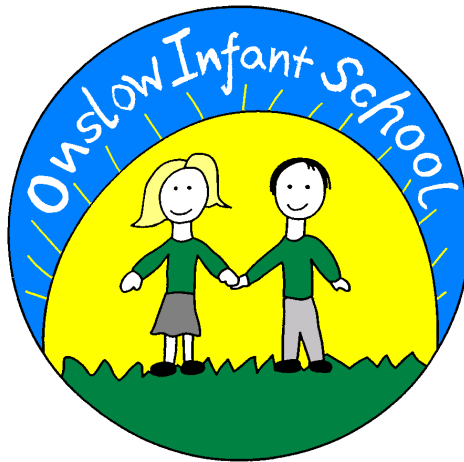




Onslow Infant School

English Policy

Nurturing Confidence, Curiosity and Creativity

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment

Policy Review

This Policy was adopted Spring 2024
The Policy will be reviewed in Spring 2027

(This policy statement should be read alongside our Learning and Teaching Policy, Communication Policy, Marking Policy, Assessment Policy, Homework Policy, and Reporting Children's Achievements Policy.)

Rationale

At Onslow Infant School we believe in providing children with the very best start in their reading and writing education. Developing children's abilities in speaking and listening and reading and writing enables them to access all areas of the curriculum. A creative, cross-curricular approach to English should inspire and excite children and build on their previous knowledge. Cultivating a love of reading and writing has long-term positive effects on both children's emotional, mental and academic well-being.

Aims and Objectives

At Onslow Infant School we aim to:

- develop a life-long love of reading
- develop children's understanding of spoken and written language
- encourage children to have an interest in words and their meanings and develop a growing vocabulary
- enable children to communicate effectively in speech and writing
- help children enjoy writing and recognise its value
- feel supported and encouraged to express their thoughts and emotions and imagination
- understand a range of text types and genres and be able to write in a growing variety of styles
- cultivate a culture of where mistakes are celebrated and children aren't afraid to experiment with new ideas

Speaking and Listening

This should be read alongside our Communication Policy.

Speaking and listening is a key feature of our English Curriculum and opportunities to practise and develop speaking, listening and critical thinking skills are embedded throughout each day in every subject. We use Talk for Writing strategies to support children's oral language and support their knowledge of a text and their ability re-tell stories. We provide children with opportunities for paired and group talk and whole class discussion encouraged by open-ended, cross-curricular questioning. As a Communication Friendly Setting we give children time to respond when we pose a question, following the model of: Stop, Listen and Respond. Speaking and listening is also developed through:

- circle time
- show and tell
- assemblies
- shared story times
- music lessons
- creative play
- PSHE lessons
- role-play
- drama activities such as hot seating

Reading

Phonics learning and teaching

We use the Read Write Inc (RWI) scheme to teach and deliver phonics throughout the school. Children start to learn their initial sounds in Year R in Autumn term. This means that they learn how to 'read' the sounds in words and how those sounds can be written down. This is essential for reading, but it also helps children learn to spell well. We teach the children simple ways of remembering these sounds and letters. Children will sound out new words by using 'Fred Talk' where they are encouraged to say the sounds out loud and look for 'special friends' (where two or three letters make one sound). The children also practise reading what we call 'tricky words' or 'red words', such as 'once,' 'have,' 'said' and 'where'. We teach phonics through homogenous groups across the school, which means that the learning can be tailored specifically to the needs of each group. Children in Year R will join these homogenous groups along with Year 1 and 2 once they are in the Spring term.

All children engage in a daily 40-minute fast-paced phonics lessons in small groups, where children review and revisit previously learned sounds and spellings as well as learning, practising and applying new ones. As children learn a new sound, they will take home a sheet with this sound on to practise reading this at home. Once children have learned to blend sounds into words, they will then apply their phonics knowledge by reading a short decodable story with a partner (from Ditty level up). They will read the same RWI book across several days to help them to build their fluency and pace before answering a range of questions on the text. Once children can read the story fluently, they will take the book home to share with their parents and carers.

Once children have learned their Set 1 sounds and can apply these in a range of words, they move on to Set 2 and Set 3 sounds and words (see Appendix 4 for the order of sounds). Before children move on to the next group, they practise reading these words at pace to ensure they grow into fluent readers who can use expression.

Children who are ready to come off the phonics scheme, take part in a comprehension group, where they read, discuss and answer questions based on a variety of increasingly harder texts.

