



Over St. John's CE Primary School

English Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Feedback Policy, Assessment Policy, Teaching and Learning Policy, Handwriting Policy.

Curriculum Intent

It is our intention, at Over St. John's, when teaching the English curriculum, that our pupils acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding to become lifelong learners and linguists. We strive to ensure that all our children receive a well-rounded learning experience when reading, writing, speaking and listening, which will equip them with the fundamental knowledge and skills to achieve, not only during their time at our school, but in the next stages of their education and into their future. It is our intention to immerse pupils in the wonders of quality texts to instil a love for reading and writing, a passion for discovery and a confidence to explore their imagination across the curriculum. English is a core subject of the National Curriculum and a prerequisite for educational and social progress as it underpins the work undertaken in all other areas of the curriculum.

Our Intentions

- to ensure that every child can read, write, speak and listen with confidence, fluency and understanding by the time they leave Over St. John's CE Primary School;
- to promote and instil a love for reading, writing and high-quality literature into pupils at all ages;
- to encourage every child to develop a positive attitude towards reading, writing, speaking and listening so that they become pleasurable and meaningful activities;
- to derive an ambitious English curriculum which is coherently sequenced and planned to develop the acquisition of age-appropriate knowledge and skills whilst following a mastery approach to learning;
- to design and develop a curriculum which allows for flexibility so that it meets the changing needs of our school and cohorts of children.

Curriculum Implementation – Writing

Our English curriculum for writing follows the content requirements as set out in the National Curriculum for Year 1 to Year 6 and Development Matters for Reception. Within our school, Reception and Key Stage One children are taught in single age classes, whereas Key Stage Two children are taught across three mixed year group classes and our curriculum is designed to reflect this. Reception and Key Stage One children are taught a single year programme of English, whereas in Key Stage 2, the teaching of English has a two-year rolling programme. To supplement and enhance the writing offer in Reception the children also take part in Greg Bottrill's drawing club. A resource aimed to further encourage the children

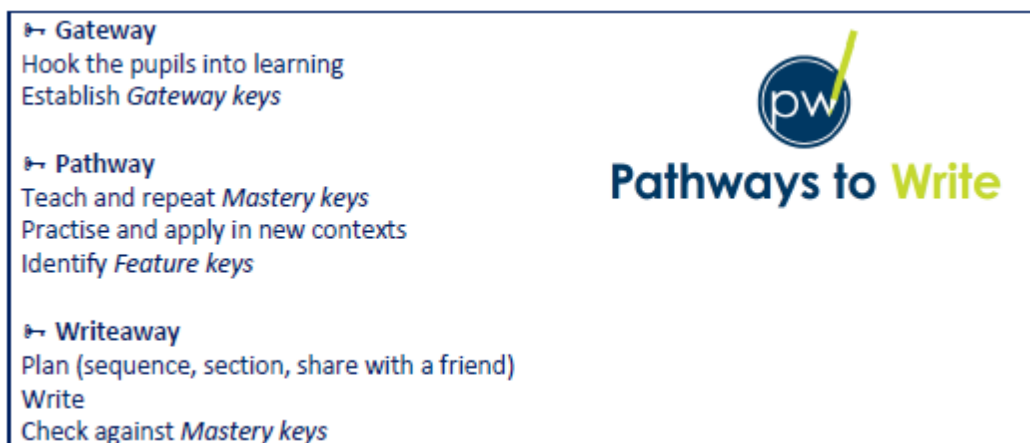
in their writing to access their imagination. develop their own ideas and use a wide range of vocabulary based on a different stimulus.

Our writing curriculum for Reception to Year 6, is derived around a sequence of high-quality age-appropriate texts which is supported by The Literacy Company's Pathways to Write Planning. We use each book to create opportunities in writing:

- to explore prior learning and skill acquisition; to develop grammar and punctuation knowledge and how to effectively use these within all areas and aspects of writing whether in English or across the wider curriculum;
- to develop a rich and varied vocabulary;
- to explore the writing structure and features of different genres;
- to identify the purpose and audience;
- plan and write different pieces of writing with a clear context and purpose before evaluating the effectiveness of writing by proof-reading, editing and redrafting.

The Pathways to Write units of work provide teachers with comprehensive planning which they can follow to support their teaching of English. However, these plans can be adapted to meet the needs of the cohort of children.

