visitors who learning within the school community. Planned activities within the classroom encourage children to learning together and respect each other's views and stories help pupils to understand the viewpoints and life stances of others.

5.5 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development - The teaching of English develops skills through which our children can give critical responses to the moral questions they meet in their learning. Their understanding and appreciation of a range of texts brings them into contact with their own literary heritage and texts from other cultures. The organisation of lessons allows children to learn together and gives them the chance to discuss their ideas, feelings and the impact this has on their learning and life choices.

6. Teaching English to children with special needs

At Oakridge, we teach English to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs as it forms part of the school policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. We strive to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. Learning in English takes into account the targets set for individual children in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Teachers provide help with communication and English through:

- texts that children can read and understand;
- visual and written materials in different formats;
- ICT, other technological aids and audio materials;
- Alternative forms of communication such as signs and symbols
- Resources such as coloured overlays, pencil grips, writing slopes and larger text

6.1 Dyslexia - The school actively promotes a Dyslexia Friendly learning environment and is using teaching techniques suitable for all children to learn.

7. Assessment and recording

Teachers assess children's learning in English in two phases. The daily assessments and reflections help teachers to plan and identify next steps for learning. The teachers mark and assess final outcomes using success and adaptive checklists at the end of each unit. Teachers complete the school tracking system for reading and writing termly following the completion of writing units, PIRA assessments and STAR reading tests. Children also undertake the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. On a day to day basis, learning conversations, verbal feedback and daily outcomes are used to measure the children's progress, identify/address any misconceptions and plan next steps for learning. Each term the English lead and deputy head meet with other teaching staff to moderate the assessments. This is also done in conjunction with staff from a partner school.

8. Resources

There is a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries and a range of teacher-made support materials that are appropriate to the year group's curriculum objectives. All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts for guided reading and

home reading, as well as access to media and interactive texts. Children have access to the Internet in the ICT suite and ipads. The library contains a wide range of books which are available on Accelerated Reader and these are regularly updated. There are also a range of topic boxes which are available to support children's individual research. Staff also read daily to our children using a range of texts including storytime read-alouds and favourites, edge-of-your-seat thrillers, PSHE based stories, humour books, picturebooks, graphic novels, poetry and non-fiction. We also aim to include new authors and texts that children may have not yet discovered.

9. Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

Through English, the school ensures that it meets the needs of all, taking account of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability and social circumstances. It is essential that the diverse needs of pupils are met, to ensure inclusion for all and that all pupils are prepared for full participation in a multi-ethnic society. Through appropriate treatment of all, Oakridge Primary School aims to eliminate unlawful discrimination, prejudice, harassment and stereotyping and strive to maintain policies that comply with current legislation. This applies to all members of the school community – pupils, staff, governors, parents/carers and community members and is based on the School's core values. During the review of this policy the nine protected characteristics of the Public Sector Equality Duty, i.e. race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy, maternity and gender reassignment have been considered.

9.1 The principles of fairness and justice for all are promoted through the education that we provide in our school.

9.2 All pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school.

10. Monitoring and review

Monitoring of the standards of the children's learning and of the quality of teaching and learning in English is the responsibility of the English subject leader. The learning of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The subject leader gives the head teacher termly summary in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, and indicates areas for further improvement. The leader has specially-allocated regular management time in order to enable him/her to review samples of the children's learning, monitor books, complete planning scans and undertake lesson observations of English teaching across the school.