



## **English Curriculum Rationale**

### **Intent**

At Oreston Community Academy we believe that a quality English curriculum should develop children's love of reading, writing and discussion. We aim to inspire an appreciation of our rich and varied literary heritage and a habit of reading a wide range of texts often. It is our intention that our pupils acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding to become lifelong learners. We strive to ensure that all our pupils receive a well-rounded learning experience when reading and writing, which will equip them with the fundamental tools to achieve. We recognise the importance of a culture where children take pride in their writing, can write accurately and adapt their language choices for a range of contexts and audiences. We believe that all pupils should be encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their writing, by developing a joined handwriting style by the time they move to secondary school. We believe that all successful writers refine and edit their writing over time; we want children to develop independence to identify their own areas for improvement in their writing, editing their work effectively during and after the writing process.

We want to inspire children to be confident in the art of oracy, who can use discussion to develop their learning. The skill of fluency in speaking, writing and reading empowers children and allows them to be effective communicators. We will give our children the tools they need to participate fully as a member of society.

All children are given the opportunity to enter the magical worlds that books open up to them. We promote reading for pleasure as part of our reading curriculum. It is our intention to immerse pupils in the wonders of quality texts to instil a love for reading, a passion for discovery and a confidence to explore their imagination through our book-led approach. We use Babcock's *Texts that Teach* from Years 1-6 to support our English curriculum, allowing our sessions to be based around high-quality texts that are age appropriate. We foster pupils' interest in writing and offer a reason and context for writing which enables the children to write for purpose and audience. It is our intention to broaden our pupils' exposure to high level vocabulary to allow pupils to apply their understanding of vocabulary and grammatical features within and across the English curriculum.

Reading in particular, also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge in a range of contexts and subjects and to build on what they already know. We aim to lay the foundations for our children's successful lives after school and their future careers.

### **Implementation**

The 2014 National Curriculum states that:

*'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.'*

Our English curriculum is derived around a sequence of high-quality age-appropriate texts. We use each book to create opportunities to develop reading fluency and comprehension with a focus on key reading strategies; develop grammar and punctuation knowledge and understanding to use and apply across the wider curriculum; explore the writing structure and features of different genres, identify the purpose and audience; plan and write a piece of writing with a clear context and purpose before evaluating the effectiveness of their writing by editing and redrafting.

We firmly believe that at Oreston Community Academy, if we support pupils in establishing a love for reading and expose them to high quality vocabulary, this has a significant impact on children's ability to become authors and developing their own, individualised style of writing. We also provide a wealth of enrichment opportunities, from hosting World Book Day, Poetry Competitions, Reading Challenges in collaboration with the local libraries, and visits from children's authors. We recognise and praise children's writing weekly through our 'Writing Champion' awards for each year group, which are announced in our Team Assemblies and newsletters and the celebrated piece of writing is displayed in our front entrance.

All teachers ensure to plan stimulating and highly effective English lessons which incorporate Outdoor Learning, ICT, collaborative learning so that children are excited and enthused in their lessons, leading to a strong motivation to write. At Oreston Community Academy, we believe it is highly important to give children feedback that is rich and meaningful so that they are aware of their successes and those areas that they need to be focussing on.

Within lessons, teachers and teaching assistants target support for all children to ensure they reach their full potential. This may involve a greater level of scaffolding and access to additional support materials such as Writers Toolkits, Word Banks or a greater level of modelling. Children working at Greater Depth are given opportunities to extend their writing in a variety of ways, including through showing greater control in their writing, a deeper understanding of the impact that their writing has on the reader and by using a higher level of vocabulary and grammar features.

**Spellings:** Spellings are taught according to the rules and words contained in Appendix 1 of the English National Curriculum. Teachers use the *No Nonsense Spelling Scheme* to support their teaching and to provide activities that link to the weekly spellings. Children are given spellings to learn each week and are given a spelling test the following week.

