

Oakwood School



English Policy

Author: Gary Nolan	
Role: Teacher/DDSL	Review due: October 2025
Head Teacher: Louise Curel	Subject Lead: Gary Nolan

English Policy

INTENTION

English language and literature is at the very heart of our curriculum. It develops children's abilities to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes. Language is used to learn and communicate ideas, views and feelings. It enables children to express themselves clearly, creatively and imaginatively in response to their reading and through their speaking and writing.

Aims and objectives

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

Speaking and Listening:

Pupils are taught to speak clearly and confidently and articulate their views and opinions. They are encouraged to express themselves orally in an appropriate way, matching their style and response to audience and purpose, listening and responding to literature, giving and receiving instructions. Children develop the skills of participating effectively in one to one conversations and group discussions.

By the time children leave our school, we want them:

- To communicate in a way appropriate to the target audience whether peer group, adult etc.
- To use the vocabulary and grammar of standard English
- To develop the ability to listen with attention and respond accordingly
- To provide an outlet for self-expression
- To participate in group discussions
- To participate in a wide range of drama activities.

Reading

- To read accurately, fluently and with understanding
- To develop enjoyment, enthusiasm and independence
- To develop the key comprehension skills of literal, deductive, inferential and evaluative understanding
- To be able to analyse and reflect on a variety of genres, both fiction and non-fiction
- To cultivate a lifelong habit of reading

Writing

- To plan, draft and improve written work on paper and in ICT
- To develop compositional skills in fiction and non-fiction writing
- To use characteristics of different kinds of writing
- To write for a wide range of purposes and audiences
- To correctly use a range of punctuation

Spelling

- To develop a range of skills, including the learning of rules and patterns in spelling

Handwriting

- To develop a legible style of handwriting in both cursive and printed styles
- To be able to use different forms and styles of handwriting for different purposes e.g. labelling, writing notes, diagrams

IMPLEMENTATION

Content of the English programme

Delivery of the Subject

English Curriculum Planning

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. Amongst other guidance, we use the National Literacy Strategy as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English. We carry out the curriculum planning in English in three phases: long-term (scheme of work), medium-term and short-term. The National Literacy Strategy Framework for Teaching details what we teach in the long-term. Our Scheme of Work identifies the key objectives in English that we teach to each year.

Our medium-term plans, which we also base on the Framework, give details of the main teaching objectives for each term. These plans define what we teach and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term. The English Key-Stage co-ordinator is responsible for reviewing these plans. Plans are available to access in the teacher's classroom planning folder. These medium-term plans are identical for each class in a year-group to ensure continuity of teaching across classes. Teachers then adapt their differentiation of the lessons in the weekly plans as needed. Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan for the teaching of English. This lists the specific learning objectives for each lesson and gives details of how the lessons are to be taught. It also includes details of what each group of pupils will be learning. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, and the class teacher and subject co-ordinator often discuss them on an informal basis.

KS1&2

The Key Stage1 & 2 curriculum is based on the National Curriculum. We use some of the published material provided but have spent a great deal of time and effort generating our own materials and schemes of work. During each year the students tackle a balance of Literature and Language based tasks. The schemes of work are adapted each year to ensure they are up to date and they are designed to engage potentially reluctant readers/learners. The specific tasks undertaken in lessons are aimed at building up the pupil's experience, skills and knowledge.

Speaking and Listening

Pupils are encouraged to be appreciative audiences and to have meaningful discussions, wherein the right of others to speak and to be listened to is respected. Opportunities where pupils are able to speak to a variety of audiences and in a variety of styles will be provided.

Handwriting

Pupils will be expected to develop a range of styles of handwriting to suit different tasks: free writing, note taking, scientific labelling, art and design etc. They will be expected to maintain high standards of presentation in all curriculum areas. Teachers will aim to produce good examples of particular kinds of writing and display students' writing attractively, encouraging them to take pride in the presentation of their work.

