

Great Orton Primary School



English Policy

Issue number	Author / Owner	Date Written	Approved by Governors
1	M Walker	January 2024	20 February 2024
2	R Cuzick	Amended 10.10.24 – amendments in red to be reviewed by HT and governors	
3	R Cuzick	Amendments 24.6.25 – changes to writing and reading	July 2025

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1. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

We seek to foster a love of literature and language and enhance knowledge so that every child leaves Great Orton School equipped to face a world full of limitless opportunities. With fluent writing and reading skills, children will pull together all the skills that 'English' encompasses and feel confident to seek their individual pathways in life.

English unites the all-important life skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. We recognise that good English is fundamental to raising standards across **all** school subjects and key stages of learning. Pupils should be taught to read, write and communicate with confidence, fluency and understanding. These key skills should be transferred from one subject to another. This policy ensures that English skills are taught in accordance with the objectives and attainment targets as set out in the National Curriculum English document and the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. At Great Orton School, we have high expectations and we aim to provide enjoyment whilst ensuring achievement in this core subject.

2. CURRICULUM INTENT

2a. Speaking and Listening

At Great Orton School we strive for a child to be able to:

- speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners.
- listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard.
- adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands.
- reflect on their own and others' contributions and the language used.
- evaluate their own and others' contributions through a range of drama activities.
- understand and use standard, grammatically correct English.
- develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life.

In the Foundation Stage (Reception), children should be given opportunities to speak and listen and represent ideas in their activities and to use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum. The children will be immersed in an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication. Teachers will use resources from the research from Tower Hamlets on Progression in Language Structure (PILS). These resources help to develop children's oracy skills and are progressive throughout the school.

At Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2), children should learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They should begin to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They should use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds. Teachers will use resources from the research from Tower Hamlets on Progression in Language Structure (PILS). These resources help to develop children's oracy skills and are progressive throughout the school.

At Key Stage Two (Years 3-6), children should learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They should read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They should explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works. Teachers will use resources from the research from Tower Hamlets on Progression in Language Structure (PILS). These resources help to develop children's oracy skills and are progressive throughout the school.

2b. Reading

At Great Orton School we strive for a child to be able to:

- be a confident, independent reader through an appropriate focus on decoding and comprehension of texts, as well as becoming readers for pleasure and choice.
- become enthusiastic and reflective readers through contact with challenging and lengthy texts.
- recognise a wide range of different genres of texts.
- develop reading in meaningful and real to life contexts for a true purpose, across the curriculum to make links between learning.
- celebrate reading through the use of Book Awards
- have a welcoming and well stocked library in school run by school librarians
- make links with the community through use of local libraries.

From Reception through to Year 6, our children are challenged to read a broad range of texts (this includes fiction, non-fiction and poetry). We encourage a 'love of reading' ethos, through reading events such as: Guest Readers, Book Swaps and World Book Day. All adults in school promote reading throughout the year and we ensure that a range of texts are available for our children. All children have access to the school library, where a range of exciting books can be read. Every day ALL children are read to by an adult through our Reading Spine sessions. These books are specially selected to widen our children's reading palate and broaden their vocabulary knowledge.

During weekly reading sessions **based on the Ashley Boothe planning**, children work with their teachers to look at different texts: analysing their features, making predictions, comparing and contrasting stories and exploring authors' styles.

For the more able readers, we have a range of texts available in our library which includes Classic Fiction texts so that children are never held back. For our children who find reading more difficult, we support and nurture their skills through specialised reading schemes delivered by skilled staff (Fresh Start).

The pupils are encouraged to take their reading book home daily, to enable parents and carers to support their child, whilst they are learning to read. Accompanying the reading book is a Reading Record that provides an opportunity for dialogue with the pupil's teacher.

All children follow the 'Read Write Inc' system of learning letter sounds to begin with. The phonics session takes place daily and children are taught at the various 'phase' levels appropriate to their ability. We use the Accelerated Reader method of identifying the reading level of books once phonics is mastered (usually at the end of KS1).

2c. Writing

At Great Orton School we strive for a child to be able to:

- develop techniques appropriate for developing phonic and spelling strategies in reading and written work.
- write using standard English.

- write with accuracy and meaning in narrative and non-fiction genres.
- be confident with sentence and grammar structure and be able to use these with effect to become 'writers'.
- to plan, draft and edit to improve their work.

Handwriting

- correspond letter names and phonemes to written graphemes, forming letters clearly and correctly.
- attempt joined writing when secure with phonetic awareness and writing independently.

