

English at Orchard Way

At Orchard Way, our aim is that every child is enabled to reach their full potential in English through quality first teaching. We are passionate about fostering a love of reading and writing and it is important to us that our curriculum is engaging, inspiring and enriching. To ensure pupils have the best chance to achieve at least national expectation, Literacy is taught daily and is often taught alongside other subjects so that pupils can make cross-curricular links in their learning and know that reading and writing have a purpose. As well as quality first teaching, pupils are encouraged to use their Orchard Way Learning Skills (OWLS) within Literacy sessions in order to help them to develop into confident and independent readers and writers. Please click [here](#) for more information.

Please click on the following tabs to find out more about reading, including guided reading; writing and phonics at Orchard Way.

Reading

Our approach to reading supports the development of phonics and reading skills, as well as encouraging pupils to read and enjoy a variety of texts.

Key Stage One pupils follow the Oxford Reading Tree scheme, which is phonic based and progresses to the end of Year 2. Pupils will read with an adult at least once a week and it is expected that pupils also read at home daily, during the school week, to support their learning. Home reading expectations are as follows:

Reception – 5-10 minutes per day

Year 1/Year 2 – 10-15 minutes per day

Year 3/Year 4 – 15-20 minutes per day

Year 5/Year 6 – 20 minutes per day

Guided Reading: From Year 1 onwards, pupils develop reading skills in Guided Reading sessions. To begin with, the focus is around the ability to decode sounds and blend these to read whole words and sentences. The focus then becomes around the understanding and comprehension of text and the ability to read aloud with fluency and expression. We split the reading skills into main areas, so pupils are involved in the learning process and know exactly what they are learning.

We call these areas **VIPERS**, which stands for:

Vocabulary

Infer

Predict

Explain

Retrieve

Sequence (KS1)/ Summarise (KS2)

These skills are key to all pupils achieving reading objectives set out in the Primary Curriculum, [click here](#) to see these for your child's year group.

Some pupils need further support with reading, so they are given opportunities to read 1:1 with an adult and may remain on the Oxford Reading Tree books in Key Stage 2 to make sure the level of challenge is appropriate. If pupils are progressing well by Year 3, they will have the chance to become a 'free reader' (choose books without support.)

Library: At Orchard Way, we are fortunate enough to have a well-stocked, fully functioning library, where Key Stage 2 can borrow a book from for enjoyment. They visit the library weekly with personalised library cards, which helps them to access a wide range of books. Each classroom also has a good selection of fiction, non – fiction and poetry available for pupils to read in class.

Writing

We believe that good readers make good writers and regular reading supports and develops pupils' writings skills by extending their vocabulary and providing a wealth of ideas to write about.

In Reception, the approach to writing begins with developing the physical skills needed for writing including fine and gross motor skills. We understand the importance for pupils to write for a purpose and therefore, our lessons are planned to stimulate and engage their imaginations.

The pupils are also taught to use accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar, as well as each year group practising high frequency words, common exception words, statutory word lists and year group specific spelling rules. Spelling words are a component of each child's homework from Year 1 up and are an integral part of pupils becoming successful writers.

Pupils learn a range of different writing styles or genres for different purposes. This involves using a wide range of different vocabulary, some of which is specific to each genre. Before pupils are expected to write, they take part in opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills, in order to develop and extend their vocabulary and to verbally practise what they are going to write. These may include: drama, hot-seating (answering questions whilst in role of a character from a book/film-clip), talk-partners and responding to specific questions to develop their understanding.

Pupils achievements in writing are regularly celebrated at weekly Celebration Assemblies, where pupils may be given certificates for specific pieces of writing, or more often, for improvements or effort in writing. We also celebrate a 'Writer of the Half Term' from each class and pupils winning this accolade have their photo and writing on display on our Writer of the Half Term board in the hall.

Phonics

Daily Phonic lessons in Reception, Year 1 and 2, draw upon the government's phonic programme 'Letters and Sounds' to teach phonics and high frequency words, with the aim of pupils becoming fluent readers by age seven. The programme builds pupils's speaking and listening skills, as well as preparing pupils for learning to read by developing their phonic knowledge.

It is split into 6 phases with the different phases being covered at different stages from Reception to Year 2.

In each phonics lesson, the pupils review previous sounds, are introduced to new sounds and then have the opportunity to apply their new learning in a variety of contexts.

