

English Curriculum Statement



Intent

At Oaklands Infant school, we believe that literacy and communication are at the heart of all children's learning, equipping them with key life skills. Our main aim is to ensure every single child becomes literate and progresses in the areas of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Through our English curriculum we will support children to develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively through written and spoken language and enable them to become successful, life-long learners.

Our aim with our reading curriculum is that all children develop the knowledge, skills and tools to become independent readers and build a lifelong love of reading. We are dedicated to ensuring that all our pupils are able to read fluently and with good understanding whilst developing the habit of reading widely on a regular basis for both pleasure and to gain information. Reading enables pupils to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know, enabling them to access the whole curriculum.

By the end of Key Stage 1, our children will use a variety of reading skills from early synthetic phonics to decoding and skimming. We actively encourage our children to read and experience a range of vocabulary and story language through our 'rich texts' English curriculum. We also encourage children to read their work for enjoyment, to read it aloud to others which also provides audiences for writing.

We will encourage children to be effective, competent communicators and good listeners, providing them with a range of opportunities to express opinions, articulate feelings and formulate responses. We will support children to foster an interest in words, understand their meanings and to develop a growing vocabulary in both spoken and written form.

Implementation

Reading

Oaklands Infant school sees the enjoyment of reading and the skills involved as a core teaching priority and it is given high status in planning, teaching and the wider learning environment. Children are exposed to high-quality, carefully chosen texts which are introduced from Foundation Stage onwards through cross-curricular learning, drama, and storytelling.

All children are given opportunities to read through a consistent system of one-to-one, group, whole class, guided and independent reading opportunities across the curriculum. To support children with their understanding of texts, we have implemented VIPERs. Each of these letters relates to a different reading skill: vocabulary, inference, prediction, retrieval and sequencing. We feel it is important that children acquire a secure understanding of a text and can express their response to a question in both an oral and written format.

Each week children take home two reading books, the first of which develops phonic knowledge and skills to build fluency. These books follow the Sounds Write Initial Code units followed by the Extended Code units. The second book will be book-banded and will support their reading comprehension and wider reading skills; these books include narratives, poetry, playscripts and non-fiction. Reading at home is regarded as an important part of reading development. Parents are encouraged to hear their children read regularly and respond to their child's reading through home-school reading records which are monitored weekly. Parents are regularly supported to read effectively with their child through parent workshops, support materials, videos and the school website.

In school, children read aloud to an adult regularly in school during whole-class guided reading and phonics sessions as well as individually at least once per fortnight. The lowest 20% of pupils read to member of staff

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or trained Reading Guardian a minimum of 2x per week. PM Benchmarking is used as an assessment tool. Children are assessed each term from the summer term of Year one.

Children have access to year group libraries where they can choose from a vast range of reading materials to read at home to promote reading for pleasure. Every child takes a book from the library each week to enjoy together with someone at home. Classrooms and learning spaces also have stimulating reading areas for children to read during the school day. Reading books are provided outside in our reading shed for play and lunch times.

Wider Reading

Children are actively encouraged to develop a love for the written word and we organise a range of events and activities to promote reading. Each class has at least one-story session per day when children have an opportunity to hear a story being read by an adult who can model fluent expressive reading. We take part in World Book Day and have our own reading celebrations throughout the year such as our reading bingos, Booknics/Reading for Pleasure, visits from authors/illustrators, trained reading guardians, reading events with our local community, stimulating reading spaces (both indoors and outdoors) and focused book weeks

Phonics

Children at Oaklands Infant School are taught phonics using the Sounds Write scheme. All teaching and support staff are trained by Sounds Writes consultants to ensure fidelity to the scheme and a consistent teaching approach. Phonics is taught daily from the first full week in school at the beginning of Reception. These are teacher-led, whole class 30 minute sessions. Reception classes start with 10minute sessions that quickly build over the year in the first term. These are varied, fast-paced, multi-sensory and engaging opportunities to develop decoding skills and essential phonic knowledge. During each phonic session, all children will read and write whole words, and throughout the week they will all read and write whole sentences. Progress is carefully monitored and assessed in order to inform planning through regular teacher assessment and where relevant with the use of the Sounds Write Diagnostic Tool. SEND pupils participate in all lessons with their peers and are supported by teaching assistants in a manner that is dependent on their individual needs to help them access the sessions. In some cases, SEND pupils may have separate phonic session working on previous as yet not secure units. Additional phonic interventions using the Sounds Write Scheme follow-up lessons run throughout the school to support pupils who need extra support in applying their phonics in reading and/or spelling.

Writing

At Oaklands Infant School, we use the 'I am a Clever Writer' approach as a basis for teaching writing skills. We ensure our children write every day, giving them the opportunity to practise newly taught skills discreetly before layering them with previously taught skills to ensure that they become embedded. I am a Clever Writer is a clearly structured approach to teaching writing. Teaching sequences are carefully planned to ensure that children are given opportunities to develop new skills relating to the Clever Writer Checklist. The Clever Writer Checklist is a list of all the skills and knowledge that the children learn as they progress through their year group. It remains visible and accessible within the learning environment and is added to as new skills are introduced. These skills are matched to the curriculum for each year group and become increasingly complex over the course of the year as the children become more highly skilled. This allows teachers to ensure these are consolidated and built upon throughout the year to give our children the tools they need to become confident writers.

