



# Overleigh St Mary's C of E Primary School

## English Policy

Signed by:

Head teacher

Date: Summer 2025

Chair of governors

Date: Summer 2025



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## English Policy

This policy outlines the organisation and management of English and the teaching and learning of *English* in our school. The policy is based on the New Curriculum 2014 and the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum 2020.

### PURPOSE / VISION STATEMENT

#### Writing

Through delivery of our English curriculum, we want children to become confident and capable writers, who develop a love of language and communicate coherently through their written and spoken language. We believe that all pupils should be able to confidently communicate their knowledge, ideas and emotions through their writing. We want pupils to acquire a wide vocabulary, a solid understanding of grammar, punctuation and spelling throughout their time in primary school. We want them to be equipped with the skills to write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.

#### Reading

We want children to learn to read so that they can enjoy a wide variety of stories and poems, develop their acquisition and understanding of language, feed their imaginations and develop an awareness of authors and author styles. We also recognise that children need to read to find information which will support and enrich their learning and enable them to fully access our curriculum. We aim to develop a

love of books and learning by providing our children with access and exposure to a wide variety of texts throughout their time at Overleigh.

## 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 word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment

### Reading

At Overleigh, we are guided by the National Curriculum for English - Reading (2014). The National Curriculum for English- Reading consists of 2 dimensions:

- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading)

Based on this, we aim to ensure that all pupils have:

- discrete, daily phonics teaching from the very start of school
- the ability to speedily decode familiar and unfamiliar words with the overall aim of automaticity
- the ability to read fluently and with confidence
- good comprehension skills
- access to a wide range and genre of books
- an appreciation and love of reading
- an increased vocabulary and developed language skills

We intend for our children to be inspired and enthused by books so reading is embedded in all areas of the curriculum.

### Writing

At Overleigh, we are guided by the National Curriculum for English - Writing (2014). The National Curriculum for English- Writing consists of 2 dimensions:

- transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing)

Based on this, we aim to ensure that all pupils:

- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- plan, revise and evaluate their writing
- spell quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words
- develop fluent and legible handwriting.

We intend for our children to be inspired and motivated to write, through a range of stimuli: books, experiences and practical opportunities in order for writing to be embedded throughout the entire curriculum. We understand the natural relationship between reading and writing, and we strive to provide children at Overleigh with rich, high quality texts to support their development as writers.

## LEGAL / STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

National curriculum 2014

Early Years Foundation Stage 2020

## PROCESSES IMPLEMENTED IN SCHOOL

### Teaching and Learning - Reading

We start teaching children to read by using a structured, synthetic phonics approach, teaching the sounds that letters make so that children can “decode” the words on the page. Children are taught to segment and blend words for reading. Once children can do this, they are able to read books, with words, that match the sounds that they know. Children are taught “tricky” and common exception words alongside this phonic approach so that they build up a sight vocabulary of words that cannot be sounded out (decoded) hence their name, tricky words. This structured approach for learning to read continues through Reception, Year One, Year Two and beyond if required. As children progress through school, they will learn to read and understand texts using

this phonic approach and other strategies such as the use of picture clues, the context of the word, meaning of the word and etymology.

All our early reading books are colour banded linked to the progression within our phonics scheme – Little Wandle Letters and Sounds. All the early book bands are fully decodable using phonics skills and knowledge. We use the published scheme, Big Cat Phonics and provide additional phonics books to read at home through our Big Cat for Little Wandle e-library. When a child has sufficiently developed their reading skills they will be moved from the book banded books onto 'free reads'. Children at this stage are able to choose from a wide range of reading material in our school libraries.

### Whole Class Shared Reading

Whole class shared reading is also taught throughout school and provides daily teaching of reading for ALL children with access to high quality texts, quality modelling of reading, opportunities to discuss vocabulary, punctuation and expression and all at a level higher than which they can independently read. Across school, we refer to this time as Reading with D.E.R.I.C and focus on 5 key reading skills.

Decode – Decode new words from the text using their developing phonic knowledge.

Explain – Explore and investigate the meaning of new words.

Retrieve – Retrieve information from the text to develop comprehension.

Interpret – Use the text to interpret meaning and inspire prediction.

Choice – Comment on the author's choice of vocabulary or style.

### Reading for Pleasure

To wider promote a love of reading we encourage visits to the local library, the library van and visiting books fairs. We participate in national days such as World Book Day and invite authors and story tellers into school. We take part in the extreme reading challenge and summer reading challenges at the local libraries and also have an outside 'Reading Shed' where children can choose to read and swap books before school and during playtimes. As part of our whole school Rainbow Reading Reward Challenge, children are encouraged to select books of their choice to read and are awarded badges for the number of books they read. Similarly, the children also have subscriptions to an online reading library where gold stars are awarded for the number of books read.

## Teaching and Learning – Writing

The teaching of phonics is key to the development of good reading skills, and consequently writing skills. Children learn the sounds within words to help decode them. In EYFS, they learn to recognise each letter and match it to its sound. They then move onto groups of two letters (digraphs) or three letters (trigraphs) that say a new sound when put together. They learn how to pronounce these sounds (phonemes) correctly so that they can segment and blend words correctly. Children are also taught to recognise common high frequency words and 'tricky' words as well as being able to spell these. We follow Little Wandle for Letters and Sounds to teach phonics.