- In the school we will use the interventions to also support the Handwriting scheme for Years 3 to 6, to provide a complete guide to the practice of teaching handwriting allowing pupils to write with greater confidence, speed and legibility.
- Pupils will be expected to write in pencil, in a joined fluent style in all areas.
- We will be realistic with regards to pupils' handwriting, with a focus on functionality. Yes the long term aim is to aim for mainstream accepted cursive , but initially it is important to develop clear and well formed letters before moving onto joins.

To achieve our aim in KS1 /2, the teacher will:

- Teach regular sessions of handwriting, in form time and during English lesson starter.
- Expect high standards of presentation for all of the pupils' finished work
- Provide good models of particular kinds of writing
- Identify pupils with very poor handwriting for additional support
- Highlight that on occasions a specific style of handwriting is required e.g. labelling of scientific diagrams should be in lower case format, upper case for posters etc.
- Remind pupils that the skills practised in the handwriting sessions should be maintained in all their written work.

In KS3 students who have still not mastered clear joined up writing will be given discrete intervention sessions centred around this expectation as well as time in lessons to refine their handwriting skills.

Reading

The Rapid Reader scheme and supported with the jolly phonics scheme is used in the Lower and upper key stage. There is a wide choice within each key stage to cater for different tastes and preferences. Pupils also have access to a variety of fiction and non-fiction books in each classroom. Children in, Years 1 to 6 inclusive are listened to individually daily. It is hoped that most pupils will have finished the reading scheme by the end of Year 4 and therefore be ready for 'free reading books' only in Years 5 & 6. Any pupils who still require a more structured approach to learning to read will be regularly supported. Students will be allocated a levelled reading book and this will be read at both school and home. Reading progress to be recorded in home school diary and strong relationship between school and home to be maintained.

Writing

The use of good quality and motivational texts in the particular genre the pupils are studying ensures they are given the opportunity to cover a range of fiction and non-fiction writing whilst developing their writing skills across the curriculum. Vocabulary, Connectives, Openers and Punctuation as tools for improving key areas of writing will be used. In fiction, pupils write poetry, short stories and extended stories. In non-fiction the six text types: recounts, reports, instructions, explanations, persuasive and discussions are regularly covered in literacy lessons as well as through cross curricular work. Pupils will have the opportunity to practise grammar exercises and are encouraged to use dictionaries, and thesauruses to extend vocabulary choices. As pupils progress through insert name of school they will become increasingly able to develop their independence in assessing and improving their own work through redrafting and evaluating the work of their peers.

Spelling

The Look Say Cover Write Check method, linked with joined handwriting, is used. Spellings are given out on a Monday for practise at home. Pupils are encouraged to find the meaning of unfamiliar words as part of this homework and practise them in context. Pupils at secondary level, will have weekly spelling tests and will receive focussed support as necessary. A holistic approach to spellings as outlined in Non Nonsense Spelling is encouraged at Oakwood School.

When teaching spellings our staff:

- Encourage children to enjoy choosing and using new and more difficult words.
- Praise all attempts at a word and then help with the tricky bits.
- Encourage children to collect the words they want to spell and keep a list for reference.

- Encourage children to take responsibility for their own spelling. Use the school correction code which helps pupils to proof-read their own work to search for errors.
- Encourage children to take a note of the correct spellings of any miss-spelled words.
- Encourage the use of a dictionary and a Thesaurus - not just for spelling but for discovering the meanings of words. Every classroom should have an Adult Dictionary/Thesaurus, and a Spelling Dictionary/Children's Thesaurus - in addition to simplified Dictionaries.
- Encourage the use of electronic spellcheckers or word finders. Some will complete the word you have typed or give you options to choose from.
- Encourage discussion of the pronunciation and meaning of a word.
- Allow children to leave gaps for words they are uncertain about. These could be a basis for research and discussion.
- Encourage cursive handwriting, which is proven to aid good spelling, and discourage the use of block capitals as recognition word shape is impeded.
- Let the children mark and consult each other over their work.
- Encourage the breaking down of words into their syllables.
- Teach words in context - this helps the pupil to relate the word to its meaning.
- Keep spelling in perspective. It remains of secondary importance to what the child is trying to say, although it can affect the reader's response to what is written.

