

# English

Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds –  
Promising Futures



## **1. Curriculum Statement**

### **Intent:**

'It is our intention that English has an essential, supportive and aspirational place within our bespoke character curriculum.

Our aim when teaching literacy is to equip all children with the skills and abilities required to succeed in all environments.

Purposely planned experiences should structure deep learning through the 9 Habits lens tailored to our pupils' individual needs.'

Our 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, 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 overarching aim for English in the national curriculum (2014) 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.

### **The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:**

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- 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
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able 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 Oasis Academy Blakenhale Infants & Juniors (OAB) we aim to:**

- Provide an aspirational language rich environment that promotes a culture of reading and writing for life;
- Encourage pupils to develop a love of books and high-quality literature that will not only support their academic studies, but extend beyond the classroom and enriches their lives;
- Explicitly teach reading skills throughout the school that continually develop the children's understanding, engagement and enjoyment of a wide range of texts;
- Purposely teach the craft of writing in order to develop the confidence and skills to write well for a range of purposes, audience and authorial tones;
- Knowledgeably teach the basics –spelling, grammar, handwriting and punctuation- in a structured manner so all children are equipped with the necessary tools to express themselves in a range of contexts;
- Foster in pupils the confidence, desire and ability to express and challenge their views and opinions both orally and in writing;
- Value and celebrate diversity in culture and language.

## **Implementation**

### **Planning – Learning and Teaching Strategies:**

The planning of all literacy activities are directly linked to the Programmes of Study for the National Curriculum (2014) in all year groups. These are Reading Comprehension, Word Reading (phonics), writing comprehension, spelling, vocabulary and grammar and spoken language.

Knowledge, understanding and skills are taught through opportunities presented by our bespoke character curriculum. Teachers plan 'text-based' English units are inspired by over-arching cross-curricular topics which offer a wide range of writing experiences. There is a balance between fiction, non-fiction and poetry with an emphasis on whole text exploration based on selected aspects of the 'Whole Novel Approach'.

### **What does this look like at OAB:**

Literacy planning begins with our topic curriculum maps which outline the main themes, character traits and core curriculum subject stimulus on which our reading and writing tasks are drawn.

Weekly planning then outlines each session in more detail including any opportunities for support and differentiation.

See marking policy for more information on providing written feedback in English.

### **Spoken Language:**

At OAB, we believe that speaking and listening form the foundations of successful learning in all contexts. In formal and informal situations, we create and facilitate opportunities for conversation, lively classroom discussions and technically appropriate talk surrounding learning across the curriculum. Our teaching is based on the principals of an aspirational view of language and vocabulary development, therefore we encourage our learners to be adventurous and inquisitive when sharing their thoughts in a supportive environment.

### **What does this look like at OAB:**

- Wellcomm and Talkboost development initiatives are used to develop language and communication skills;
- Questioning, challenging and taking risks with language;
- Presenting in front of an audience;
- Reciting and reading aloud;
- Re-telling, role-play and drama activities routinely used in learning;
- Listening to and participating in stories, poems, rhymes and songs;
- Active and technical discussion of a range of text types and their features;
- Debate
- Collaborative activities which require feedback following group work;
- Delivering presentations.

### **Phonics:**

Reading and Phonics at Oasis Academy Blakenhale Infants.

From September 2021, the 'Book Wings Phonics' scheme has been introduced into our EYFS setting.

The uniqueness of Book Wings Phonics is that the synthetic phonics teaching opportunities are embedded within the context of real books; books written by skilled and well-known writers and illustrators who know how to engage children and make them want to read for pleasure.

The balance between the two skills (word recognition and language comprehension) changes as children acquire decoding skills and progress from learning to read to reading to learn for information and pleasure. As teachers, our main priority should be to instil a love of books, enthusing and motivating children to want to learn to read for pleasure, whilst working alongside teaching children to decode and encode.

The Book Wings Phonics scheme is being introduced year on year for the pilot cohort. Pre-introduction year groups will continue with our successful, bespoke 'Letters and Sounds' scheme.

