

# ENGLISH POLICY

*for*

# OAK FARM JUNIOR SCHOOL

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## English Policy for Oak Farm Junior School

### Rationale

The study of English develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes. The use of written and verbal language in the classroom enables children to communicate ideas, views and feelings creatively and imaginatively. As they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry, playscripts, non-fiction and media texts, children gain an understanding of how language works. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations. We will recognise, value and build on the language skills that children have already acquired, including the foreign language skills of children for whom English is an additional language.

### Aims and objectives

The aims of English are:

- to enable children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their audience;
- to encourage children to listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard, and respond appropriately;
- to enable children to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands;
- to develop children's abilities to reflect on their own and others' contributions and the language used;
- to enable children to explore and evaluate their own and others' thoughts, feelings and beliefs, through a range of drama activities;
- to develop confident, independent readers through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text-level knowledge;

- to encourage children to become enthusiastic and reflective readers through immersion in challenging, texts and discussions;
- to help children enjoy writing and recognise its value;
- to enable children to write with accuracy and meaning in narrative and nonfiction;
- to increase the children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work.

### Teaching and learning style

At Oak Farm Junior School we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English lessons. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding of English. English is taught daily through a variety of approaches including; whole class, group work, investigations and individual tasks. Children have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts and use a range of resources to support their learning. Children use digital literacy in English lessons where it enhances their learning, such as drafting their work and inspiring writing. Wherever possible we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

There are children of differing ability in all classes at Oak Farm Junior School. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. During lessons, a range of strategies are used to ensure appropriate levelled learning takes place. We use classroom assistants to support some children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

### English curriculum planning

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the National curriculum in England as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programmes of study for English. We carry out the curriculum planning in English in two phases: a long-term overview across the year and detailed weekly plans. The national curriculum in England details what we must teach across Key Stage 2, setting out the

key objectives in two stages: Years 3 and 4; Years 5 and 6. Each Year's overview outlines a theme and defines what genres they teach to ensure that there is an appropriate balance and distribution of text types across each term and Year group. They also outline the key objectives that should be taught in each year group in line with the national curriculum. The English subject leader is responsible for reviewing these plans. Year groups complete a (short-term) plan for the teaching of English. This lists the specific learning objectives for each lesson and provides details of the content and structure of the lesson. The class teacher keeps these individual plans and adapts as required for their class.

## **SPOKEN LANGUAGE**

### **Aims**

We aim to enable our children:

- To communicate effectively
- To speak confidently and to express themselves clearly in a variety of situations
- To listen attentively and respond to others, having respect for the different opinions of others
- To develop the skills needed for group discussion
- To participate in and respond to drama

### **Approaches:**

Speaking, listening, group discussion and drama activities are integrated into our teaching across the curriculum and are seen as fundamental to teaching and learning. We encourage 'Talk for Writing' strategies, based on the recent work of Pie Corbett and develop children's knowledge and understanding of the conventions of standard English. Children are given opportunities to develop their skills in drama through assemblies and school performances as well as in class through aspects of English lessons. Children are given opportunities to discuss issues in class situations and also to take part in debates and share opinions in role.

## **READING**

## **Aims**

We aim to enable our children:

- To read independently, fluently and expressively, with understanding and enjoyment
- To read a wide range of texts, including text on screen both for pleasure and for information
- To engage with and respond to what they read

## **Approaches**

We encourage a love of books and of reading by providing a rich reading environment in our classrooms and in our school library.

Throughout the school, teachers read aloud to children on a regular basis. We read a wide range of good quality fiction, non-fiction and poetry.

Children take part in Guided reading sessions where they read and discuss books suitable for their ability. Discussions are based on the assessment focuses for reading.

Children are encouraged to read independently and choose books that they enjoy. All children have access to the school library during the school day and also before and after school and at lunchtimes. When children arrive in year 3 they also continue to work through the levelled reading scheme (Oxford Reading Tree).

Some teachers and LSAs have received training in phonics which is used to support children in years 3 and 4 with spelling and reading. The use of Read, Write, Inc, is also in place for children with special educational needs in this area.

We provide reading lists for all year groups on the school website and regularly discuss books with children within the class. As part of

homework, children are requested to read regularly at home and a reading record book is used to monitor this.

We regularly celebrate world book day and participate in the Hillingdon Primary Book of the Year Awards and have also shadowed the Greenaway award. We also encourage children to get involved in ordering books for the library and recommending them to others.

## WRITING

### **Aims**

We aim to enable our children:

- To write clearly, accurately and confidently for a variety of purposes and audiences.
- To develop a consistent, clear, fluent and joined handwriting style and to be aware of the importance of the presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively.
- To understand the conventions of writing, including grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- To plan, draft and edit their writing.
- To feel valued as writers and to appreciate the writing of others.

### **Approaches**

We provide a wide variety of reasons and purposes for writing.

In lessons, teachers use a balance of modelled writing, shared writing, guided writing and independent writing to develop skills. Modelled and shared writing is also used within guided writing groups to focus on development of particular skills for individual groups of children. We also incorporate the 'Talk for Writing' principles in our lessons. We provide regular opportunities for children's writing to be shared, displayed, published and celebrated.

