

English

English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. A high quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils, therefore, who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.

The teaching of English is central to a child's education and will develop the core skills needed across the whole curriculum. At Oak Cottage we aim to deliver our English curriculum in a stimulating and varied manner. The use of Visual Literacy, the performing arts, Computing and a cross curricular thematic approach enable teachers to develop children's skills and knowledge across a range of genres and contexts.

We aim to enable every child to gain in confidence and develop transferable skills in English so that they successfully:

- Read a variety of texts with fluency, accuracy and expression, showing a good understanding
- Develop the habit of reading regularly and widely, both for pleasure and to discover new information
- Appreciate our rich and varied literacy heritage
- Develop a legible, joined style of handwriting
- Acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style across a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- Use discussion in order to learn. Be fluent and articulate in the use of the spoken word to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- Are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate

At Oak Cottage we use a cross curricular approach to ensure that English is placed at the heart of the curriculum.

Reading at Oak Cottage

Reading is a key aspect of your child's learning in our school and we are committed to improving the literacy skills of all our pupils. Raising the profile of reading and encouraging reading for pleasure are so important in the development of these skills.

Your child takes part in regular reading opportunities in class through individual, group and whole class reading. Every pupil takes home a 'home reading' book which they are encouraged to read every night. In addition, in Reception and year one, the children are given 'tricky' words to practice at home.

We have a range of reading schemes in school, which are colour coded according to reading levels. These books are read at school and are also taken home for extra practice. The children enjoy books covering different genres, from a range of reading schemes including: Oxford Reading Tree, Collins Big Cat, Bug Club, Rigby Star, Songbirds and Project X.

When reading in school, an emphasis is placed on both word-reading and comprehension to ensure the children develop competency in reading. In order to develop fluency in word reading, phonics teaching is introduced in the Nursery and continued daily throughout Reception and Key Stage 1, using the 'Letters and Sounds' six phase teaching programme from the Primary National Strategy. In addition to this, we introduce the 'Jolly Phonics' sounds and actions and the Read Write Inc. actions for phase 3. Opportunities are also given during Key Stage 1 and 2 to use additional phonic programmes if necessary, for example 'Big Cat phonics' and 'Phonics Play', which provide further consolidation of phonics. Some pupils undertake specific intervention programmes if they experience difficulties with reading or phonological skills. Comprehension skills develop through pupils' experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction. We encourage all pupils to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world they live in, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum.

In order to develop the children's love of reading, they are able to choose books which interest them from our library; in Years One to Six, the children have a regular library session whilst in the Early Years Foundation Stage the children have story sacks which contain non-fiction and fiction books.

Library

Both KS1 and KS2 have a library. Each is cultivated as a learning environment, which promotes an interest and awareness of the value of books for both research and pleasure.

The KS1 and KS2 libraries have both fiction and non-fiction books. Both have been categorised using the Dewey Decimal system, although there is also a colour coding system in operation to help the children.

Parent helpers support the running of our libraries. Throughout the school all classes have a weekly library session when they can choose and borrow books, for which we ask that parents provide their child with a book bag. These can be purchased from the school office.

Every year, the school takes part in 'World Book Day'. Lessons are devoted to learning more about books, authors and poets. Pupils share their favourite books and enjoy dressing up as book characters for the day.

A book fair visits once a year and money is raised for the school for further investment in reading books and resources.