## **Letters and Sounds**

At Oasis Blakenhale, phonics has been taught from Nursery to Year Two using Letters and Sounds. Letters and Sounds is a phonics resource published by the Department for Education and Skills in 2007. It aims to build children's speaking and listening skills in their own right as well as to prepare children for learning to read by developing their phonic knowledge and skills. It sets out a detailed and systematic programme for teaching phonic skills for children starting by the age of five, with the aim of them becoming fluent readers by age seven.

## **What does this look like at OAB?**

### **Nursery:**

Phonics is taught daily from the Autumn term for 15 minutes in groups led by the teacher and TA. This is then supplemented with continuous provision activities both in and outdoors.

### **Reception:**

Phonics is taught 5 sessions a week for 25 minutes in groups led by the teacher and TA. This is also supplemented with continuous provision opportunities both indoors and outdoors.

### **Year 1:**

Phonics is taught 5 sessions a week for 20 minutes in groups led by the teacher and TA.

### **Year 2:**

Phonics is taught minimum of 4 sessions a week for 20 minutes in groups led by the teacher and TA.

### **KS2:**

Phonics is taught as an intervention 3x weekly for all the children who did not achieve the expected standard in the phonics screening test using the PiXL Code recovery strategies. Led by a TA.

### **Assessment:**

Within Nursery and Reception termly phonics checks are reported based on formative and summative judgements.

### **Year 1:**

Termly phonics checks are reported based on formative and summative judgements.

### **Year 2 and KS2:**

Children who haven't reached the expected standard in the screening test are given additional intervention led by a TA. These interventions are monitored termly for progress.

### **Reading:**

At OAB, our priority is developing a life-long love of reading while developing essential reading skills. As children begin to read, we focus on decoding, primarily through phonics in addition to essential word recognition, rhyme and context as learners develop their ability. As learners build fluency, comprehension skills become our main area of focus and questioning looks at skills such as re-telling, inference and prediction. We believe that high-quality literature is key to motivating children to learn to read and instilling a love of reading throughout the school day and out into the wider world.

### **EYFS & KS1:**

While pupils are emergent and developing readers, they will focus on phonics and word recognition strategies as required by the 2014 curriculum, but also understanding what the words they are decoding mean and how they contribute to the meaning of the whole text. Allowing children to access a chosen text to apply their phonic knowledge, pay attention to sentence structure without loss of meaning, however careful planning and support can also be used to enable all pupils to engage with a range of aspirational books and other reading opportunities. At OAB, we provide children with both types of reading experiences with carefully selected sessions. Our reading offer demands that we encourage all children to read willingly and for pleasure and our reading sessions must allow pupils to understand, engage with and enjoy the text.

## KS2:

In KS2 pupils are becoming more fluent and independent readers. Decoding has become a more automatic process and, in addition, they use knowledge of spelling patterns and grammatical knowledge to read unfamiliar words with accuracy. They will read different texts for different purposes and the experience and develop higher order reading skills in order to engage fully and respond effectively. Inferential thinking, stating preferences and opinions while developing the confidence to justifying them, understanding different viewpoints, including their own, in a text and considering the writer's craft are among the required skills.

### What does this look like at OAB?

Reading is primarily taught as a whole class based on a class text, however in KS1 the 'carousel' model can still be used incrementally to facilitate one-to-one reading opportunities on occasion. The class text is chosen to reflect the the main themes, character curriculum traits detailed in our curriculum topic maps for each termly unit.

Each reading opportunity has a reading skill focus based on the content domains. We teach them in child-friendly way called, 'Read with RIC'

**DECODE**

1. Applying phonic knowledge and skills as the route to decode words.
2. Responding speedily with the correct sound to graphemes for all phonemes.
3. Reading accurately by blending sounds in unfamiliar words.
4. Reading common exception words.
5. Reading words containing taught GPCs and -s, -es, -ing, -ed, -er and -est endings.
6. Reading other words of more than one syllable that contain taught GPCs.
7. Reading words with contractions, and understand that the apostrophe represents the omitted letter(s).
8. Rereading these books to build up their fluency and confidence in word reading.
9. Correcting inaccurate reading.

