

# Old Dalby C.E. Primary School



Let us be concerned for one another, to help one another to show love and to do good.  
Hebrews 10:24

## **English Curriculum Policy To be reviewed September 2025**

*Kind hearts. Open Minds. Courageous Spirits  
Together, we will explore life in all its fullness.*

## **Introduction**

All at Old Dalby C.E. Primary School recognise the central importance of English, as a subject in its own right, and as the most cohesive area of learning. Gaining and using skills in language not only affects the child's progress in school, but also has a profound influence upon the course of his or her whole life. We aim to develop pupils' abilities within an integrated programme of Speaking & Listening, Reading & Writing. Pupils are given opportunities to develop their use, knowledge and understanding of spoken and written English within a broad and balanced curriculum, with opportunities to consolidate and reinforce taught literacy skills.

## **Aims**

- To promote a positive attitude to reading, writing, speaking and listening.
- To develop children's ability to become confident users of language, both oral and written.
- To value language from other countries and cultures.
- To ensure children have access to a broad, balanced and creative literacy curriculum.
- To provide clear and consistent teaching throughout the school.
- To communicate the school policy on English to all staff, Governors, parents and other interested parties.

## **Objectives**

Pupils at Old Dalby C.E. Primary School will leave Year 6:

- reading and writing with confidence, fluency and understanding, using a range of independent strategies to take responsibility for their own learning including self-monitoring and correcting their own errors;
- with a love of reading and a desire to read for enjoyment;
- with an interest in words and their meanings; developing a growing vocabulary in relation to grammatical terminology;
- understanding a range of text types, media types and genres;
- able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the situation;
- using their developing creativity, imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness;
- having a suitable technical vocabulary to respectfully articulate their responses in any discussion.

## **Inclusion Statement**

Every child is given the opportunity to be included in all aspects of school life and in all areas of the curriculum. Teaching and learning in the school ensures that all children are set suitable learning challenges. Broad ranges of teaching styles are adopted in response to diverse learning needs. We make every effort to overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and for groups of children. We aim for Old Dalby C.E Primary School to be an ideal learning environment for nurturing and developing the whole child.

## **Equal Opportunities**

We have high expectations for all children. Our aim as a school is to ensure that all children have equal access to a rich and rewarding curriculum for English, and that they experience this curriculum in ways that are appropriate for their needs, regardless of gender, ethnicity, or any other determining factors.

## **Statutory Requirements**

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum in England: English Programmes of Study – Key Stages 1 and 2 (2013) and in the Communication and Language and Literacy sections of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2017).

In the Foundation Stage (Reception) children are given opportunities to:

- Speak and listen and represent ideas in their activities;
- Use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum;
- Become immersed in a language rich environment.

At Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) children are given opportunities to:

- Learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say.
- Learn to read and write independently and with enthusiasm.
- Learn to use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.

At Key Stage 2 (Years 3-6) children are given opportunities to:

- Learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences.
- Read a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetic texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them.
- Explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works (using grammatical terminology).

## **Subject Organisation**

### *Foundation Stage*

Children have opportunities to develop their communication, language and literacy skills on a daily basis in both adult led and child initiated activities. A range of texts and stimulus are used in the daily mixed ability Literacy lessons. Children have daily discrete Phonics lessons. Individuals develop their library skills by selecting their own books, (within their book band) to read with an adult. Regular story times develop a love for books and storytelling.

### *Key Stage 1*

In Key Stage 1, daily discrete phonics lessons continue and are taught in ability groups, while children have daily mixed ability Literacy lessons with an emphasis on real texts. Children take part in both guided, whole class and individual reading sessions and have regular story times and library visits to develop a love for reading. Literacy skills are developed across the curriculum. Provision is made for children who require extra support through intervention programmes, differentiated class teaching and targeted teaching groups.

### *Key Stage 2*

Spelling and Grammar skills are taught both discretely and embedded within literacy lessons. Additional literacy sessions include whole class reading, spelling practice, grammar, handwriting and daily reading aloud of class novel. Literacy skills are developed across the curriculum. Provision is made for children who require extra support.

## **Differentiation**

There are children of differing ability in all classes at Old Dalby C.E. Primary School. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons, we do it through differentiated group work, while in other lessons we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use teaching assistants to support some children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of the individual.

## **Approaches to Speaking and Listening**

We recognise the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum; spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life. Opportunities to develop these skills include: talk partners, storytelling, role-play and debating within lessons across the curriculum, class assemblies, prefect representatives, school productions and talent shows.

The National Curriculum states:

'All pupils should be enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Pupils should be able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role.' (pages 3, 4 and 7, 2013) All of these speaking and listening skills are taught in Literacy, across the curriculum and during extra-curricular activities too.

Children who require extra support in speaking and listening are referred to a Speech and Language therapist to further assess their needs.

We recognise the need for all pupils to speak, read and write Standard English fluently and accurately, while acknowledging that a pupil's own dialect or other language is of prime importance. All staff members are role models who promote Standard English and take care to sensitively correct children's misconceptions with language.

## **Approaches to Reading**

We use the Letters and Sounds programme to deliver daily discrete phonics lessons in Foundation Stage and KS1; enabling children to decode effectively. This is continued into KS2 where necessary.

Teachers model reading strategies during shared reading sessions, whilst children have the opportunity to develop their own reading strategies and to discuss texts in detail during guided reading time/ whole class reading. From Foundation Stage up to Year 6, children have the opportunity to read 1:1 with an adult regularly; with there being a particular focus on questioning to promote an in-depth understanding of the text. Questions progress from literal to inferential as the children move up through the school. A range of reading schemes are used to support early readers as well as book banded 'real books'.

