

## English At Orleton School: Policy including intent, implementation and impact



At Orleton School, we believe that literacy and communication are key life skills and that it is our role, through our broad and rich curriculum, to help children develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively with the world at large, through spoken and written language. Engendering a love of reading and writing that is shared across our school, we strive to ensure all children enjoy and appreciate literature and its rich variety.

Our shared philosophy, that literacy in all its forms is a key life skill, helps to build the foundations for learning at Orleton School. We are driven by the belief that, in order to achieve success, children need to be taught the skills of spoken conversation, before learning the grammatical elements of the English language, allowing them to become successful writers with a strong sense of achievement. Through carefully chosen shared texts across school, and a strategically planned English curriculum, we ensure our children leave primary school with a solid foundation in the spoken and written word, having had the opportunity to master these essential life skills.

As a school, we aim to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping children with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading both across the curriculum and at home. As a school, we aim to ensure that all pupils aspire to achieve by ensuring that all teaching:

- provides children with the exposure to different types of texts (fiction, non-fiction, poetry, song);
- nurtures confident story-tellers through imitation who have mastered the art of speaking whilst acquiring a wide and rich vocabulary skills set; a solid understanding of grammar; and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language;
- demonstrates high-quality teacher-modelling of both spoken and written language skills;
- allows children to edit, evaluate and publish pieces of writing using the curriculum skills they have been taught.

This English Policy outlines in depth how we teach English at Orleton.

### **Writing:**

**Intent:** The curriculum is designed with our pupils and our community in mind. It enables children to access and enhance their understanding of their home, their locale and the wider community, developing their cultural capital and giving them opportunities and choices about their future, and their impact as they progress through their school career and beyond. This will help them become successful members of modern British society, preparing them for the challenges and opportunities of their future lives.

**Implementation:** Children will write a wide range of texts using models from a range of genres as appropriate to their age and understanding using the ‘Talk for Writing’ framework. This ensures that from an early age, children will be exposed to high-quality texts and learning which enables them to write independently with greater confidence using the understanding that they have developed. This also enables children with limited life experiences and little ‘cultural capital’ to keep up with their peers in writing.

They will be expected to use their knowledge of phonics, spelling and encoding to write in Early Years and Key Stage One, followed by also using spelling rules and letter patterns as they progress in Key Stage Two. Their sentences will develop as they learn more about grammar and how it works in sentences and longer pieces of writing. They will be able to discuss their work using grammatical terms and select appropriate grammar and language to reflect the audience and purpose of the particular text. They will also be taught to use punctuation accurately at age-appropriate levels. Pupils are expected to edit and improve their writing before publication, guided by peer and adult evaluation and discussion. Children are expected to develop a fluent cursive handwriting style by the end of Key Stage Two, based on the Nelson handwriting scheme. To encourage a fluent cursive style, we have recently started to use specific ‘handwriting guidelines’ exercise books. These will be continued until each child’s handwriting is of the expected standard.

**Impact:** Their writing will be increasingly influenced by great authors, poets, performers and playwrights through the use of model texts. Children will be able to combine words into progressively complex narratives and non-fiction texts. They will gradually develop the characters, atmosphere, settings and plot when story-writing. We aim to develop enthusiastic writers who can independently produce accurate, creative and ambitious texts by the end of Key Stage Two and who enjoy this creative process. At the end of Key Stage One and Two, our pupils achieve at or above the national standard.

### **Assessment: (How we know how children are doing in writing)**

- Termly tracking (hot tasks)
- Termly Pupil Progress meetings
- Formative assessments (cold tasks)
- Marking and feedback (success criteria)
- Internal and external moderation (book scrutinies)

## **Reading:**

**Intent:** The best primary schools in England teach virtually every child to read, regardless of the social and economic circumstances of their neighbourhoods, the ethnicity of their pupils, the language spoken at home and most special educational needs or disabilities.