**RETRIEVE**

1. Retelling key stories, fairy stories and traditional tales.
2. Checking the text makes sense to them.

**INTERPRET**

1. Linking what they read and hear to their own experiences.
2. Discussing word meanings.
3. Linking new word meanings to those already known.
4. Drawing on what they know and background information to understand.
5. Making inferences based on what is being said and done.
6. Explaining clearly their understanding of what is read to them.

**PREDICT**

1. Predicting what might happen based on what has been read so far.

**PERFORM**

1. Recognising and joining in with predictable words and phrases.
2. Reciting some verses and poems by heart.
3. Reading books aloud which are in line with their phonic knowledge.

**REVIEW**

1. Listening to and discussing a wide range of poems, stories and non-fiction.
2. Discussing the significance of the title and events.
3. Identifying characteristics of key stories, fairy stories and traditional tales.
4. Participating in discussions about what is read to them.

**Read with R.I.C.**

### **Reading Bug & Accelerated Reader**

Every child in Reception and KS1 has access to the Reading Bug learning platform. This online resource provides a supportive experience at the individual child's reading level. While they access a range of vibrant online books, they are given a range of questions based on the key reading domains. Success indicators can be accessed by teachers and TAs and the child can be given feedback on their responses.

When reaching KS2, pupils are given an Accelerated Reader account. The children are encouraged to access these resources at home or at certain times in the school day to encourage fluency and independence. When a book is completed, learners can do a quiz which tests fluency and a range of reading skills. Children who get 100% on a quiz can be entered into a prize draw.

### **Developing a Positive Reading Culture at OAB:**

- We read across the curriculum: topic books, news articles, magazines, etc.
- All teachers are expected to read a class novel to actively model expression when reading aloud.
- Each class is given allocated library time as part of their weekly timetable. Children can access libraries during break and lunch times.
- Book clubs are run by members of staff.
- Parents are invited into school for 'Share a book' and 'Books at Bedtime' events.
- A rotation of interactive reading displays are placed in key positions around school.
- A series of events and competitions keep the profile of reading for pleasure part of daily life in school.

Children are expected to read every night at home, writing in the reading diaries to share ideas about books and to keep a record of what they are reading.

### **Writing:**

At OAB, we strive to create an environment that promote lively and insightful writing with an appropriate purpose and tone. We teach through a 'cycle' based on the opportunities offered by the themes, topics or text types of our bespoke character curriculum maps.

For each text type or genre there will be a clear teaching cycle consisting of Cold Write- evaluation- taught sessions of skills or context or stimulus development- Hot Write-edit and improve.

This cycle embeds the principals of AfL and cognitive learning strategies and is a way of showing clear progress through a unit of work.

### **What does this look like at OAB?**

- Purpose, Audience, Format and Tone is decided from the onset through clear discussion and exploration in learning sessions.
- Writing is explicitly linked with wider curriculum topics to promote engagement.
- A 'Going for Gold' success descriptor is added after independent pieces to ensure writing is not overly scaffolded.
- Text Exemplars are used to explore Expected & Greater Depth Standards at each Age Related Expectation (ARE).
- Teachers provide regular, helpful feedback through marking.
- Time is planned into sessions to respond to marking and feedback.
- Reviewing of 'what a good one looks like' and editing is a key part of the writing development process.
- We ensure progression in complexity of tasks each year.
- We steadily build stamina for writing by providing opportunities to write for extended periods;
- Peer marking and reviewing is encouraged as an additional way for children to respond to writing challenges.

### **Spelling:**

Understanding how to spell correctly is important in supporting children to organise their thinking around language. Knowing how to apply spelling rules and recognise key words is empowering for children. Spelling plays a key role in standardised assessment and is explicitly taught throughout the school.

### **What does this look like at OAB?**

- We use the National Curriculum as a guideline as to which spellings should be taught in which year group. In addition to this, KS1 focus on common exception words;
- We link handwriting to common spelling patterns (See handwriting section);
- Children learn to spell explicitly in spelling lessons;
- Children are actively encouraged and taught to proof read their writing for spelling errors and make corrections;
- From Year 1 upwards, Children follow the Head Start spelling strategies which teaches spelling patterns according the NC programme yearly guidance in a clear and structured manner.
- Children learn spellings for weekly spelling tests and progress is recorded termly on the assessment tracker.
- Spelling is taught in linked sessions with handwriting daily for at least four sessions per week.