Phase 1

Early phonics teaching in pre-school, nursery and at the start of Reception focuses on developing pupils's listening, vocabulary and speaking skills. Typical activities for teaching Phase 1 phonics include 'listening' walks, playing and identifying instruments, action songs, learning rhymes and playing games like I Spy.

Phase 2

In Phase 2, pupils begin to learn the sounds that letters make (phonemes). There are 44 sounds in all. Some are made with two letters, but in Phase 2, pupils focus on learning the 19 most common single letter sounds.

By the end of Phase 2 pupils should be able to read some vowel-consonant (VC) and consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words, and to spell them out. They also learn some high frequency 'tricky words' like 'the' and 'go.' This phase usually lasts about six weeks. Tricky words are those that cannot be sounded out phonetically, which pupils must learn by sight.

Phase 3

Phase 3 introduces pupils to the remaining, more difficult and/or less commonly used phonemes. There are around 25 of these, depending on

which scheme is followed, mainly made up of two letters such as /ch/, /ar/, /ow/ and /ee/.

Alongside this, pupils are taught to recognise more tricky words, including 'me,' 'was,' 'my,' 'you' and 'they'. They learn the names of the letters, as well as the sounds they make. Activities might include learning mnemonics (memory aids) for tricky words, practising writing letters on mini whiteboards, using word cards and singing songs like the Alphabet Song.

Phase 3 takes most pupils around 12 weeks. By the end, they should be able to say the sound made by most, or all, Phase 2 and 3 graphemes, blend and read CVC words made from these graphemes, read 12 new tricky words and write letters correctly when given an example to copy.

A **grapheme** is a letter or a number of letters that represent a sound (phoneme) in a word.

Phase 4

Pupils will, among other things, practise reading and spelling CVCC (consonant, vowel, consonant, consonant) words ('such,' 'belt,' 'milk', etc, practise reading and spelling high frequency words, practise reading and writing sentences and learn more tricky words, including 'have,' 'like,' 'some,' 'little.'

Pupils should now be blending confidently to work out new words. They should be starting to be able to read words straight off, rather than having to sound them out. They should also be able to write every letter, mostly correctly. This phase usually takes four to six weeks, and most pupils will complete it around the end of Reception.

Phase 5

Phase 5 generally takes pupils the whole of Year 1. Pupils learn new graphemes (different ways of spelling each sound) and alternative pronunciations for these: for example, learning that the grapheme 'ow' makes a different sound in 'snow' and 'cow'. They should become quicker at blending, and start to do it silently.

They learn about split digraphs such as the a-e in 'name', o-e as in 'bone', i-e as in 'bike', and u-e as in 'flute'.

They will continue to learn more tricky words, including 'people,' 'water' and 'friend'.

The Year 1 Phonics Check

The Phonics Screening Check is taken individually by all pupils in Year 1 in England towards the end of the school year. It is designed to give teachers and parents information on how pupils are progressing in phonics.

There are two sections in this 40-word check and it assesses phonics skills and knowledge learned through Reception and Year 1. Your child will read up to four words per page for their teacher. The test will always be administered by an adult they know, e.g. their teacher or the head teacher.

It is a school-based check to make sure that your child receives any additional support promptly, should they need it. It is not a stressful situation as the adult is well-equipped to listen and understand your child's level of skills.

The pupils also need to be able to read 'alien words', these are words that are phonically decodable but are not actual words with an associated meaning.

Any child who does not pass the Phonics Screening Check in Year 1 will retake this the following year in Year 2. School will ensure that those pupils who find phonics learning difficult will have a phonic intervention to support their learning.

Phase 6

Phase 6 phonics takes place throughout Year 2, with the aim of pupils becoming fluent readers and accurate spellers.

By Phase 6, pupils should be able to read hundreds of words using one of three strategies:

- Reading them automatically
- Decoding them quickly and silently
- Decoding them aloud

Pupils should now be spelling most words accurately (this is known as 'encoding'), although this usually lags behind reading. They will also learn, among other things:

- Prefixes and suffixes, e.g. 'in-' and '-ed'
- The past tense
- Memory strategies for high frequency or topic words
- Proof-reading
- How to use a dictionary
- Where to put the apostrophe in words like 'I'm'
- Spelling rules

Although formal phonics teaching is usually complete by the end of Year 2, pupils continue to use their knowledge as they move up the school.