

Oaklands Junior School



CURRICULUM INFORMATION

“The curriculum is interesting for pupils and promotes a wide range of skills and knowledge.”

“Teachers have high expectations and use their good subject knowledge to design engaging lessons and bright stimulating displays in each of the classrooms. Teachers use questioning and discussion well to review and deepen pupils’ understanding.”

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Oaklands Junior School aims to provide a happy, stimulating and purposeful learning environment for our pupils. We endeavour to allow each child to develop at a pace suited to their individual capabilities but we also provide challenge to enable our pupils to achieve their full potential.

Our school has a broad and well-organised curriculum which encompasses all of the new Primary Curriculum and Religious Education. All of the curriculum policies and schemes of work comply with the requirements of the new Primary Curriculum.

Where appropriate we take a more integrated approach where the curriculum is taught through carefully planned topics which incorporate a number of different subjects in cross curricular learning.

Learning to Think – Thinking to Learn

We firmly believe that thinking should be at the heart of the curriculum and, while knowledge and academic achievement are important, it is also vital that we develop children's thinking and creativity. Therefore, we are in the process of becoming a Thinking School and are continuing to develop the skills and attitudes that will be essential throughout the lifetime of learning. The underpinning ethos of the school is summarised by the Oaklands Mindset – the key competences that we aim to develop at Oaklands Junior School:

Friendship, Ambition, Communication, Independence, Challenge and Enjoyment

In order to support the development of children's thinking, we use a variety of Thinking Tools which enable children to independently "learn to think" and "think to learn":

- P4C – encourages children to use the language of learning: Think, Commit, Justify, Reflect.
- Thinking Maps – scaffold the thinking process and help children to organise their thoughts independently using eight maps according to purpose.
- Write from the Beginning – develops the Flow Map into a structure specifically aimed at supporting writing across the curriculum.

As a staff, we believe that these tools will provide children with essential skills for the future, giving them increased confidence to use strategies and techniques as they move on to the world of secondary school, higher education and employment. More information can be found on our website.

Outdoor Learning

We are privileged to have excellent facilities for learning outside the classroom. Termly outdoor learning is a feature across the curriculum in every year group. Pupils will use the woods, pond, year group gardens and other areas to cover a range of curriculum topics which will also include orienteering and gardening.

English

Our primary aim is to enable our children to be able to use the English language confidently, appropriately and accurately, to the best of their ability. Language development is taught through speaking, listening, guided reading and writing (including the explicit teaching of grammar, punctuation and spelling). We also place great importance on good handwriting, and tidy presentation with children taking pride in their work.

Children are given opportunities to write for different audiences and for different purposes e.g. to record, report, narrate and explain. Our pupils are also often asked to draft and edit their work. We aim to help them develop research skills and techniques so that they are able to find out information independently. Children are encouraged to share their experiences and to voice their views in discussions as well as presenting their work and reciting poetry.

Our school is very well resourced for all aspects of teaching English. Each year group has graded texts from a variety of schemes/publishers and accompanying materials for guided and independent reading sessions. Additional sessions in advanced reading skills, drama and speaking and listening are also included in all year groups. Classes may be split into ability groups for specific activities. We also offer some additional programmes, when appropriate, for children who need support.

We aim to foster an enjoyment of the language and a desire to read beyond the classroom into adult life.

Mathematics

Mathematics is taught daily as a separately timetabled subject in all year groups. It is also incorporated in general class work and thinking skills, when appropriate. Cross curricular work is used to expand and consolidate mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding so that children understand that mathematics is an essential tool in everyday life. In all year groups the children are set in ability groups. Part-time teachers and teaching assistants support children, where appropriate.

We use the new National Curriculum for Mathematics (2014) as the basis for our mathematics programme. The emphasis throughout is on developing mental strategies and using a variety of written solutions to ensure understanding of mathematical processes. Our children undertake plenty of practical problem solving and investigational tasks to reinforce this. There are several opportunities for the upper school to compete in both local and national competitions. A times tables programme operates in all year groups to encourage children to learn their tables and we also subscribe to mathematics for use in school and home learning. They experience various teaching and learning styles, including using the classroom interactive whiteboard, computer suite and various maths programmes, and mathematical tools. Calculators are not part of the new National Curriculum but we do use them from time to time, as we feel that this is also an important skill to learn. The school is very well equipped with a wide variety of textbooks, reference materials, worksheets and practical apparatus.