Phonics and Spelling

- use phonic strategies from EYFS to Year 6 using 'Read Write Inc' and 'Read Write Inc Spelling' documents.
- develop segmenting and blending skills needed for reading and writing.
- understand the rules and convention, the 'why' of spelling rules and patterns and be able to apply these in their own writing.
- apply skills in reading and writing opportunities across the curriculum.
- learn key spellings weekly in Key Stage 2.

At Great Orton we want to inspire our children to become fluent and imaginative writers. To achieve this, we start the foundations of writing with our Reception children. As the children progress through school, they continue to build on these foundations through a range of exciting and interactive lessons. We use Pie Corbett's Talk for Writing across the school to encourage our children to become independent thinkers and then writers.

Talk for Writing consists of a three-week process, called 'Imitation, Innovation and Invention'. Prior to this, pupils will be given a short piece of writing to do called a 'cold task' where they will have the chance to activate their prior knowledge and show their teacher what they can already do. From here, the teacher will assess the needs of the class and ensure to work on these throughout the writing unit.

During the Imitation phase, pupils will be exposed to a high quality 'model text' which they will take inspiration from to eventually write their own piece at the end of the unit. The teacher will co-construct a writer's 'toolkit' alongside the class, so the pupils know exactly what skills they need to show in their writing in order to engage the reader.

During the 'imitation' stage, pupils will stick closely to the 'model text', however they will change parts to make it their own! As the children gain more confidence, they will eventually move further and further away from the model text.

Finally, during the 'invention' phase, pupils will create their own piece of writing, using all the knowledge and skills they have gained over the unit. Throughout the unit, pupils will be encouraged to write short pieces every day to build their stamina and practise the skills within the 'toolkit'.

Our curriculum allows our children to develop their key skills in English sessions where they focus on a range of sessions, punctuation and spelling (GPS), regular handwriting practice and reading skills. These skills are specifically linked to the genre the children are writing about and can therefore be utilized in their independent writing. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are encouraged to use self – evaluation and check their work independently for sense, accuracy and meaning.

Children from Year 2 upwards take home spellings each week to learn through the 'look, cover, write, check system' to be tested in school each week; this is further supported in school through the use of the RWI Spelling program.

In addition to English lessons, we encourage writing across the curriculum and have high expectations of what our children can achieve. From exploring an author's style to modelling good practice, creating shared texts and developing independent writing, we believe we give the children the tools they need to become confident and inspired writers.

By the time our children leave Great Orton, we aim for them to be able to write texts of all genres using a wide range of punctuation, vocabulary and sentence structures. We also encourage our children to write well-structured, cohesive texts that engage and involve the reader. As our children progress further, we like to nurture and support them in their writing by emboldening them to develop their own individual 'voice' and style.

We want our children to aspire to be the next generation of novelists, playwrights and journalists

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING

3a. Approaches to Phonics

Phonics is taught through the **Read, Write Inc** program. This program teaches children to read accurately and fluently with good comprehension. They learn to form each letter, spell correctly, and compose their ideas step-by-step. All children are grouped in accordance to their individual needs and are in phase appropriate groups.

For those children who are still struggling with their reading and phonics, afternoon interventions are in place to allow them to 'catch up' quickly or practice what they have been taught previously. We also provide the 'Fresh Start' program for those children in Y5 – Y6 who are still developing their phonic skills.

All Read, Write Inc books that are sent home have been specially selected to match the child's ability. They should be able to read them accurately with ease. They will only ever be sent home books that they can read accurately with fluency and comprehension. If the book appears too hard for them, they will be re-assessed to ensure they are in the correct group. Reading at home should be an opportunity for children to share what they can do and celebrate their achievements.

Approaches to Reading

In Year 1 and for some of our Year 2 children, reading is taught through the Read, Write Inc program. This program teaches children to read accurately and fluently with good comprehension. Most Year 2 children complete the RWI program by the summer term in Year 2 and will progress into explicit reading lessons by the end of the Summer term. Children also have the opportunity to take home a library book to read for pleasure with the support of the adults at home.

We aim to hear every child read at least once a week (with less able children at least twice a week) and encourage our parents to read daily with their children at home. Each day children are read to by an adult during our Reading Spine time.

In Key Stage Two, reading is taught **using the Ashley Boothe program**. This focusses on: introduction (basic understanding), investigation (deepen understanding) and independent application. It also looks at encouraging the children to use strategies to improve their reading fluency (e.g. echo and choral reading).

In Key Stage Two, we aim to hear every child read at least once a week and encourage our parents to read daily with their children at home. Accelerated Reader books are sent home that match the child's reading ability and can be changed when the child has shown that they have read the book

confidently and fluently and can answer comprehension questions on the AR computerised program. Like KS1, children also have the opportunity to take home a library book to read for pleasure.