This aspiration for each of our children is based upon the need for them to enter the next stage of their education, as articulate and literate individuals with a strong love of reading, well-equipped with the cultural capital which enables them to take their rightful place with confidence. We recognise the responsibility to send children to secondary school having

mastered at least the basic elements of reading and to have developed a love of reading originating from all cultures which will last a lifetime.

We aim to ensure that all children have the chance to follow an enriching curriculum by getting them reading early and developing fluent readers as early as possible so that comprehension skills can follow: **learning to read** → **reading to learn**

Competence in reading is the key to independent learning and has a direct effect on progress in all other areas of the curriculum. We want our children to be ‘readers’, not just children who can read. Meek (1983) believes that, ‘Readers are made when they discover that the activity is worth it.’

We will ensure that all children have equal access to the curriculum, regardless of gender, race, religion or ability. Children with specific reading, speech and language or hearing difficulties will be identified and supported through support programmes in school and external help will be sought where necessary.

**Implementation:** We start teaching our children to read as soon as they enter our school. The teaching of reading is carefully planned to meet the needs of all of our children, taking into account individuals and different starting points. We recognise the importance of taking a consistent whole-school approach to the teaching of reading to close any gaps and to target the highest possible number of children to attain age-related expectations and above.

There are two key areas that we consider crucial for reading success:

1. **Learning to read (decoding)** through the use of a structured and closely-monitored synthetic phonics programme (RWI) in Class R and Class 1. Progress is monitored at least every 6 weeks, to identify quickly any child who is in danger of falling behind their peers. Children who do not meet the expected standard in the Phonics check, continue in daily phonics intervention until they reach the required level.
2. **Reading to learn (comprehension)** through the use of RWI story books, Reading with RIC and Cracking Comprehension. Again, interventions will be provided to enable all learners to achieve the expected standards and some to develop higher order reading skills at a greater depth.

### **Reading Mileage**

According to Arlington et al 2008, ‘Some researchers suggest beginning readers need to read 600-1000 words a week to become competent readers’.

At Orleton, every attempt is made to ensure that our children gain ‘reading mileage.’ This means ensuring that the children have opportunities to read wherever possible, both within reading lessons, and across the curriculum. Daily practice will ensure that readers have the best chance of developing fluency (reading words at a glance) and we know that this supports and enables comprehension. Comprehension also supports reading fluency with contextual information.

### **Opportunities for extending reading mileage at Orleton are:**

- RWI story books
- Individual reading (1:1 reading with an adult in school)
- Guided reading (Reading with RIC and Cracking Comprehension)
- Cross-curricular reading
- Independent reading
- Home reading
- Reading worships
- Reading interventions
- Toe-by-Toe

Children also listen to stories and poems read aloud by an adult on a regular basis during our 'story-times'.

**Impact:** Through reading, we will produce happy, engaged learners with a strong understanding of their place in our society and culture. Our children demonstrate perseverance and resilience with very positive attitudes towards their reading, and a lifelong love of books. At Key Stage One and Key Stage Two our children achieve at least the national standard in assessments.

**Assessment:** (How we know how our pupils are doing in reading)

- Termly tracking
- Termly Pupil Progress meetings
- Termly Teacher assessments (Y1-6)
- Marking and feedback
- Analysis of test results
- Six-weekly phonics tracking and early identification of children needing support
- Regular termly testing
- Monitoring (book scrutinies and observations)

### **Cultural Capital:**

Through our literacy curriculum, we aim to introduce children to knowledge, skills and behaviours which will accumulate over time through many different experiences and opportunities. Children arrive at our school with their own 'cultural capital' and will gradually share this through talk and play, as well as expanding their awareness, skills and knowledge through diverse and enriching curricular experiences. Literacy and literature, in all its forms, is a key vehicle for this development. The impact of cultural awareness is that our children leave primary school with good understanding of their own culture as well as that of others, both in Britain and beyond, and demonstrate interest in the literature of diverse cultures.