The Pathways to write approach focuses on three core elements that are referred to as keys:



The Mastery Keys are the features of writing that we are aiming for the children to master within a particular unit of work. These keys often focus on the grammar skills to be taught and are progressive and follow a mastery approach across the classes. These grammar skills are often linked to the text studied, where children can see where authors have skilfully used them. Opportunities are then provided for children to explore this grammatical skill and apply their understanding of it in their own writing. This skill is continually explored and revisited following our mastery approach throughout the units as repeated practise to ensure they become learnt skills and an embedded feature within the children's writing.

The knowledge and skills to be learnt are mapped out on each classes writing outcome document which is included in the front of their English book.

Teachers provide high-quality models of writing to support children. Teachers will engage in modelled writing or shared writing with their class following a 'My go, Our go, Your go' approach during writing tasks. At Over St. John's, we have agreed the following definitions for both modelled and shared writing within English:

- Modelled Writing is where we are writing **to** children. We write in front of them, and we talk about our writing to bring our thought processes out into the open. We hold

the power of the pen and the children watch and listen as we demonstrate the writing process.

- Shared writing is where we are writing **with** children. We still write live, but we ask them to offer their ideas. We write together and so relinquish some of our pen power to enable the children to shape the collaborative text.

My Go, Our Go, Your Go....

- **My go** – focuses on teacher live modelling how to do it, talking about all steps that you are doing.
- **Our go** – focuses on the teacher leading a shared writing session, still holding the pen and writing but taking ideas from the children.
- **Your go** – children will complete own go. This will be the main task of the lesson. Sometimes in grammar lesson it may focus on the children practising the skill etc.

Children are regularly provided with opportunities to write at length, in extended, independent writing sessions throughout the unit of work as well as across the curriculum. Opportunities for writing across the curriculum enable children to practise and develop the skills they have been learning within English lessons. The children are provided with an 'every time I write' during writing opportunities which highlights the key skills they are expected to include.

Each class also has an English working wall which is used to support the learning process.

Writing – Vocabulary Development

Vocabulary development is a key element of the writing process within the classroom. Children are encouraged to explore and discover new vocabulary linked to the text that they are reading through finding the meaning to new words, identifying synonyms and antonyms for words, through shades of meaning or gradients of words activities, and by using new words in sentences. This exploration enables the children to be able to access and understand the text they are reading whilst also enhancing their writing. Each classroom also has a WOW vocabulary wall. Ambitious vocabulary is collected and displayed on the wall with its definition, word class and or an image for the children to use within their writing.

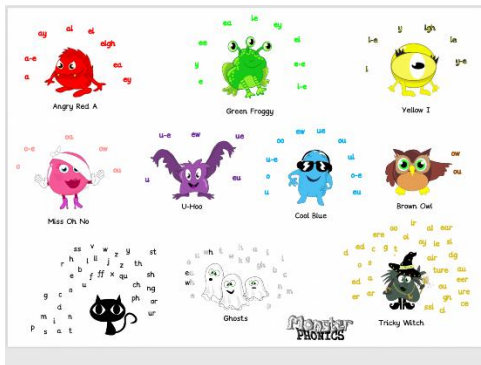
Curriculum Implementation - Phonics

At Over St. John's, we follow the DfE-approved, Monster Phonics Scheme. Monster Phonics is a whole-class, Systematic Synthetic Phonics Scheme with Decodable Books for children in Reception and Key Stage 1. We use Monster Phonics in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. It is also used within and throughout school as a rapid intervention for children who require further support, whether this be through pre-teaching, keep up, catch up or precision teach interventions. Teachers carry out ongoing formative and summative assessment of the children within their class which informs the need for any extra support. Our summative Phonics assessment is carried out through Phonics Tracker.

Monster Phonics teaches children to confidently read by enabling them to identify the individual graphemes (letter combinations) and blend the sounds (phonemes) together to read the word. Monster Phonics provides a multi-sensory approach to teaching and learning Phonics. Sounds are categorised into ten colour groups and each colour has a corresponding monster character.

The colour-coded grapheme system is unique to Monster Phonics; each coloured grapheme is paired with a monster character that makes the same sound to give audio-visual prompts

that help children 'see' each sound within a word and pronounce it correctly. The monsters are sound cues to help children remember how to read and pronounce graphemes correctly. The colours are effective in the teaching and learning of new sounds and can be removed when the teacher believes the children are confident with the sounds they are learning.