To continue to encourage a love of reading, children are asked to journal their thoughts and feelings about the books they are reading or the class Reading Spine book (in EYFS and Year 1 children journal with their teacher). These journals are an insight into the child's reading journey and are shared with the class teacher. These contribute to the Book Awards journey where children can earn awards for their reading.

3b. Approaches to Writing

English in EYFS is taught through all seven Areas of Learning, but particularly through the prime area of Communication & Language and the specific area of Literacy. As oral communication is fundamental to every area of the curriculum, we provide every opportunity for children to refine their speaking and listening skills.

From Year 1 through to Year 6, children are taught English within their classes. Through scaffolding and the support of Teaching Assistants, all children will receive high quality teaching and ensure every child reaches their full potential. Children may receive additional support (if necessary) outside of the English lessons.

A clear lesson objective is a feature of all English lessons. Working walls and 'Washing Lines' support learning in the classrooms. Evaluative and 'in the moment' marking is used. Assessment informs planning and reference is made to the National Curriculum in medium term plans. The use of computing enables children to use and apply their developing skills in English in a variety of ways. We encourage children to use ICT as a resource for learning, whenever appropriate. We provide a rich and varied experience for pupils to draw on in their writing and reading which should include the whole curriculum.

Spelling lessons also take place weekly (via RWI Spelling) and encourage our pupils to investigate patterns, root-words etc. Statutory words are taught as part of this approach.

3c. Handwriting Approaches

Handwriting begins in EYFS with mark-making and patterns. All pupils are given access to a wide range of writing tools and mediums to practise the early fine motor skills. The needs of left-handed children, or those with physical difficulties are also taken into consideration and where necessary accommodated with resources or specific intervention. Pupils are encouraged to develop fluent lines of correctly orientated letters from an early age and emergent writing is encouraged.

In EYFS and KS1, the RWI program is also used to help teach letter formation.

We continue to use the RWI handwriting scheme from Year 2 (Summer Term) onwards and teacher-led handwriting practice is timetabled and implemented at least once a week. Correct posture and positioning of paper or books are also emphasised during these sessions.

As the children move up through the school they are encouraged to think carefully about the presentation of their work and to develop clear, legible and fluent handwriting. Those who successfully achieve this then progress to writing with a pen.

At Great Orton, our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding in English. There are children of differing ability in all classes. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the individual child. We achieve this through a range of strategies including, differentiation through levels of support, outcome and task. We will deploy staff for one to one and small group tuition and intervention opportunities at the point of need and make use of modelled and guided work to lead into independent work.

4. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS AND PLANNING

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum English Document and in the Communication and Language and Literacy sections of the Early Years Foundation Stage (September 2014).

5. THE GOVERNING BODY

Regular reports are made to the governors on the progress of English provision. This policy will be reviewed every three years or in the light of changes to legal requirements.

6. ASSESSMENT AND TARGET SETTING

Work will be assessed in line with the Assessment Policy. Teachers assess in the short-term to mark children's work each day against their learning objectives. This includes marking and feedback to the child about their learning and progress through the use of individual target setting to scaffold and challenge learning as well as observations within Foundation Stage to lead towards the end assessment of the Foundation Stage profile.

In addition to this, teachers will plan to assess and level at least one piece of work done independently each half term and phonics assessments will take place every half term. Termly assessments are made against National Curriculum level descriptors for each child. Towards the end of the school year, teachers make assessments to show progress against school and national targets. Teachers set targets for the next school year and these are shared with parents during the Autumn term parents' meetings. Children undertake national tests at the end of Year 1 (Phonics Screening), the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

7. INCLUSION

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 attainment. Gifted children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors including, classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style and differentiation, so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This may include small group intervention on a regular basis or one to one support. Intervention through School Action and School Action Plus will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs. We enable children to have access to the full range of activities involved with learning in this area. This includes catering for the needs of children with EAL, assessing and targeting their needs.

Teachers provide help with communication and literacy through

- Using texts that children can read and understand
- Using visual and written materials in different formats
- Using ICT and other technological aids
- Using alternative communication, such as Makaton

High achieving pupils combine rapid progress through the planned work with more demanding work related to topics which have already been encountered. All curriculum materials and resources are designed to encourage pupils to be polite and develop respect towards others, irrespective of gender, race, culture or ability.

8. ROLE OF SUBJECT LEADER

The Subject Leader should be responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in Literacy through:

Monitoring and evaluating English:-

- pupil progress
- provision of English (including Intervention and Support programmes)
- the quality of the Learning Environment;
- the deployment and provision of support staff

The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, being informed about current developments in the subject. The named governor responsible for English meets at times with the subject leader to review progress.

9. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents can support pupils by reading with children and using the Reading Record to communicate progress to the teacher and to encourage the child.

Adopted by The Governing Body on 22/1/24

Chair

Headteacher