For children with SEN or those who are working towards ARE, teachers use their professional judgement to differentiate writing tasks. This may require them to plan tasks from the previous year groups Clever Writer progression of skills. Our teachers create their own model texts based on a high-quality stimulus, which model to the children how to include the identified features and skills in their own writing. At the end of each sequence of lessons - which usually lasts around a week - the children take part in an extended writing activity linked to the model text. This is our 'Star Write' and the different aspects of spelling, grammar,

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punctuation and vocabulary taught during the week should be evident in this piece of writing as well as previously taught skills. Live marking is used to give immediate feedback and to give children an opportunity to edit and fix their work. A comprehensive progression of skills document has been drawn up and introduced to show the progression in writing from EYFS to Year 2. This shows clearly what knowledge and skills children need to have gained in previous years to ensure they are ready for the next step in their learning. Grammar and punctuation knowledge and skills are taught in context during our writing lesson through our skills and embedding lessons.

Handwriting

Handwriting is an integral part of our English lessons. Children are taught the correct letter formation in Reception, and this is consolidated in Year 1 with any misconceptions picked up and corrected at an early stage. The first 3 weeks of writing lessons in Year 1 and Year 2 have a focus on letter formation. In Year 2, children who are ready are taught to join their writing. We have high expectations for children's handwriting and believe that all writing should be 'best' writing.

Grammar and Spellings

Through the Sounds Write scheme, children are taught to spell using their phonic knowledge that includes the Year 1 and Year 2 statutory common exception words through the appropriate unit. In KS1, spelling sets are allocated (and sent home) and tested each half term. Pupils who are not secure will continue with these spellings in the next half term. When writing across the curriculum, children are encouraged to apply their phonic skills. SEND children or children who are not secure in the previous year groups spellings will be given differentiated spelling lists. Children are taught to use punctuation and grammar in context, following the objectives set out in the National Curriculum. The correct terminology is used and pupils are encouraged to use this language when discussing the structure of their writing.

CPD

Sound and accurate staff subject knowledge allows the intentions of our English curriculum to be delivered successfully. We continually strive to build upon the good understanding of the expectations of the curriculum that our staff have. All staff are encouraged to raise questions, seek support and request further training if needed in order to ensure everyone is confident in what they teach. Good practice is shared between staff. The English leads meet with the other leaders from the Trust at least once a term. Information from these meetings is then shared with staff. All new staff involved with the teaching of phonics will complete official Sounds Write training as a priority. Refresher in-house training for phonics is led by the Phonics Lead, as well through online support using the Sounds Write videos and resources. Meetings or training are carried out (when applicable) with all staff to refresh their skills across the English curriculum or to update them on curriculum or government changes.

SEND

Children identified with additional needs or disability are given the opportunity to minimise the barriers to learning by the implementation of reasonable adaptations to the lesson content, methods of recording, grouping, resources, time allocation or supervision as well as methods for assessment and evaluation. Pre-teaching, interventions and additional practise time may need to be provided to embed learning.

Impact

By teaching English as we do at Oaklands, we believe we are achieving the best possible outcomes for all children. The **impact** of our reading, phonics and writing learning and provision teaching is evidenced in different ways:

- Hearing children read, their reading records and by speaking to the children themselves
- Completion of IAACW key skills checklists

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- Teacher assessment, (including PM Benchmarking, Optional KS1 SATs, phonic screening, Soundwrite diagnostic tool, self-assessment and peer assessment of learning)
- Submission and subsequent analysis of end of term reading judgements, identifying children not achieving expected standard and those exceeding
- Subject monitoring e.g. pupil conferencing, book monitoring and planning monitoring

Attainment –

93% of Year one children achieved 32+ in the Phonic Screening check in 2025.

Pupil Voice –

Reading: 100% of the children asked expressed a love of reading, the children spoke with confidence about reading, the importance and value of reading. Children reported they do not read much at home, as a school we need to look at how we can promote home reading.

Writing: 100% of the children asked shared they enjoy writing and feel proud of their writing. Most children could name resources they use to support independent writing. It was evident that writing was held as a high profile as children talked about writing at school daily. Actions to take – more opportunities for children to read their writing out loud to an adult to celebrate their writing.

Evidence in knowledge and skills –

As all aspects of English are an integral part of the curriculum, cross-curricular writing improves and skills taught in the English lessons are transferred into other subjects; this demonstrates a consolidation of skills and a deeper understanding of how and when to use specific grammar and punctuation.

This 3Is statement is a working document, one which is reviewed and adapted and reflects teaching improvement as an ongoing process.