

English at Saltwood School

English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society. (The National Curriculum)

Reading

Our aim is for our pupils to develop as confident and enthusiastic lifelong readers.

We use the Letters and Sounds programme to teach phonics. Letters and Sounds is a quality first phonics programme published by the Department for Education and Skills. It aims to build children's speaking and listening skills in their own right as well as to prepare children for learning to read by developing their phonic knowledge and skills. It sets out a detailed and systematic programme for teaching phonic skills for children starting by the age of five, with the aim of them becoming fluent readers by age seven.

There are six overlapping phases which the table below summarises. For more detailed information, visit the Letters and Sounds website.

Phase	Phonic Knowledge and Skills
<i>Phase One</i> (Nursery/Reception)	Activities are divided into seven aspects, including environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body sounds, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds and finally oral blending and segmenting.
<i>Phase Two</i> (Reception) up to 6 weeks	Learning 19 letters of the alphabet and one sound for each. Blending sounds together to make words. Segmenting words into their separate sounds. Beginning to read simple captions.
<i>Phase Three</i> (Reception) up to 12 weeks	The remaining 7 letters of the alphabet, one sound for each. Graphemes such as ch, oo, th representing the remaining phonemes not covered by single letters. Reading captions, sentences and questions. On completion of this phase, children will have learnt the "simple code", i.e. one grapheme for each phoneme in the English language.
<i>Phase Four</i> (Reception) 4 to 6 weeks	No new grapheme-phoneme correspondences are taught in this phase. Children learn to blend and segment longer words with adjacent consonants, e.g. swim, clap, jump.
<i>Phase Five</i> (Throughout Year 1)	Now we move on to the "complex code". Children learn more graphemes for the phonemes which they already know, plus different ways of pronouncing the graphemes they already know.
<i>Phase Six</i> (Throughout Year 2 and beyond)	Working on spelling, including prefixes and suffixes, doubling and dropping letters etc.

Pupils are heard read through one-to-one reading sessions with teachers, adults and reading volunteers. Guided reading allows us to develop a wide range and depth of essential comprehension skills. Parents are encouraged to hear children read on frequent basis at home and work closely in partnership with the school. Communication about progress is maintained through a reading log and discussions with parents.

The school uses the Oxford Reading Tree reading scheme to provide a range of high quality books with clear steps of progression from EYFS into KS2. Additional books supplement this scheme to ensure a broad range of reading experiences. Pupils have access to a wide variety of reading materials and genres across the curriculum in class libraries, the school library, the school reading scheme, the guided reading scheme, carefully selected core texts used in our teaching of English, texts on iPads, visiting authors and book sales. Book Week is a highlight of our school calendar with many exciting activities planned by our School Council and librarians.

Pupil progress is closely tracked on a termly basis and interventions are put in place for any pupils identified as needing additional support. Pupils are closely supported in knowing and achieving their next steps.

Writing

Our aim is for pupils to develop as confident and enthusiastic writers. A wide range of writing opportunities are carefully planned to enthuse, inspire and ensure progression of skills. Class teachers and teaching assistants work with groups during guided writing and creative writing opportunities. Our pupils write frequently across the curriculum, applying their skills throughout.

Writing is taught through discrete phonics sessions, spelling lessons, shared writing and guided writing. A high focus is placed on grammar, punctuation and spelling (GPS); they are taught both discretely as well as being integral to English lessons and the wider curriculum.

Spelling is taught throughout the school, covering the National Curriculum spelling objectives from year 1 onwards. This supports pupils to become confident spellers by teaching the strategies, rules and conventions systematically and explicitly, and helping pupils recognise which strategies they can use to improve their own spelling. Spelling strategies are taught explicitly and applied to high-frequency words, cross-curricular words and individual pupils' words.

The cursive handwriting script is taught in all classes and becomes joined from year 2.

Phonics and spelling homework is sent home throughout the school to support learning.

Year 6 are taught by a specialist literacy teacher in split classes for 3 days per week.

Marking identifies strengths and also provides scaffolded support for the next stages of development. Assessment for Learning is used throughout the school. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own learning, and the learning of their peers, and to edit and improve their writing as a result.

Pupil progress is closely tracked on a termly basis and interventions are put in place for pupils identified as needing additional support. Pupils are closely supported in knowing and achieving their next steps.

Writing is frequently celebrated in Gold Book assemblies.