EYFS and KS1 children have daily phonics lessons of 20-30 minutes. This learning is then consolidated during English lessons and reading sessions to ensure that children use phonics as the route to decoding unfamiliar words. We ensure that any child who has not passed the phonics check by the end of KS1 has further phonics teaching into KS2. In key stage 2 (years 3-6) teachers use the 'Pathways to Spell' spelling programme, introducing new spelling patterns, providing different opportunities to apply the spelling pattern, before being tested weekly.

### Handwriting

Handwriting is taught discretely each day, through direct teaching using the PenPals scheme. Children are firstly taught how to form letters correctly, writing with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation. As children progress through KS2, the aim is to increase the fluency with which they can write, which in turn, will support their composition and spelling.

### Mastery Approach

At Overleigh, writing is taught through whole class lessons, using a mastery approach. Children should have opportunities to write for a range of real purpose and audiences as part of their work across the curriculum. Grammar and punctuation knowledge and skills are taught through English writing lessons as much as possible. The required skills are taught through genres of writing, linking it to the genre to make it more connected with the intended writing outcome.

Mastery targets are selected from a genre progression grid, which then forms the focus of lessons for each unit. Children with additional needs are also provided with a specific Mastery Target, which is related to an area of writing they may need to develop. Each unit begins with conceptual understanding: children are engaged with the context for learning, provided by a stimulus, a hook, a concrete experience, drama or role-play. This is followed by procedural fluency - repeated learning experiences to

practice, apply and extend the new skills, which are the mastery targets. This includes frequent short burst writing, in order for children to build stamina to write, alongside opportunities to apply mastery targets. Towards the end of the writing unit, children are given the opportunity to apply all of the skills within an extended context.

Two different genres are covered each half-term, allowing the children to be exposed to a variety of texts, including fiction and non-fiction, whilst also writing two extended independent pieces, demonstrating their writing ability. Teachers plan activities which closely match pupils' abilities, providing additional, individual targets to help close any gaps, whilst providing support through scaffolding and visual prompts. Opportunities are planned in for children to demonstrate their ability, to extend and apply their writing skills.

Teaching continues to provide further opportunities to apply skills to new contexts. Children are given frequent opportunities to apply their writing skills for a range of purposes in wider curriculum subjects. In KS2, children have a weekly writing session whereby they apply their writing skills to a wider curriculum subject, such as Geography or History.

### MONITORING & REVIEW

The leadership team and English Subject Leaders check that the teaching and learning for English is secure and consistent through monitoring the subject on a regular and frequent basis. The method of monitoring supports the ongoing development of the curriculum. This includes:

- Staff subject knowledge, which is continuously developed throughout the year through training courses, moderation opportunities and lesson observations.
- Regular staff meetings to discuss and evaluate the latest guidance and best practice within the subject. From this, new strategies and methods of teaching are shared and implemented.
- Analysis of year group data to ensure progress and attainment and identify any need for early intervention.
- The monitoring of books and lessons against the non-negotiables, so that inconsistencies can be addressed.
- Tracking of content against the long-term plan of the school, to ensure the full breadth of the curriculum is met.

The impact of this is to ensure that children at Overleigh are fluent, confident and readers, which will enable them to be ready for the curriculum at Key Stage 3 and for life as an adult in the wider world.

## INCLUSION

In planning work the teachers will aim:

- to provide breadth and balance of language activities for all children
- to provide a differentiated English curriculum to meet the needs of all the children through the continuity of experiences
- to set suitable learning challenges for individuals or small groups of children
- to respond to pupils diverse learning needs
- to liaise with the SENCO to ensure that provision is made for all children with SEN.
- to relate activities for SEN children to their individual targets and personal plans.
- to overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.
- to identify vulnerable groups who are not making expected progress, and provide appropriate support.

## SEN Provision

Pupils identified as needing extra support in English will be given the appropriate help in the classroom. Providing for pupils with special educational needs should take account of each pupil's particular learning and assessment requirements and incorporate specific approaches which will allow individuals to succeed, such as using texts at an appropriate level of difficulty and planning for additional support.

## EAL Provision

At Overleigh, we are a diverse community and have rising intake of pupils who do not hold English as a first language. Providing for pupils with English as an Additional Language should take account of each pupil's ability and grasp of the English language.

Teachers should both differentiate planning for these children but also allow them.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

### Head Teacher and Governing Body

- Support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively.
- Ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning.
- Monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations.
- Monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil Attainment.
- Ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching.

### Subject Leader

- To have an impact on raising standards of attainment for English across the whole school.
- Adapt and use the Programme of Study for English across the whole school that meets the needs of our children.
- To monitor the whole school and individual needs to be able to assess individual professional development opportunities and needs.
- To maintain the availability of high-quality resources.
- To maintain an overview of current trends and developments within the subject.
- To ensure, together with the Head Teacher and Assessment Lead, a rigorous and effective programme of moderation of assessments.
- To ensure a regular and effective programme of analysis of children's work sample monitoring is in place.
- To ensure a regular and effective programme of analysis of short-term planning is in place.

### Class Teachers

- Ensure the effective implementation of the National Curriculum for English/EYFS.
- Adapt and use the Programme of study for English across the whole school that meets the needs of our children.
- Make effective use of Assessment for learning within English.
- To ensure work is planned to enable all children to reach their full potential.

### Teaching Assistants

- To support the class teacher in the effective implementation of English.

### Parents/Carers

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We do all we can to inform parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- holding parents' evenings to discuss children's progress

- sending an annual report to parents in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can develop their learning
- explaining to parents how they can support their children with homework and English learning through workshops and parent meetings.

### EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed annually by the English coordinator, in consultation with the staff, SLT and governors and as and when elements of English are identified or prioritised within the School Improvement Plan.

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