### **Handwriting:**

We place high value on children taking pride and care over their work and handwriting is a key part of this. Within EYFS, there is a big emphasis upon fine motor skills and we use a range of resources to practise these basic skills. This moves into correct letter formation with a focus on both upper and lower case letters.

### **What does this look like at OAB?**

- In Nursery and Reception letter formation is taught as part of our bespoke phonic development scheme;
- From Year 1 to Year 6, we use the Nelson Handwriting scheme in conjunction with our Head Start Spelling resources to links key handwriting joins to common spelling patterns;
- We use an integrated approach to handwriting development that utilises bespoke whiteboards paper and exercise books which have a differentiated system of 'tramlines'.
- Children move through the tramline scheme from broad lines, through to 18mm, then 12mm until reaching regular unassisted lined paper based on personal development and need.
- We use the cursive Nelson script and encourage children to join their writing as soon as they are forming and sizing their letters correctly;
- Extra handwriting groups occur in classes throughout the school where the class team feel additional support is needed;
- We have high expectations for handwriting and ensure that staff and pupils adhere to the policy.

### **Grammar:**

An understanding of how to use grammar correctly, use meta-language and identifying word classes and sentence types is taught both in the context of a piece of writing and explicitly in whole class work. Linked to the NC guidelines for year groups, grammar is taught and planned to fit in with relevant genres of writing.

### **What does that look like at OAB?**

- We start with basics of sentence construction including full stops and capital letters;
- Children begin to identify word classes early on (noun, verbs, adjectives, adverbs);
- We follow the 2014 NC as guidance as to what is taught in each year group and from this have devised a specific structure for our school detailing expectations year by year. This structure includes opportunities to revisit key areas as OAB recognises that this is key aspect of learning.
- GPS is taught in two types of session. These are either 'stand-alone' or as part of a wider writing cycle.

### **Marking and Feedback:**

Marking is rigorous in English and across the curriculum, with regular 'Response Times' and spelling corrections to help children correct and consolidate their work. Regular English book scrutinies are carried out to check all teachers are following our marking policy rigorously. Feedback and marking should be completed, where possible, within the lesson. This can be with quality first teaching, lesson starters and plenaries, one to one conferencing or direct marking in books which must be responded to by all pupils. All marking and feedback is given in line with our marking and feedback policy.

### **Summative Assessment:**

\_Summative assessments will be entered into tracking system 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 extended write that pupils produce at the end of each unit, and determine to what extent pupils have met the agreed success criteria for that genre of writing. Teacher's will refer to the TAFS in Y2 and Y6 and the OCL TAFs that have been developed for other year groups as a support for making judgements and to inform planning.

## **Impact**

When pupils leave OAB, they are competent readers who can recommend books to their peers, have a thirst for reading a range of genres including poetry, and participate in discussions about books, including evaluating an author's use of language and the impact this can have on the reader. They can also read books to enhance their knowledge and understanding of all subjects on the curriculum and communicate their research to a wider audience.

In writing, they will make good progress from their own personal starting points. By the end of Year Six they will be able to write clearly and accurately and adapt their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences. Our pupils will acquire a wide vocabulary and have a strong command of the written word. Most importantly, they will develop a love of writing and be well equipped for the rest of their education.

Impact is measured by a combination of the following\*:

