

English at Our Lady of the Assumption.



It is our intention 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 pupils receive a well-rounded learning experience when reading, writing, speaking and listening which will equip them with the fundamental tools to achieve in our school and beyond. It is our intention to immerse pupils in the wonders of immersive texts to instil a love for reading, a passion for discovery and a confidence to explore their imagination.

English is a core subject of the National Curriculum and a pre-requisite for educational and social progress as it underpins the work undertaken in all other areas of the curriculum. The acquisition of language skills is of the utmost importance to us here at O.L.A and therefore the teaching of all aspects English is given a high priority within school. Confidence in basic language skills enables children to communicate creatively and imaginatively, preparing them for their future journey through education and beyond.

Our intentions:

- Our aim is to ensure that every child becomes a reader, a writer and confident speaker by the time they leave OLA.
- To promote and instil a love for reading, writing and high-quality literature into pupils at all ages.
- To derive an English curriculum which is sequenced to develop the acquisition of knowledge and skills.

Curriculum Implementation:

Our English curriculum is derived around a sequence of highly immersive age-appropriate texts. We use each book to create opportunities to develop reading fluency and comprehension with a focus on key reading strategies and skills; developing 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 an initial piece of writing with a clear context and purpose before evaluating the effectiveness of writing by editing and redrafting.

Reading for Pleasure

Reading is not only celebrated in classrooms here at OLA. Around school, you will find displays which celebrate authors - including our author of the term displays, inspiring reading corners and spaces, reading lodge, igniting writing displays and a writer of the week, children's favourite book, authors, genres and recommended reads. At OLA, we celebrate reading throughout every phase in the school: we offer 'School Readiness' for our Nursery pupils and parents, Book Shares in both Early Years and Key Stage One, Story Sharing sessions with the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher, reading open sessions, as well as implementing a book-led curriculum across all phases. In addition, throughout the school year the importance of reading is enhanced through World Book Day, author and poet visits, Shakespeare Week, Book Fairs and sponsored reading events to further enrich our English curriculum.

Each week, we spend time enjoying reading for pleasure in our classrooms during a dedicated reading for pleasure time. When we read for pleasure, pupils are able to choose the books they wish to read and enjoy, can choose to share a book with a peer, read the 'Picture News' newspapers to read about the world around them, choose to read topic books related to our wider curriculum or listen to an adult in the classroom reading aloud to the children.

Additionally, at 3.00pm everyday, pupils end the school day by sharing a story in their classrooms; adults read a class book aloud to the children to further promote a love for reading into every school day.

Language Acquisition & Vocabulary Development

We endeavour to ensure we provide our pupils with a 'language rich' environment; we do this with our precise modelling of vocabulary within the school environment which ensures we have a wide range of texts to correlate with our wider curriculum. We work closely with a range of book fairs in raising the profile of reading to ensure we share the importance of reading with our parents, carers and wider community. Within our classrooms, we explore ambitious vocabulary across the wider curriculum to ensure we acquire an understanding of tricky language across the wider curriculum through the use of our knowledge organisers and working walls.

At O.L.A we aim to share our vision of high aspirations for all of our pupils through our high expectations across the wider curriculum; by setting these high expectations, our pupils are aware of the standards we expect in all lessons and learning opportunities.

Curriculum Impact:

We strive to ensure that our children's attainment is in line or exceeds their potential when we consider the varied starting points of all our children. We measure this using a range of materials, whilst always considering the age-related 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 primary school and throughout their educational journey.

Reading at O.L.A

Reading is a high priority area of our English curriculum at O.L.A. Reading is a fundamental skill, used to stimulate children's imaginations and learn to acquire a love for books. 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 takes place daily in with a teacher or teaching assistant. If children are working below their chronological reading age, targeted intervention and support is put in place. Children in all classes still have access to story time and have a class book for a sustained period: this ensures that reading is correctly modelled to children as well as giving them the opportunity to enjoy being read to! Each term, our classes have a new 'author of the term' and are able to read a wide variety of texts written by specific authors.

At O.L.A, we use the fully decodable, inclusive 'All aboard Phonics' scheme to support our children in developing their reading skills in Reception and Y1. These books are closely matched to the specific teaching of sounds in the current phase and stage and are used to rehearse and revisit the sounds.

Since the last OFSTED inspection, where phonics and early reading were identified as a target, the subject leader spent a considerable amount of time looking at resources and auditing their use. A substantial amount of money has been spent ensuring that reading provision is consistent across the school and that children are excited and engaged in their reading sessions. We have also increased expectations from Nursery where children now are taught phase 2

phonics from the summer term to include the first sixteen sounds of the 'All aboard phonics scheme'.

Writing at OLA

Over the past few years, through consistent monitoring and professional discussion, we decided to implement a brand new writing scheme in school to provide interest and intrigue and capture the imagination of the children in our school.

We aim to develop children's ability to produce well-structured, detailed writing in which the meaning is made clear and which engages the interest of the audience / reader. Particular attention is paid throughout the school to the formal structures of English: grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling. Our approach at OLA when teaching writing covers the transcription and composition requirements of the National Curriculum.

Throughout Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, our writing follows the Book-Led curriculum in place across Read to Write scheme. Writing opportunities are sourced and developed based on the class text within each year group. Our curriculum allows Key Stage Two children to have the opportunity to explore high-quality texts in depth, enhancing reading comprehension and providing meaningful contexts and purposes for writing. The teaching of this programme is flexible and class teachers are then, in turn, able to apply their own creativity to cover the objectives across Key Stage 2.

Teachers clearly model writing skills and document the learning journey through consistent working walls; guided writing sessions are used to target specific needs of both groups and individuals. We have provided staff training in R2W where a professional was able to discuss the writing process and give us ideas to personalise the curriculum to the needs of the children. Children have opportunities to write at length, in extended, independent writing sessions at the end of a unit of work – applying their taught skills to an unsupported piece of writing. For further information about the variety of novels used to stimulate writing in each of our classes, please see the Read2Write Curriculum website.

Mr A Finnan
Literacy Lead