

Reading at Ocker Hill Academy

“Books shouldn’t be daunting, they should be funny, exciting and wonderful; and learning to be a reader gives terrific advantage.” - Roald Dahl

At Ocker Hill Academy, reading is at the heart of our curriculum. It is our belief and ethos that without the skill to read and the breadth and knowledge of language, the world is a very difficult place to access. We teach reading at Ocker Hill Academy in many ways and forms but always with passion and aim to build young learners who love reading and have sufficient reading ability to access all areas of the curriculum and ultimately, the wider world.

Library and Reading Books

We have a wonderful library of books available for all children at the academy to use. Children have one set session per week where they are able to visit the library with their class and have our school librarian, as well as their class teacher, on hand to help select engaging and appropriate books. In addition to this, the children are free to visit the library each morning when they arrive but also during break times if they wish to change their books more frequently. Our year six librarians are available during these times to assist the children but also carry out books reviews each week in classes. At Ocker Hill Academy, we use the Collins Big Cat scheme of books which are banded according to fluency and cover a wide range of fiction, classic texts, poetry and non-fiction. The children are able to select one ability-based ‘reading’ book from this scheme at a time but are also encouraged to choose up to two other ‘library books’ of their choice to foster their love of reading.

Phonics and decoding.

In accordance to statutory guidance, pupils should be able to read age appropriate books accurately with the ability to decode 90% of the text independently and at a speed that is sufficient for understanding rather than decoding. In years three and four, to ensure that this is the case, the literacy curriculum has been adapted to ensure all children are able to access reading. Children are taught phonics using the Little Wandle scheme on a daily basis outside of literacy lessons. This enables any children, who have not yet reached phase 6 or have gaps in phonic knowledge to do so and make certain that they are able to access the key stage 2 curriculum. In addition to this wave 1 teaching, the lowest 20% of learners in this area, receive further phonics intervention following the Rapid Catch Up programme from Little Wandle. From year 5, as the majority of children by this point are able to phonetically decode and blend, phonics is only taught to those who require it, during 1:1 or 1: small group interventions using the aforementioned scheme.

Fluency and Language

All children, throughout the academy have several opportunities to read aloud to an adult across the course of the week. It is expected that every child read to an adult (teacher or support staff) at least once per week on a one-to-one basis where decoding is refined, punctuation recognised, unfamiliar words tackled and the speed at which they are reading fluently, improved and practiced. Further to this, children read to their class teachers within guided reading once per week within a small ability group where reading skills are demonstrated and shared collaboratively. At Ocker Hill Academy, we believe that fluency is very important in the building of reading for enjoyment and therefore this is practiced too. Choral reading, copy reading and echo reading are all used as methods to demonstrate and teach the use of expression and intonation as well as to build confidence in the use of language and punctuation. This can take place not only in guided reading and literacy, but in all areas of the curriculum. There is also an expectation that the children practice these skills at home

with a parent or guardian a minimum of three times per week- a home reading record book is then completed by the adult to be checked and responded to in school by their teacher. Fluency is assessed in school by using Collins 'Assess Fluency in Reading' which identifies reading behaviours and the speed at which children can fluently decode the text proficiently for understanding. This assessment links directly to the Collins 'Big Cat' scheme in school and outlines the band that the children should be working at. Once the pupils reach the highest 'pearl' band, it is deemed that the child has enough ability to choose their own books independently from our library as 'free readers.' These are checked periodically to ensure that match ability. Vocabulary boards for each subject area are in place in every classroom to underpin the teaching of language and strong links to word classes and SPAG teaching are made.

Assessment and explicit reading teaching.

The children complete reading comprehension exercises within literacy sessions on a bi-half-termly basis. These exercises are often linked to the genre/ unit that is being taught at that time but the reading skill that is being focussed on is made clear and demonstrated by the class teacher. These objectives are outlined on our Literacy progression maps. In addition to these, in year's three to five, children sit a full NFER comprehension test at the end of each term. The results of these are used to guide teachers with the following term's planning but also with groupings for guided reading sessions. Following both, the NFER tests and bi-half-termly comprehension sessions, a full hypercorrection session takes place. This means that the test also becomes a method of refining reading skills and provide opportunities for learning as well as a gap finding exercise.

Guided Reading.

Daily guided reading sessions also take place. Children work in ability groups with their decoding and comprehension ability considered. Each week the children work through a carousel of activities devised to test and support their reading skills as well as build their love of reading. These include a teacher focus session where each child is listened to, where the teacher can model high quality reading and where a discussion to check and stretch understanding takes place. This is underpinned by high quality key questions planned for and prepared in advance to get the most out of the half an hour session. These sessions are followed by a session of independent reading, an opportunity for the children to listen to an audio book as well as the opportunity to work on reading and comprehension skills independently. These skills are outlined across the academy on our reading skill progression map used by all staff and ensure high quality, focused skills practice.

Implicit reading in Literacy Lessons.

Reading objectives are taught in literacy on a regular basis. These skills are implicit within the unit of work and will match the genre/text that the unit that is being taught. This ensures that all staff follow all requirements of the national curriculum, close gaps and stretch pupils where necessary. All objectives are taken from our progression maps which are directly linked to the National Curriculum Reading Content Domains. These in turn reflect our assessment grids which are used to assess the children in reading. Reading is also widely encouraged outside of literacy sessions in our wider curriculum with topic related books being used as class readers and audio books as well as huge range of topic related books being available in classrooms for the children to use.

Reading for enjoyment.

All children are read to on a whole class basis at least 3 times per week. This can include, fiction, non-fiction and poetry and allows children to hear punctuation is used and how expression and

intonation can impact upon the way a story is portrayed. Much of the time, these books are made up of texts related to the topics that are being taught in other subject areas such as science, humanities, RE or PSHRE. In every classroom of the school, the children have access to their own class libraries and reading areas. These areas are used during guided reading time, but the children are also encouraged to use them during break and lunch times. A laptop is available to use for audio books, but also a range of books, magazines and comics are available here too. Each assembly in school also starts with a short story related to the content of the assembly and ends with assembly staff recommending an 'author-a-week' and books written by the author