English– KS3

The department is constantly striving to improve its schemes of work for all key stages and will endeavour to keep a broad depth whilst ensuring students receive sufficiently stretching depth in the subjects.

Speaking and Listening:

Pupils will explore, develop and respond to a range of skills and strategies, in a variety of contexts, adapting language according to task, audience and purpose. We believe that it is vital for meaningful understanding of text and to support the development of imaginative writing that the students have opportunities to take part in a variety of drama techniques including hot seating.

Reading

Pupils will engage with, and respond to, a rich variety of print, developing analysis and awareness of forms and purposes of writing by relating texts to the social, historical and cultural contexts in which they were written; analysing how writers' use of linguistic and literary features shapes and influences meaning; analysing writers' use of organisation, structure, layout and presentation. Pupils have regular opportunities for silent reading, in addition to their timetabled English lessons. These are designed to encourage the enjoyment of reading. The books, both fiction and non-fiction, used during this time, are selected with the aim of raising the pupils' standard of literacy and the selection is regularly updated. On

completion, pupils write a short appreciation of each book. In addition to books which are studied as part of the curriculum, there is a variety of suitable reading material in classrooms and in the Library/Resource area. All classes KS3/4 have access to library reading books. Any pupils who still require a more structured approach to learning to read will be regularly supported in intervention sessions. Home reading from appropriately levelled books is actively encouraged and monitored in home-school book. Other opportunities for reading i.e. magazines, web sites also to be encouraged and recorded.

Writing

Pupils will write a wide range of texts on paper and on screen for different purposes and audiences, adapting features and techniques to create a range of effects and shaping and constructing language for expression and effect. Pupils will use the conventions of Standard English and use grammar accurately and appropriately. At Key Stage 3 we aim to build upon the foundations laid in Key Stage 2, to equip our pupils to deal with language across genres and to extend their enjoyment and appreciation of Literature. The texts chosen mirror the breadth of books studied in mainstream secondary schools. This is done with the intention of easing future transitions back into mainstream education should they occur. We also strongly believe that all students should have a right to studying great works of art. Typical texts which form the fabric of our curriculum include the following:

- Shakespeare
- Dracula
- Lord Of The Flies
- Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde
- Holes
- World War 1 poetry
- Of Mice And Men

Studies have recently shown that when students who perform at levels below the national average KS2 are introduced to higher levels works and GCSE style language as soon as possible in KS3, they have a much greater chance of success at the end of KS4.

Language study includes a range of media and non-fiction texts designed to stimulate critical and analytical skills. Pupils are encouraged to write creatively and imaginatively and to engage in a wide range of Speaking and Listening activities to prepare them for real-life situations.

In English it is never just about the examination. In addition, we offer a broad range of experiences to our pupils: we organise theatre trips and study days whenever appropriate and available.

Any pupils who still show additional concerns with regard to their spellings and writing will be given additional interventions and support which draw upon the No Nonsense support for spelling programme.

KS4

At Oakwood School, we endeavour to support our pupils individual needs in order to help them make the best transition possible to further education and/or the world of work. Thus, several options are available in Key Stage 4 and include:

- Entry Level 3 NCFE qualification
- Level 1 NCFE qualification
- Level 2 NCFE qualification
- GCSE

The Structure of English

The schemes of work are adapted each year to ensure they are up to date. End of Key Stage 1 assessments are used to support group decisions in Key Stage 2 and inform planning during the next academic year. End of Key Stage 2 assessment is used to support grouping decisions at the start of Key Stage 3. In Key Stage four the previous year's end of Key Stage assessment is used to support grouping decisions at the start of the new school year. Pupils across Key Stages are split into groups based on their ability, learning style and learning needs. The nature of the school is such that pupils can arrive in at any time from their previous school. The programme follows the National Curriculum. The specific tasks undertaken in lessons are aimed at building up the pupil's experience, basic skills and knowledge.