All staff members are trained in delivering RWI based phonics so that the teaching of phonics is consistent across the school. Children who require extra phonics practice will have short 10 minute sessions with a Teacher or a TA that follows the same teaching sequence as the morning lessons.

The way we teach phonics and reading is shared annually with parents at a workshop where we discuss how phonics is taught in our school and give ideas of how to support children with phonics in a fun and engaging way by providing useful websites, books and online games. The slides from the training are made available to all parents so that they can support their children at home.

Assessment

Children's progress through phonics is closely monitored and tracked. At the end of each half term, children are assessed to check the number of sounds they know and how easily they can apply these within real and nonsense words. Once children know all their Set 3 sounds, their pace of reading a passage will also be assessed. Following an assessment period, children will be regrouped to ensure they are in a phonics group that best suits their needs. This may mean they move to a new phonics group or stay where they are to help them to consolidate what they've learned already. Children who are not meeting age related expectations will be identified for phonics interventions. Parents and carers will be sent a letter once children are in these groups to explain which sounds they will be focusing on in the half term ahead and how best to support them at home.

In Year 1, the statutory phonics screening check is taken individually by all children in the Summer Term. Children are required to apply their phonics knowledge to read 20 real and 20 pseudo words. This test is repeated in Year 2 for children who have not reached required standard or children who were not eligible or not in our education system at the time of the Year 1 phonics test. It is designed to give teachers and parents information on how their child is progressing in phonics and helps to identify whether children need additional support. It is a school-based check to make sure that children receive additional support promptly, should they need it.

'Red words' are taught within phonics sessions and once children are in Year 1 and Year 2, they are assessed to see how many of these words they know, with additional support given to those who need it.

Reading sessions

As part of their daily phonics sessions, once children can blend sounds into words, they will read a short story with their partner and be heard by their phonics teacher. All children in Reception will have an individual reading session with their class teacher or TA at least once a week. In Year 1 and Year 2, they will read at least every other week to an adult, with those children identified as needing additional sessions, reading more than once a week (unless it is a phonics assessment week). A record is kept of all individual reading sessions and comments are also made in each child's reading record that goes between home and school each day.

'Reading Rocket' volunteers are additional adults who come into school and read with identified children from each year group. They have a training session in how to best support children in their reading during these sessions.

Guided Reading is introduced in Year 2. Mixed ability pairs are used and children apply the phonic skills and strategies already taught to their text and these sessions build their comprehension skills and promote discussion around texts. Visual sentence stems that cover the key comprehension skills are used to scaffold children's answers within guided reading sessions. These are displayed around the interactive whiteboard so can be referred to throughout the day and are first introduced in Summer in Year R (prediction sentence stem only) and more sentence stems are introduced systematically throughout KS1.

Reading Books

Once children are ready to blend sounds into words, they will start to take home a RWI phonics book having read it across a number of days at school. They should be able to read this book with fluency and expression.

They will also take home a 'Reading for Pleasure' book. This will be a banded book that closely matches their growing phonic knowledge. They progress through these banded books based on their ability to decode the words, recognise red words and answer questions based on the text. Before moving to the next book band, children should be able to decode the majority of words in a text and be able to summarise the key points and themes. Children will be taught the next set of sounds before moving onto the next colour book in order to ensure they are able to access the words at that level and to keep their confidence high.

Children take home their books each day and are expected to read every evening at home. Re-reading of these books is encouraged to promote fluency in reading. Children can change their books twice a week and should be encouraged to self-select their new book.

Children in EYFS have access to their own library and can change their books weekly. Children in KS1 have access to the school library and can borrow a book every two weeks.

Each classroom has a warm, inviting reading area containing a range of high quality, accessible books that stimulate and challenge children in their reading choices.

At Onslow Infants, story time is a valued part of the day and a chance to discuss and share stories together. Stories help children to understand the world around them and can help them identify their own experiences and feelings as reflected by the stories they are exposed to.

The 'Book Nook' is a reading shed in the playground where children can enjoy stories and non-fiction books during break time (in Year 2) and lunchtimes.

Assessment

See above for phonics assessment.

In Year R children are assessed against the *Early Learning Goals* and observations are gathered using Tapestry to help inform assessment.

In Year 1 and Year 2, RWI comprehension papers are used termly to check children's understanding of what they are reading as part of our summative assessment. Each time children are heard reading on a one-to-one basis, they will be assessed using formative assessment against the relevant framework for their year group.

