



English

Reading, writing and communication (including speaking and listening) are fundamental life skills that are of the highest priority at Robert Ogden School. These are essential for all aspects of school life and the world beyond. We work to celebrate and build on the strengths of pupils and support them to overcome barriers to their learning. We are fully committed to developing each child's unique potential within a secure and caring environment to enable pupils to learn well and to support their learning across other subjects and areas of interest. Reading, writing and communication are taught across the curriculum ensuring that skills taught are applied in other subjects and activities.

Reading

As well as giving pupils a basic life skill in reading, some pupils will be able to use reading to discover new knowledge and develop a desire to read for enjoyment. They will be given the tools to read with confidence, fluency and understanding.

We develop our pupils' understanding of the written word by including activities focused on reading for meaning, including following written and visual instructions, responding to written and visual questions, and by using appropriate questioning techniques when reading.

Where appropriate, English is planned and delivered through the context of a high quality text from picture books and nursery rhymes to seminal word literature, pre 1914 and contemporary Shakespeare, poetry and drama. Pupils are introduced to a variety of genre; including fiction, non-fiction, poetry, graphic novels, computer-based writing, short stories, and novels.

Pupils communicate enthusiastically about reading. They have access to a range of reading materials including books, magazines and computer programmes matched to their own interests. Some pupils can talk about books and authors that they have enjoyed. Other pupils might show their enjoyment of reading through engagement with activities.

Each class has dedicated time daily to read for pleasure known as 'ERIC' time (Everyone Reads in Class). This is adapted in each class depending on need and interests. In some, teachers may be reading to their class, or completing story massage while in others children read their books or other texts (eg, magazines) independently.

All pupils in school have access to the library which holds a wide variety of genres and levels of books, including fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Constant current affairs are added to the library to ensure pupils know up to date information about the world today alongside historical events. 'First News' newspapers are included in classes to support the reading of current affairs where appropriate.

A successful tool used in school for interventions is Lexia. Lexia is a reading based computer programme which constantly assesses each pupils' reading and understanding ability and adapts its programme to support them.

Lexia

Lexia is a targeted literacy intervention in the form of an animated computer programme. It provides explicit, systematic and personalised learning in the six key areas of reading instruction: phonological awareness, phonics, structural analysis, automaticity, vocabulary and comprehension.

All appropriate pupils are assessed using the Lexia programme and have opportunities throughout the week to access the programme.

Research suggests that greater access to Lexia is linked to greater success on the programme. Students who wish to access the programme at home can do so using the link below:

<https://www.lexiacore5.com/>

Phonics

Learning to read is important. Everything else depends on it, so we put as much energy as we can into making sure that every single child learns to read as quickly as possible. Phonics and early reading is also taught creatively using multi-sensory approaches where needed.

We want you child to love reading- and to want to read for themselves. This is why we put our efforts into making sure they develop a love of books as well as simply learning to read through the Read, Write, Inc. programme.

This means that they learn how to 'read' the sounds in words and how those sounds can be written down. This is essential for reading, but it also helps pupils learn to spell well. We teach pupils simple ways of remembering these sounds and letters.

Pupils also practise reading and spelling what we call 'tricky words', such as; 'once', 'have', 'said' and 'where'. Pupils practise their reading with books that match the phonics and the tricky words they know. They start thinking that they can read and this does wonders for their confidence.

The teachers read to the pupils too so the children get to know all sorts of stories, poetry and information books. They learn many more words this way and it also helps their writing.

For more information about the Read, Write, Inc. programme in our school, please see the information regarding Read, Write, Inc. on the website.

Handwriting

Pupils are encouraged to develop their pre-writing and fine motor skills including practising their tripod grip through playful, engaging sensory activities including Dough Disco, Squiggle While you Wiggle and prewriting patterns.

Following this, an in-house handwriting programme has been developed to support letter formation from single letter low case formation, to capitalisation. Handwriting lines are used to ensure consistency in size and spacing to support formation. These guides differ in sizing to support pupils' ability and eventually help to write consistently without the use of line guide support when ready.

Spelling

Developing on from Read, Write, Inc., we use the Spelling Shed programme to teach pupils who are ready about different spelling rules. Classes complete weekly teaching practise and activities relating to specific spelling patterns to develop understanding of how words are formed.

Where children struggle to understand spelling rules, the Toe by Toe intervention is used to give children smaller steps of understanding. This is used following ongoing assessment and shared once it is found a pupil is unable to make progress in this area.

Writing

Multi-sensory approaches are used to encourage exploratory mark making. A variety of mediums are introduced including: sand, foam, play dough, etc. in order to develop cause and effect and unintentional and intentional mark making skills.

Some pupils develop meaningful writing beginning with their name and letter formation following the Read, Write, Inc. scheme and eventually progressing through to writing for a variety of real life purposes, eg., shopping lists, recipes, instructions and creative composition for enjoyment. We use a range of support materials including symbols and pictorial representations of words and phrases. The computer programme Communicate In Print is used throughout the school to support both reading and writing. We also use Colourful Semantics to promote understanding and develop meaningful writing.

Where pupils are able to, writing is developed for fluency, structure, application and audience exploring a range of devices and techniques. Pupils are then taught to transfer these components to extended pieces of writing.

Pupils are encouraged to write in lessons across the curriculum. Staff are mindful of the anxieties writing can illicit in our pupils.