The school is constantly striving to improve its schemes of work for all key stages and will endeavour to keep a broad depth staying up to date with current developments in the subject. All pupils follow a core scheme of work. They are led through the four main areas of English: Speaking and Listening, Reading and Writing. Many of the students are performing at levels below the National Average. Texts across the Key Stages are appropriate for the students' ability. Texts studied over an academic year will reflect the range of genres expected. At Oakwood School we believe that the choice of text is crucial if best possible engagement is to be achieved. As the students move into KS3 there is an emphasis on looking at great works of art in line with text expectations of mainstream KS4.

Studies have recently shown that when students who perform at levels below the national average KS2 are introduced to higher levels works and GCSE style language as soon as possible in KS3, they have a much greater chance of success at the end of KS4.

English in a wider school setting

Special Educational Needs

At our school we teach English to all pupils, whatever their ability. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all pupils. Through our English teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting termly individual targets and responding to each pupil's different needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each pupil's attainment and progress against expected Key progress indicators. When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the pupil may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, and differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the pupil to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the pupil's needs.

Intervention will be put in place for students where significant gaps in learning have been identified. Where necessary the child will have additional TA support either in the classroom setting or individual support in the learning support room. We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning English. Where pupils are to participate in activities outside the classroom, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils. Pupils who are gifted in English are extended through the use of more complex problems and investigations and may work on activities the year group above them are working through. Work is scaled up or down to enable all pupils to access the curriculum at a level appropriate to their needs.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development and Safeguarding

When teaching English, we contribute to the pupil's spiritual development where possible. We also provide pupils with the opportunity to discuss moral questions, or what is right and wrong, when studying topics which may contribute towards more difficult topics/scenarios.

Cross curricular learning

Schemes of work are planned creatively to harness learning opportunities from across the curriculum. Each scheme refers to these links.

Equal Opportunities

Every lesson at all key stages should be planned in such a way that it encourages full and active participation by all pupils, irrespective of ability, class, colour, gender or creed.

Display

All teachers should link curriculum learning with English. English vocabulary should be clearly on display in every classroom used for the delivery of the subject. Every pupil should have the opportunity to have his or her work on display as it is important to celebrate, inform and consolidate personal and whole school learning

Health and Safety

Consideration for Health and Safety is of the utmost important in English. Appropriate storage and handling of materials is highlighted. Pupils are taught to follow instructions to control risk to themselves and others.

The teaching of English supports the social development of our pupils through the way we expect them to work with each other in lessons. We group pupils so that they work together, and we give them the chance to discuss their ideas and results. Safeguarding is embedded across the curriculum throughout. Through English students are encouraged to discuss and explore topics relevant to the subject area such as gangs during *Rome & Juliet* and child on child abuse during *Lord of the Flies*. This in turn develops the students understanding of these difficult topics in relation to wider subject learning.

The teaching of English offers opportunities to support the social development of our children through planning and exploring situations in context of both fiction and non-fiction. Groupings allow children to work together and give them the chance to discuss their ideas and feelings about their own work and the work of others. Their work in general helps them to develop a respect for the abilities of other children and encourages them to collaborate and co-operate across a range of activities and experiences. The children learn to respect and work with each other and with adults, thus developing a better understanding. They also develop an understanding of differences in people through the topics covered.

Resources

Resourcing any subject remains a key priority in delivering the subject as intended. We have a wide range of resources to support the teaching of art across the school. All our classrooms have a range of basic resources, but we keep the more specialised equipment in the art cupboard. We have half-termly review of the resources needed to plan ahead to ensure that weekly lessons are delivered with efficiency.