Phonics is taught on a daily basis and to the whole class so that all children are exposed to their year group curriculum and expectations.

Each Phonics lesson follows the same five-point teaching sequence of review, teach, hook, activity and plenary:

- Review – review the most recently taught graphemes/HFW/ spelling rule.
- Teach – use the PowerPoint to teach the new grapheme, HFW, spelling rule.
- Hook – each lesson in Monster Phonics has a hook that will capture and engage the children. This could be a song, a story or a video. The hook will contain the most common words that use the new graphemes.
- Activity – all the lessons have an activity linked to the learning outcome and allows the children to practise and apply their skills.
- Plenary – allows you to review the lesson outcome and consolidate learning.

The learning that takes place in the daily phonics lessons is then reinforced and applied within all reading and writing opportunities throughout the day.

All adults teaching phonics follow the 'my go, our go, your go' approach to the modelling and teaching of new sounds and use the following actions when teaching children to decode words. They should be exposed to these actions as different children will find different ones easier to use and understand.

- Sound buttons, count phonemes on fingers
- Punch, Slice, Dive. Punch (Single punch forward with fist) = single letter making sound, Slice (draw a line with your hand, slice the air) = digraph or trigraph, Dive (arch movement, down then up) = split digraph.

Writing Implementation - Spelling

We follow a mastery approach to the teaching of spelling through the programme '*Pathways to Spell*' from The Literacy Company for Year 3 to Year 6. It is a programme designed to deliver the statutory content of the Primary National Curriculum for spelling in Key Stages 2 and which follows a review, explain, practise, apply model. Through weekly teaching of spelling objectives, exploring rules and using a variety of strategies to support spelling, the programme aims to develop children as proficient spellers who are enthused and fascinated about words and language.

Whole class spelling sessions take place daily across the whole school and skills learnt are reinforced and applied within all writing opportunities.

Writing Implementation - Handwriting

It is paramount that children are rigorously taught correct letter formation from the very beginning of their time in school. As soon as the children are ready, they should be taught to sit properly to have the correct posture for writing, hold a pencil in the correct tripod grip and develop a legible and continuous cursive handwriting style. Children in Reception are taught to form their letters correctly. The sequence the children are taught these letters is aligned to the teaching sequence of sounds within the Monster Phonics Scheme. In Year 1, the children are taught how to form the letters with an entrance and exit stroke as the pre-cursor to developing a cursive script. From Year 2, children are expected to start to develop a cursive script towards writing.

It is expected that all members of staff, class teachers and teaching assistants, model the school handwriting style at all times i.e. when writing on the board or in children's books. Further details of expectations and the teaching sequence for Handwriting can be found in our Handwriting Policy and its corresponding appendix.

Curriculum Implementation – Speaking and Listening

The acquisition of language skills is important at Over St John's as many children begin their school journey with speaking and listening skills below where they need to be. Confidence in basic language skills enables children to communicate creatively and imaginatively, preparing them for their future journey through education and beyond. The current Reading Framework 2023, places a high level of importance on high quality talk and language rich environments as integral to developing children's spoken language and this is something that we endeavour to do. We provide opportunities for lots of talk and discussion with adults and with peers. Children are given the opportunity to work in partners and in groups to explore and share ideas, to explore turn taking, to take part in debates and to create presentations which they share with the class and learning and reciting poetry as and when the curriculum allows. Other ways we create language rich environments is through adult modelling, through providing high quality texts which act as a starting point to explore vocabulary and through classroom displays.

Teachers and other adults in school model speaking clearly. This includes clear diction, reasoned argument, using imaginative and challenging language and the correct use of Standard English. Listening is also modelled, as is the appropriate use of non-verbal communication, respecting the views of others and turn taking.

Nursery Rhymes

Learning and reciting nursery rhymes plays an integral part in the daily routine of our children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. Each week, the class teacher shares a new nursery rhyme, song, riddle with the children which they learn over the week. This again promotes vocabulary development and an understanding of rhyme and rhythm.