<p><b><u>Book Scrutiny:</u></b> Through regular and rigorous scrutiny evidence of skills, knowledge and presentation are gathered.</p>	<p><b><u>Learning Walks &amp; Observations:</u></b> Through regular and supportive observations of 'live' teaching evidence of strengths, individual areas of development and opportunities for whole school CPD are obtained.</p>	<p><b><u>Evidence in Knowledge:</u></b> Within AfL and pupil interview, children can make links between texts and the different themes and genres within them. They can recognise similarities and differences. Pupils understand the reading and writing process.</p>	<p><b><u>Evidence in Skills:</u></b> Evidence within curriculum maps, weekly planning and other resources show that children are taught reading and writing progressively and at a pace appropriate to each individual child. Teachers' subject knowledge ensure that skills taught are matched to NC objectives.</p>
<p><b><u>Pupil Voice:</u></b> Through discussion and feedback, pupils talk enthusiastically about reading and writing and understand the importance of this subject. They can also talk about books and authors that they have enjoyed and can make reading recommendations.</p>	<p><b><u>Staff Voice:</u></b> Through various channels, which include our bespoke coaching programme, staff questionnaires relating to CPD and 'deep dives' and subject development support, staff talk professionally and confidently about the importance of this subject.</p>	<p><b><u>Parent Voice:</u></b> Through questionnaires, parental workshops and other events, parents are able to develop their understanding of any area of literacy they may require.</p>	<p><b><u>Outcomes.</u></b> At the end of each year, we expect the children have achieved Age Related Expectations (ARE) for their year group. Some children will have progressed further and achieved greater depth (GD). Children who have gaps in their knowledge receive appropriate support and intervention.</p>

**\*most update results are available in the English headlines document.**

### **Inclusion & Equal Opportunities:**

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their progress in order to close the gap. This will be done in discussion with the class teacher at pupil progress meetings. This information will then be shared with the ALT, SENCO and parents if required. More able children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided to deepen and strengthen their skills in English.

OAB has high expectations for every child, whatever their background or circumstances. Children learn and thrive when they are healthy, safe and engaged. Our school motto is 'Healthy Minds, Healthy Bodies: Promising Futures'.

In order to engage all children, cultural diversity, home languages, gender and religious beliefs are all celebrated. Our curriculum includes a wide range of texts and other resources which represent the diversity and backgrounds of different children.

We recognise that parents play a large part in the education of their children. At OAB parents and staff work together in partnership to encourage the qualities, attitudes, knowledge, understanding and competences which are necessary to equip children for adult life.

## **Role of the Subject Leader**

- The subject leader will raise the profile of English at OAB through best practice. They will model best practice, as appropriate to new staff, NQTs and peers to support continued professional development. They will ensure the high quality of English displays around the school, present certificates of achievement during end of term assemblies and involve the school in 'celebrations' of literacy, including participation in events such as 'World Book Day'. The subject leader will support staff in providing opportunities for learning outside the classroom in English and will identify and organise opportunities which enable this, as appropriate.
- The subject leader will monitor progression and continuity of English throughout the school through lesson observations and regular monitoring of outcomes of work in exercise books.
- The subject leader will ensure that all staff have access to year group plans and the relevant resources which accompany them.
- The subject leader will monitor children's progress through the analysis of whole school data. They will use this data to inform the subject development plan which will detail how standards in the subject are to be maintained and developed further.
- The subject leader will, on a regular basis, organise, audit and purchase central and class based English resources.
- The subject leader will keep up to date on current developments in English education and disseminate information to colleagues.
- The subject leader will extend relationships and make contacts beyond the school.
- The subject leader will develop opportunities for parents/carers to become more involved in English education, with a particular focus on Early Reading.
- The subject leader will ensure that all staff have access to professional development including observations of outstanding practice in the subject.

## **Parents**

- We recognise that parents and carers have a valuable role to play in supporting their child's literacy learning. An overview of the English curriculum is available on the school's website, as well as guidance in the progression in reading, writing and GPS. Paper copies of these documents are also available on request and the curriculum letter, sent home by each year group, also outlines the topics to be covered.
- Activities which link to various topics are suggested for parents and carers to try at home with their child in each Reception newsletter.
- Children are given English homework at least once a week from Reception to Year 6. In Year 1, teachers use the homework activities which link to the weekly topic. Where possible, questions at an appropriate level are also set using online resources.
- Parents are informed of their child's progress at Parents Evenings and in the annual end of year report.
- Parents and carers are encouraged to speak to their child's teacher at any point during the year, either informally or by making a specific appointment; information about their child's standards, achievements and future targets in English is shared during parent/carer meetings, as well as ways that parents/carers may be able to assist with their child's learning.
- School also provides a number of opportunities for parents/carers to learn about what their child is learning and the way their child is being taught through parent workshops and online videos especially designed for parents