IMPACT

Assessment, Recording and Monitoring

Assessment for Learning is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. This is a partnership between pupils and teacher with the common goal of improving each pupil's understanding and skills. Throughout this process it is critical that pupils are involved in discussing and appraising their work and are made aware of their progress. Pupils should know, through discussion with their teacher, what the next steps are to improving. Teachers use a combination of formative and summative techniques such as:

- Marking work
- One to one discussion with pupils
- Assessment of lesson objectives
- Observation of the pupil/s
- A mixture of open and closed questioning
- Frequent quick tests, written or oral
- End of unit formal testing and teacher assessments

It is the responsibility of the teacher to assess all pupils and to record and report the outcomes of that assessment. Work in English will be monitored in a variety of ways. Teacher marking

is always essential and valued by pupils and parents but there will be opportunities when pupils, particularly older pupils will benefit from marking their own exercises with routine practice and guidance from the teacher. Where appropriate, pupils are encouraged to check computational exercises with a calculator. This fosters independence in the pupils who can seek help if they are unable to locate and correct errors.

We assess pupil's work in English from three aspects (long-term, short-term and medium-term). We make short-term assessments which we use to help us adjust our weekly targets. These short-term assessments are made using SATs papers. As part of the assessments we incorporate bands and use Key Progress indicators (KPI). Each half term the KPI targets are placed in the beginning of the pupil's workbooks. The bands are placed in the back of the books for the whole academic year. We make medium-term assessments to measure progress against the key objectives. We use the assessment record sheet of the key objectives as the recording format for this. We make long-term assessments towards the end of the school year and we use these to assess progress against school and national targets. We can then set targets for the next school year.

Formative Assessment is carried out informally by teachers in the course of a lesson. It is used to:

- Guide the progress of the individual.
- Identify this progress in each area of the subject.
- Determine what has been learnt.
- To decide upon the next stage – whether it is a progression or consolidation.
- Suitable tasks for Formative Assessment will include:
- Small group discussions about a practical task.
- Short tests in which the teacher questions orally and pupils record answers.
- Specific assignments for individual pupils according to ability.

The quality of marking is crucial. A simple x is of little or no assistance to a pupil unless accompanied by an indication of where and how the error occurred, together with an explanation, written or verbal of how to avoid it in the future using Closing the Gap (CTG) on marking sheet. All closing the gap assessment should be specific for that marked lesson and revisited during the beginning of the next lesson. Marking should be both diagnostic and summative and is best done through conversation with the pupil. We keep detailed records of a pupil's progress and attainment and communicate this to carers in the following ways:

- Carer Consultation afternoons keep carers fully informed of their child's mathematical development and an indication given as to whether academic expectations are being met.
- Regular reports detail their child's attainment and effort in the subject, including relevant test results. If a pupil is identified as having difficulty with any aspect of the English curriculum the following process will be implemented
- Extra support and guidance from the English teacher where strategies will be devised.
- Curriculum support offered if the difficulties persist, within the classroom or one to one.

Progress and Achievement

Contribution of English to Teaching in Other Curriculum Areas

Pupils should view their learning as a whole rather than a set of disjoint subjects. We aim to do this in the following ways:

- Identifying and promoting transferable skills whenever they arise
- Identifying common themes across subject disciplines
- Using a wide range of contexts to introduce new ideas and concepts

The monitoring of the standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching English is the responsibility of the English subject leader. The work of the subject leader involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, being informed about current developments in the subject, attending training, booking workshops and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The English subject leader gives the headteacher a half termly summary report in which they evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, pupil voice, what went well, what needs to happen next and any extra curricula activities within the subject. The English subject leader monitors books and English work within the classroom as well as planning again on a half termly basis providing teachers with constructive feedback. The assessment for English is done by class teachers on a half termly basis when each topic is complete. The skills go over a whole key stage.

Students will complete topics / units delivered for their ability. Students will have developed some skills in relation to healthy living, structures, product design, evaluation, technical knowledge, tools and others. Students will have more ability in problem solving and critical thinking.

Students are able to move onto complete functional skills (NCFE) qualifications once at Key stage 4 level. This enables students who are unable to complete a GCSE to leave Oakwood with an equivalent qualification to support them in attending college and gaining a job in the future.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Head Teacher.
It will be due for review in September 2024.