Curriculum Implementation – Reading

It is our intention that all children will leave our school being able to read confidently and fluently, as reading is a fundamental skill used within many aspects of life. By supporting our children to develop their reading skills, we aim to prepare children for the next stage of their academic journey as well as developing a love of reading for pleasure and for purpose. Reading is also used to stimulate children's imaginations and a love for books. Reading has a

high profile at Over St. John's and teachers promote and value reading as an enjoyable activity and a life skill.

Our reading curriculum is delivered through a variety of different activities and approaches:

- *All children are provided with a reading book and a reading diary. Children are supported and encouraged to select these books independently. We encourage reading on a regular basis (at least four times per week) at home as well as regular reading to the adults in school.

- *Each class has a reading corner stocked with fiction and non-fiction texts and poetry texts, which the children are encouraged to access.

- *Specific English lessons, linked to the text we are exploring in writing, focus on the teaching and developing of reading skills, whether it be prediction, inference, summarising/sequencing, explaining or retrieving..

- *In Year 2 to Year 6, children are taught to develop and practise reading skills through well planned whole-class shared reading sessions.

- *In Reception and Year 1, children are taught to read through take part in guided reading sessions based on books that are closely matched to their current phonological understanding and phonics teaching.

- *Sharing and reading aloud stories in class is also something teachers do. The texts used are part of our whole school reading spine which is a list of quality texts for each class, which will be read aloud to and shared with our children during their time at our school. Within KS2, there is a two-year rolling of texts due to the nature of our mixed classes. It has been created with the support of the Pie Corbett Reading Spine and in conjunction with our staff team. This list of books will be added to, supplemented, and changed by staff as and when is needed. Reading and sharing books gives our children the opportunity to listen to a story, no matter their age, and enjoy a book they may not otherwise have read. Reading aloud to children also helps to promote and model reading fluency, intonation, and expression. During focussed reading tasks, whether in English lessons, whole class shared reading or guided reading sessions, reading skills are explicitly taught, reinforced and supported by the VIPERS approach (vocabulary, inference, prediction, explain, retrieve, sequence/summarise).

Whole Class Shared Reading

Whole class shared reading takes place three days a week from Year 2 to Year 6. The teaching of our whole class shared reading is supported by the Steps to Read programme from Literacy Counts and is delivered around a sequence of high-quality age-appropriate texts. The texts used are aimed to promote a life-long love of reading and includes fiction, non-fiction and poetry which enhances learning across the curriculum. Each session, follows a four-step teaching sequence, which involves read, model, practise and apply encouraging a clear focus on the reading skills and strategies needed to enable children to become proficient and confident readers.

Developing Reading Fluency

As part of our whole class reading sessions, there is a specific element focused on developing and improving reading fluency. Specific areas of reading fluently are focused on phrasing, recognition of punctuation, expression and intonation within each session. A section of the text is modelled out loud to the children. The text is then surveyed and a discussion is had about what has happened at certain points which can act as cues. The

children are then given the opportunity to read the text aloud either through choral reading, echo reading or paired reading.

Guided Reading in Reception and Year 1

In Reception and Year 1, children take part in guided reading sessions three times per week. Guided reading builds on the teaching of phonics exploring short texts that include only the sounds and words that the children have been taught, are secure with and are reading at around 90% accuracy. Text used with guided reading our from our scheme - Monster Phonics. The children will read the text in Guided Reading one week and then take the same text home the following week. This helps to reinforce teaching and allows the children to continually practise the sounds they have learnt. Guided Reading follows the same teaching sequence each week. Children explore the key words and focus words in the book, read sections of the text and discuss and explore it in more detail with their teacher. Modelling of reading by the teacher is also important to build skills of fluency.

Reading at Home

At Over St. John's, we encourage the daily reading and sharing of books at home. We carefully monitor the children's reading at home and encourage parents to be fully active and engaged with us in this in order to support their child's ongoing development. Reading diaries are checked weekly by an adult in school and reading is rewarded through our school raffle ticket reward system.

For each read recorded in their diaries, children will receive a raffle ticket. For four reads at home, the children receive a special 'Readopoly' token which is added to a prize pot for a special draw each term.

Reading and sharing books at home, as well as in school, is essential and can make a huge difference to a child's reading ability and helps to develop an enthusiasm for reading and a life-long love of books. At Over St. John's, we encourage the daily reading and sharing of books at home.