All children are also assessed against the reading statements in the 'Building Blocks' assessments (see Appendix 1) at the end of each year to show readiness for learning in their forthcoming year. Any children not on track are identified for further interventions and support.

Vocabulary Development

Exposing children to new vocabulary and discussing the meaning of words is a crucial part of children's progress in reading, as well as their speaking and listening. Vocabulary development is supported through a range of strategies including:

- 'I spy' games
- 'Guess the object' descriptive games
- Generating art around words to be displayed
- Making visual connections between known and new words
- 'Big Talk' in Year R to introduce wow words
- Discreet vocabulary lessons taught in Year 1 and Year 2

Special Sentence

Each week, a new sentence that is linked to an area of the curriculum is shared with the children through echo reading. Read first by the teacher, this 'special sentence' models fluency and expression in reading and the children echo this back. This sentence also includes one new higher-level language word and helps to develop the children's growing vocabulary. Children can then choose to use the special sentence in their writing to help them build their ideas.

The special sentence is used weekly in Year 1 and 2 and introduced as an echo reading activity only in Year R from Spring term.

Celebrating Reading

Reading is celebrated at every opportunity at Onslow Infant School. A reader of the week certificate is given out in each class every Friday during achievement assembly and is a chance to celebrate children who have worked hard in their reading, shown real enthusiasm and determination to progress.

Reading Week takes place once a year during Spring 2 to coincide with World Book Day. During the week, book related activities are planned for and reading for pleasure is at the forefront of the curriculum. On World Book Day, children (and Staff) are encouraged to dress up as a fictional book character. Bedtime Stories also takes place during this week and is an opportunity for the children to come back to school in their pyjamas and listen to a story read by a class teacher.

Within each class, we also discuss and display our '5 favourite books'; these are books that we read and re-read as a class every half term. This is to encourage a love of reading as well as children's knowledge of different children's authors and illustrators.

Writing

Our aim at Onslow Infant School is to plan and deliver inspiring writing lessons and give children opportunities to explore writing and mark making in a variety of different ways. We make clear links between the children's reading skills and writing and texts are often used as a basis for developing writing skills. We also use a range of other engaging starting points as a stimulus for writing including drama and role-play, first hand experiences, visual starting points, including film and pictures.

Children are introduced to both the 'Reading Rooster' and 'Writing Wren' curriculum characters in Reception and these characters are referred to across KS1 during English lessons (see Appendix 5).

In EYFS, children are assessed against the *Early Learning Goals* statements for writing. Children experience writing in variety of ways and opportunities for mark-making and developmental writing are available through all areas of learning and throughout the learning environment. Children's own attempts at early writing are celebrated and promoted alongside the direct teaching of key skills that will enable the children to progress through the stages of writing development.

Within phonics, children are taught how to form each letter that corresponds to the phoneme (sound/s) they are learning, and they practise spelling using these graphemes (letters).

In KS1, we implement the 2014 National Curriculum Programme of Study for writing during explicitly taught sessions and cross-curricular work. The teaching and learning of writing is taught and supported through:

- Talk4Writing: children learn to re-tell stories through the use of pictures and actions
- Shared writing: this is used to model the generation of ideas, grammar and spelling and to check for marvellous mistakes that need editing
- Guided writing: this involves the teacher working intensively with a small group of children. Sessions are used to meet specific objectives and to focus on specific aspects of the writing process. Particular areas are targeted for individual children
- Independent writing: children are given opportunities to apply skills learned in shared and guided writing across the Curriculum in a range of contexts. Where possible, all writing activities should have a purpose, such as: to read to a partner, present to the rest of the class, to make into a book or to write up in best to share at home. Independent writing is supported through the use of working walls, word banks, writing frames and phonic and word displays

There are a wide range of opportunities for children to apply and develop their literacy skills across the Curriculum.

Spelling Belts

The spelling of Common Exception Words (CEW) are taught explicitly in Year 1 and Year 2 through progression through the 'Spelling Belts' (see Appendix 2). These are words coloured banded by spelling patterns and as new words are taught, they are displayed for the children to refer to independently.

Teaching Strategies

To support children in their writing a range of strategies are used including:

- Colourful semantics – to help children structure their sentences
- Widget online – this helps children to associate a picture with a word

- Sound recording postcards – these capture a child’s sentence that they can then play back
- Cubes – each cube represents a different word in their sentence

Targets

Children have individual visual writing targets. In Year R, they have a visual ‘target pencil’ and they continue to work on these targets into Year 1 on their ‘target train’. In Year 2, they have a visual ‘target pencil’ and these targets are changed as they meet each new target. Children are familiar with their target and use it whenever they are writing across the curriculum.