**Grammar and Punctuation:** Grammar and punctuation knowledge and skills are taught through English lessons as much as possible. Teachers plan to teach the required skills through the genres of writing that they are teaching, linking it to the genre to make it more connected with the intended writing outcome. Teachers sometimes focus on particular grammar and punctuation skills as stand-alone lessons if they feel that their class need additional lessons to embed their understanding or to consolidate skills. Years 1-6 use No nonsense Grammar to support their teaching.

Each year group have a yearly overview of the writing genres, both narrative and non-fiction, that they will teach. These have been planned to ensure correct coverage of the key genres as well as build on skills from year to year. Units will take up to four weeks to complete, and the outcome of each unit will be an independent write, which will be used to assess the pupil's skills against the agreed success criteria.

Summative assessments will be entered into iTrack each term. Teachers will use their professional judgement to determine whether a child is working within age-related expectations, above or below. They will base their judgements on the quality of the independent write that pupils produce at the end of each unit. Teacher's will refer to the Teacher Assessment Frameworks (TAFS) at the end of Key Stage 1 in Year 2 and the end of Key Sage 2 in Year 6. The Babcock TAFs that have been developed for other year groups are used as a support for making judgements and to inform planning for all year groups.

Our thematic curriculum allows for English to be at the heart of everything we do as it is also taught through all other subjects plus assemblies, educational trips and visiting authors. This includes trips to our local library in Plymstock and guest speakers for Science and Health Weeks. Quality English teaching allows children to discuss their understanding of what is being taught, promotes the correction of misconceptions and allows teachers to provide clear feedback to children in order for them to understand their successes and next steps. Teachers adapt their

teaching as required to cater for the individual needs of the children in their class. We endeavour to make the English curriculum accessible to all pupils. All children need a secure understanding of the objectives they are learning in order that future learning is built upon firm foundations. As new skills are learnt, children are required to draw upon their previous learning to support their understanding of key concepts.

The learning environment is designed to stimulate, support and celebrate learning. Ongoing formative assessment is integral to every lesson ensuring that misconceptions are identified straight away and addressed within the lesson. English books are marked daily and children respond to their next steps.

All teaching staff have had up to date Continuous Professional Development (CPD) training from Babcock for teaching grammar across the school. This has enabled staff to ensure grammar is taught progressively. Teaching staff have also had CPD training for Texts that Teach, to ensure teachers fully understand how to use the texts to meet the needs of all of their pupils.

### **Impact**

The impact of our curriculum is that we establish an environment where English writing is creative, purposeful and challenging, where it is OK to be 'wrong' because the learning journey towards our outcomes is most important. Our children's English books show a range of learning outcomes with rich evidence of English in a variety of contexts. Children's exposure to rich and varied texts fosters a love of reading and allows them to become fluent readers. Our children take great pride in what they achieve and have a positive growth mind-set, which supports them in making progress throughout their time here. As a result, we have a community of enthusiastic readers and writers who enjoy showcasing their developing literacy skills. They are confident to take risks in their reading and writing, and love to discuss and share their ideas.

We strive to ensure that our children's attainment is in line or exceeds their potential when we consider the starting points of all our children. We measure this using a range of materials, whilst always considering the expectations for each year group. Children will make at least good progress in Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening from their last point of statutory assessment or from their starting point in Nursery. We intend the impact of our English curriculum will ensure our pupils are academically prepared for life beyond Oreston Community Academy and throughout their educational journey. We believe that through the book-led approach we have developed for the pupils of Oreston, that pupils foster a love for reading and an interest in reading for pleasure. We also strive to ensure that pupils work hard to ensure that children will be able to produce written work in all areas of the curriculum of a similar standard, which evidences good progress from their last point of statutory assessment point or their starting point in Nursery.

The % of pupils working at ARE within each year group will be at least in line with national averages. The % of pupils working at Greater Depth within each year group will be at least in line with national averages. There will be no significant gaps in the progress of different groups of pupils (e.g. disadvantaged vs nondisadvantaged).