Throughout the school, in each class, children will take the following books home every week:

- **1 x reading book matched to their current reading level. In EYFS and Year 1, these will be phonically decodable based on sounds that have been taught and are secure with the children.**
- **1 x library book for reading/ sharing for pleasure**

Home reading books are organised into stages. Children in Reception and Year 1 read phonetically decodable books which follow the teaching sequence of our Phonics scheme, Monster Phonics. Children in Reception and Year 1 will only ever bring reading books home with sounds in they have been taught in school to consolidate this learning. Over the course of Reception and Year 1, children will read through books from Stage 0 (wordless books) to Stage 8. Children in Reception and Year 1 will come home with a guide for sharing their phonetically decodable books over a week with their adults.

Towards the end of Year 1, children will be assessed on their reading to move from phonetically decodable books and to continue to progress through the rest of the stages as part of our Phonics exit assessment. Our books within Stage 9 to Stage 18 are grouped according to their level of difficulty, providing children with a challenging reading experience which also allows them to build on and use their phonic and whole word knowledge to read independently. Within our Stages 9 to 18, we use the following schemes within reading: Collins Big Cat, Oxford Reading Tree, Smart Kids which comprises of a mixture of Fiction,

Non-Fiction, Traditional Tales and Poetry. This is further supplemented by a wide range of reading material that has been selected and appropriately matched using the Accelerated Reader Programme

Impact

Formative and summative assessments are used throughout the year, across all areas of the English curriculum to measure the children's attainment and progress.

- Writing and reading assessments are completed on a termly basis and then inputted into the whole school Target Tracker system based on the learning that the children are completing.
- Children are listened to read on a regular basis and have their reading benchmarked to support their progression through our staged books.
- Reading fluency assessments are also completed for each child on a regular basis to focus on and develop reading fluency. This also provides an opportunity to identify those children that require further support regarding fluency of reading if necessary.
- In Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, formative assessment is carried out daily in Phonics and reading and those children who require further support will be provided with that through interventions or precision teach. Children are also assessed on a regular basis at assessment points within the teaching sequence. These assessments are carried out on Phonics Tracker based on the current sounds and words they are exploring. These assessments help to identify those children who may need further support. From these assessments, we identify our lowest 20% of readers. In conjunction with staff, it is then identified as to what support is required to help these children to make the progress they require. This may be pre-teaching, targeted interventions, rapid interventions, precision teaching, modelling of learning, provided frequent opportunities to practise.

We aim for all of our children to make at least good progress from their last point of statutory assessment or from their Baseline assessment on entry in Reception. Alongside this, we monitor and track progress throughout each year group to ensure that children remain on track to make their expected progress.

Children will leave Over St John's having received a well-rounded learning experience within reading, writing, speaking and listening, enabling them to use these skills confidently so they are prepared socially and academically for life beyond primary school and throughout their educational journey.

Equal Opportunities and Diversity

All children have equal access to a rich and rewarding curriculum for English that is appropriate to their needs regardless of gender, ethnicity or any other factor. Additionality within the curriculum is used to support the learning and to meet the needs of all children. As a school, we use Rosenshine's Principles to support our teaching. Every effort will be made to ensure that the methods and materials used are free from prejudice or bias against particular groups. Resources will actively promote an awareness of the diverse nature of the world around us.

Staff Development

Teachers are expected to keep up to date with subject knowledge and use current materials that are available in school or online. These resources are all held centrally on our school system.

Training needs are identified as a result of whole school monitoring and evaluation, performance management and through induction programmes. These will be reflected in the School-Improvement Plan. The English Subject Co-ordinators will work closely with all staff to arrange for relevant advice and information, such as feedback from courses or newsletters or meetings to be disseminated or lead or organise school-based training to support the delivery of English throughout the school.

Role of English Subject Leaders

The role of the English Subject Co-ordinator is to:

- take the lead in policy development;
- monitor teaching and learning;
- monitor and support assessment and record keeping;
- support colleagues in their development of their subject knowledge and delivery of their teaching;
- take responsibility for the purchase and organisation of resources;
- keep up-to-date with developments in Literacy education and disseminate information to colleagues as appropriate.

This policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier if practice changes.

Signed: E McLaughlin

English Lead

E Snowdon

Head Teacher

Date: May 2024

Review Date: May 2026