As a school we work hard to engage children in reading. Many exciting and rewarding activities are arranged in school to promote the pleasure and knowledge that can be gained from books, e.g. 'World Book Day' - where children are immersed in storytelling, author quizzes, book discussions and the opportunity to dress up as a book character and share their favourite books. We regularly visit the newly renovated library - where the children are encouraged to take books out and relax in a quiet inspiring space. Other opportunities include; author visits, book clubs and individual class reading challenges to promote the love of reading.

In KS1, children take home a banded book which is appropriate to their level of ability along with a non-fiction book. Children choose their books from a wide selection of schemes and real books. In Key Stage 2, some children take home a banded book which is appropriate to their level of ability. Children are expected to progress to a 'free reader' status so they are able to read any book from their classroom or school library.

The school teaches language comprehension through the use of the 'Reading Rainbow'. This promotes 'reading for meaning' through the use of language and teaching reading skills. There are 3 layers of lenses which deepen the children's understanding. In EYFS children are introduced to the fantastic lenses and this progresses throughout KS1. By KS2 children are confident in using

the stylistic and analytic lenses also. Alongside the reading lenses children are taught the reading skills needed to answer written comprehension questions such as inference and summary.

We recognise the value of adults (both in school and at home) reading aloud to children, in order to improve their grasp of story language, enthuse them with a love of books and inspire them as writers. Each child has a partnership book teachers and parents can use to share information about a child's reading. Parents are encouraged to read with their child. Information is given on how to support their child in reading in a variety of ways e.g. on the school website, parent information evenings, reading café and parents' evenings. As children progress through the school, they become more independent in recording what they have read in their reading records. We promote a passion for reading with both parents and children, through secret books, a half termly reading raffle and a parent book swap.

### **Approaches to Writing**

We aim to develop the children's ability to produce well structured, detailed writing in which the meaning is made clear and which engages the interest of the reader. Attention is paid throughout the school to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling. Our approach to teaching writing covers the 'transcription' and 'composition' requirements of The National Curriculum (2013). Teachers model writing skills and the use of phonics and spelling strategies in shared writing sessions. Children have opportunities to write at length in extended independent writing sessions at the end of a unit; applying their taught skills to an independent piece of writing. The teaching of Grammar and Spelling is in line with the requirements of The National Curriculum (2014). Across the school grammar lessons are taught discretely but are also imbedded into writing lessons. To be able to spell correctly is an essential life skill. When spelling becomes automatic, pupils are able to concentrate on the content of their writing and the making of meaning. Whilst we note that spelling is not the most important aspect of writing, confidence in spelling can have a profound effect on the writer's creativity. We aim to use explicit, interactive teaching, which draws children's attention to the origins, structure and meaning of words.

### **Cross- Curricular Literacy Opportunities**

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. They will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through literacy lessons to other areas of the curriculum through our topic-based curriculum.

### **Resources**

There is a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school; all classrooms have dictionaries, thesauruses, vocabulary mats and literacy-rich environments. All classrooms have a selection of fiction/ non-fiction texts linked to their class topic and children have permanent access to the school library.

### **Assessment, Target Setting and Record Keeping**

The formative assessments that teachers make as part of every lesson helps teachers to adjust their daily plans. Teachers match these short-term assessments closely to the teaching objectives. Teachers use formative and summative assessments to measure progress against the key objectives, and to help them plan for the next unit of work. These assessments are also used to evaluate progress against school and national targets. Writing is assessed against the statutory (year 2 and 6) TAF and the schools own created TAF. Each term all children are assessed against their year group objectives in reading, SPAG, and writing. Children undertake the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Marking in English is in accordance with the school's Marking Policy.

### **Evaluation and Monitoring**

English is evaluated and monitored through a range of strategies including learning walks, book scrutiny and moderation. The English co-ordinator monitors their action plan and evaluates their

objectives so that they know what the next steps are to develop English across the school. The English co-ordinator also monitors the school's results looking for trends to feed into the action plan.

### **Staff Development**

At Old Dalby C.E. Primary School, staff development is undertaken in the following ways:

- By identifying areas for development during Performance Management reviews (personal development).
- In the School Improvement plan (whole school development).
- By discussion with the Head Teacher and/or co-ordinator.
- By attending relevant courses.
- By observation and feedback (Learning Walks)
- By whole school INSET.
- By visits to leading literacy teachers when appropriate and other schools.

### **Excellence in English**

Excellence is celebrated with praise, merits and displays of work, read or spoken presentations to the class or school. Special guests to the school, such as visiting authors and performing arts groups are also actively sought, providing children with stimulating and enjoyable experiences associated with Literacy. Special events such as whole school writing events, World Book Day and visiting book fairs are also used to promote excellence in English. Children are also encouraged to take an interest in their own reading development and the reading development of others by the use of partner reading. Older pupils support younger children in the development of their reading and gain self-esteem and a sense of achievement from doing so. The school website, twitter and Facebook page promotes and celebrates excellence in English.

### **Homework and the Role of Parents**

We see parents as important partners in the process of developing children's literacy skills.

- They have an important influence on children's language before they come to school.
- They provide valuable support at home in helping children to become readers and writers.
- They offer a useful audience for children in their development as speakers and listeners, readers and writers as the children move through the school (e.g. phonics, reading, SAT's revision).

We therefore encourage parents to play their full part in their children's education by:

- Involving parents in the school's reading programme from the moment their child starts school.
- Weekly expectation of reading 3 times a week or more with their child at home.
- Guidance for parents so that they can offer appropriate support.
- Give parents outlines of the curriculum areas in English that each year group will be studying.
- Welcoming offers of help from parents to assist in school by listening to children read.
- Sending homework home in accordance with the school's Homework Policy and encouraging parental support.