Marking in English

(This should be read alongside the Marking Policy.)

Marvellous mistakes are celebrated in writing. Purple pens are used instead of rubbers to correct any mistakes in writing. Children are given time in Year 1 and Year 2 to independently check their work and edit in purple pen.

Where incorrect spellings of CEW are used, these are corrected by asking the children to copy out the correct spelling three times and then use the word in a sentence. No more than three spellings will be corrected in a piece of work.

‘Vinnie the Vole’ (see Appendix 3) is a character used to help children think carefully about which grapheme to use in their spellings.

Handwriting

Children are taught the correct formation of letters during their phonics sessions, with phrases to help them to remember how to form the letters. In Year R, children are offered a range of materials and experiences for mark making and are encouraged to experiment and explore different marks within the message centre and within both inside and outside environments. When teachers are modelling activities, they demonstrate and encourage correct pencil grip. Non-cursive print is used in Year R to encourage the correct formation of letters.

In Year 1, cursive handwriting is taught in explicit, regular sessions focussing on letter formation, consistent size and shape of letters, as well as accurate joining. These sessions continue into Year 2 and regularity depends on the needs of the class. In Year 2, pen licenses are awarded from Spring term for those children using the correct formation and joins.

Throughout all years, children are given the opportunity to develop their fine motor and gross motor skills. Additional resources such as pencil grips, fatter pencils, special lined paper and interventions are used to give extra support to any children identified with additional handwriting needs.

Assessment

Ongoing assessment for learning and summative assessment through marking is used to inform teaching and planning of writing and interventions are put in place for any children

requiring extra support. Year R and Year 1 may use Tapestry to record observations and these help to inform their assessments.

Every half term, children write independently in their profile books and this work is assessed against the relevant framework for Years R, 1 and 2. Although this work may be structured around a theme, or inspired by a given stimulus, this is a completely independent piece of work. Marking of this work is moderated as a year group to ensure consistency against the statements. A staff meeting is also used termly to moderate writing across the school.

All children are also assessed against the writing statements in the 'Building Blocks' assessments (see Appendix 1) at the end of each year to show readiness for learning in their forthcoming year. Any children not on track are identified for further interventions and support.

Celebrating Writing

To help to raise the profile of writing within the school, children's writing is celebrated within each class by sharing work and reading it aloud. During KS1 assembly, a child from each Year 1 and Year 2 class will be chosen to read their written work to the audience to acknowledge their hard work and efforts.



This chart illustrates the basic skills that all children need to have learnt by the end of each academic year in reading and writing. This is not a comprehensive list of all skills that are covered in each year, however, it shows the foundation skills that are needed in order to build future learning upon and create successful, cumulative learning across our school. All children should meet these Building Blocks at a bare minimum before the end of the academic year specified. Any child not on track to meet these should be identified and this list should then be used to pinpoint specific interventions required and shared with all staff in the class.

[illegible]

Year 1 CEW belts
a, I, no, go, so
he, she, we, me, be
is, to, do, by, my
the, of, you, was, are
put, his, has, one, ask
here, there, where, said, says
they, today, your, push, pull
love, come, some, friend, full
were, our, once, house, school

Year 2 CEW belts

because, people, after,
would, should, could,

both, even, half, money,
hour, most, only,

busy, eye, door, poor, floor,
find, kind, mind, behind

old, cold, gold, told, hold,
break, steak, great,

who, whole, many, any,
water, plant, again, climb,

path, bath, move,
prove, improve, glass, class, pass

fast, last, past, child, parent, father,
Mr, Mrs, Christmas,

beautiful, wild, pretty, sure, every,
everybody, sugar, clothes

I'm, It's, she's, he's, he'll, she'll, we'll,
I'll, they'll, they're, we're,

don't, won't, can't, didn't, haven't,
couldn't, wouldn't, shouldn't,

could've, would've, should've, they've,
you've, I've, we've



RWI phonics teaching order

Set 1:

m a s d t i n p g o c k
u b f e l h r j v y
w z x sh th ch qu ng nk

Set 2:

ay ee igh ow (blow the snow)
oo (poo) oo (book)
ar or air ir ou oy

Set 3:

ea oi a-e i-e o-e u-e
aw are ur er ow (brown cow)
ai oa ew
ire ear ure tion tious/cious