We aim to ensure that children complete pieces of independent writing regularly both in English lessons and across the curriculum. Where possible we ask children to attempt a range of genres throughout the curriculum.

As part of their homework children regularly produce a piece of writing of their own choice. This is guided by suggestions which cover a range of genres and purposes.

In collaboration with Oak Farm Infant school, we teach a fully cursive handwriting style.

### **CROSS-CURRICULAR LITERACY OPPORTUNITIES**

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. They will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

### **FEEDBACK ON WRITING**

Feedback is an essential tool to help children move forward as writers. Feedback may be verbal or written. Children are also encouraged to evaluate their own work and develop skills in peer marking such as giving three stars and a wish.

### **Homework**

Children are set weekly homework in order to strengthen their learning. This usually includes spellings to learn each week, reading at home and another English task which directly links to the current learning or is a revision of earlier learning and is differentiated as required.

### **Handwriting**

Children are encouraged to write in the fully cursive style as soon as they enter Oak Farm Junior School, if they do not already do so. Handwriting practice takes place regularly across the school. By the time children are in Year 5 they are expected to write with a pen.

### **Spellings**

Spellings are taught within English lessons following the national curriculum objectives. However, spellings are also taught and discussed as they arise in specific lessons or when identified as a class need. The statutory list of words (from the new curriculum) that the children should learn has been separated into year group lists. The children are given part of the list to learn at home and practice at school.

### Assessment and recording

Assessment is under review this year due to changes in the national curriculum.

Teachers assess children's work in English continually. The daily assessments that teachers make as part of every lesson allows them to adjust their teaching and planning for subsequent lessons.

In writing, children are assessed against the national curriculum objectives for their year group using the target sheets which are displayed in the front of their English books.

In reading, children work regularly with an adult during guided reading sessions which allows for a range of questioning and informal assessment to take place. At the end of each term, children take a formal comprehension test based on optional SATS or, if available, NFER tests which are more closely linked to the 2014 curriculum. At the end of Year 6 children undertake the relevant, national test.

In grammar and punctuation, children undertake a test each half term to monitor their progress and inform planning. Spelling tests are held each week to test children on words learnt as part of their homework. These words are linked to spelling patterns described in the national curriculum for their year group and may also include topic words or words that children are struggling to spell in their work. Half termly tests of unseen words linked to the national curriculum are also taken.

### Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas

The skills that children develop in English are linked and applied to 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 work in school.

### Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

The teaching of English develops skills through which our children can give critical responses to the moral questions raised in a variety of texts and experiences. 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 of differing abilities and backgrounds to work together and gives them the chance to discuss their ideas and results.

### Teaching English to children with special educational needs and disabilities

At Oak Farm Junior School we teach English to all children, whatever their ability. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Teachers provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties.

All staff provide help with communication and literacy through:

- using texts that children can read and understand;
- using visual and written materials in different formats;
- using digital literacy and other technological aids and taped materials;
- using alternative communication such as communication in print;

Children with SEND are given help according to their needs. This may include working in a read, write, inc group, handwriting groups, extra 1 to 1 reading, intervention groups etc.

### Resources

There is a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All year groups have dictionaries and a range of age-appropriate literacy resources. All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts. Children have access to the Internet through the school network. The library contains a wide range of books to support children's individual research as well as fiction and poetry. Guided reading texts are stored in the corridor and relevant questions are available on the server. Further resources are centrally stored on the English shelves in the library. All plans, flipcharts and resources are stored on the network.

### **ROLE OF THE COORDINATOR**

- Assisting with requisition and maintenance of resources required for the teaching of English. This will be within the confines of the school budget
- Supporting colleagues in the implementation and assessment of English throughout the school.
- Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing standards of English within the school via lesson observations, work and planning scrutinies and pupil voice.
- Ensure that teachers are familiar with the national curriculum and help them plan lessons.
- Keeping the school informed about current developments in the subject and providing a direction for the subject across the school.
- Prepare, organise and lead INSET as appropriate.
- Liaise with teachers from other schools within the Long Lane Collaboration.
- The school's English Action Plan is reviewed and updated annually by the Subject Leader and Senior Leadership Team

### **THE GOVERNING BODY**

Regular reports are made to the governors on the progress of English provision.

This policy will be reviewed every three years or in the light of changes to legal requirements.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

### PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

We encourage parents to become involved in a variety of ways. We ask that they listen to their child read and take them to the local library particularly during the summer reading challenge. The school learning zone is open before and after school and parents are welcome to join their children in choosing and returning books, reading and completing homework tasks.

Parents receive feedback as to their children's progress in English through parent consultation evenings. Each child has a reading record book to record progress in reading at home and school. The practising of spellings and other written work is set in accordance with the Homework Policy. Parents receive an annual written report at the end of the school year. This includes details of their children's progress and areas for development. Where appropriate the SAT results are reported.

### CONCLUSION

This policy also needs to be in line with other school policies and therefore should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

Teaching and Learning Policy

Assessment and Record Keeping

Responding to pupils' work / Feedback / Marking policy

Special Educational Needs Policy

ICT Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

Health and Safety Policy