Science

Throughout the science curriculum, children are encouraged to develop their natural sense of curiosity, developing ideas through questioning and investigation. Our children engage in active learning through which they begin to understand and make sense of the world around them. We encourage them to develop their investigational skills and apply these to their studies. Although the curriculum is the same for all children in the class or group, expectations, support and extension activities are geared to the individuals.

Each year group has set scientific topics to complete and these have been carefully thought out to provide full coverage of the National Curriculum. Some work is linked to class topics and themes and some of the work extends into other subjects, notably Design Technology, Geography and Mathematics. These links are encouraged to help the children make sense of the world in which they live.

Computing

Computing is taught both as a national curriculum subject in its own right and as a learning tool for other subjects. It is the study of how computers and computer systems work through practical and hands-on learning.

There are three core interlinked elements to the teaching of computing. Computer science, which covers the principles of computation and how digital systems work; children will be applying this knowledge through programming. Information Technology, which covers creating, storing and retrieving digital content. Digital literacy is the skill to be able to use, express and develop their ideas in a digital world. We have nominated pupils in each year group who are our Digital Leaders.

Across the whole curriculum the children will be taught how to use computers safely (online safety). In addition there will be presentations to parents and carers about E-safety in the home.

All computers in the school are networked and have Internet facilities and as well as having one or two computers in each classroom, every class has access to our computer suite several times per week. This suite accommodates 33 computers which are regularly updated with new equipment and software.

We aim to develop children's computing skills to enhance learning in other areas of the curriculum.

The use of the Internet is encouraged throughout the school with access monitored appropriately. The school's E-safety policy is available to view on our website.

Art

Art is taught as a subject in its own right. However, work often enhances many other areas of the curriculum or seasonal themes. At Christmas a whole day is devoted to creative art activities. Our teaching seeks to help children develop visual perception and understand processes involved in producing high standards of artwork, whilst stimulating creativity and imagination. Children are encouraged to sketch ideas and techniques. Two-dimensional work is developed through drawing, painting, printing, sewing and collage. Materials such as clay, wire and fabrics are used to create three-dimensional items.

Children are given a sketch book in year 3 which they keep throughout the school. The children enjoy looking back through their books to view their work and their progress.

There is also a programme of art appreciation which gives children the experience of looking at and talking about the work of other artists, craftspeople and designers, both in contemporary life and in different times and cultures. This helps pupils evaluate their own work.

Design Technology

Children design and make products and then evaluate and modify their ideas in the light of their practical experience. Specific practical skills and safety rules are introduced as appropriate. Pupils are given opportunities to investigate and evaluate various products. The school has a good range of resources and equipment available to give our children a wide variety of experiences. We also have a children's kitchen which allows us to teach food technology in a specialist area, complying with health and safety regulations.

Our scheme of work ensures that all pupils complete study units where they use various materials. They construct frameworks, work with textiles, undertake projects involving food technology and use mechanisms and control technology in their designs. Links with other subjects are encouraged. Pupils work with a high level of adult supervision, where appropriate.

History

Our scheme of work for teaching the study units includes:

- **Year 3:** Changes in Britain from Stone Age to Iron Age and the Ancient Egyptians.
- **Year 4:** The Roman Empire and its impact on Britain and Britain's settlement by Anglo Saxons and Scots. Year 4 will still visit Ufton Court Residential Centre which now covers Anglo Saxons and will also count towards a local history and geography field work study.
- **Year 5:** Viking and Anglo Saxon struggle for the Kingdom of Edward The Confessor and beyond 1066. They will also study the Victorians, linked to their Reading Museum trip and local history walk to Wellington College and St. John's Church.
- **Year 6:** Ancient Greece and Mayan Civilisation. Year 6 also covers WWII as part of an English led study because we feel it is an important part of our heritage/British values.

The children are usually taught in class groups, but work may be differentiated according to children's abilities. In addition to developing knowledge and understanding of aspects and eras of history, we aim to help pupils explain, and learn from, historical change; to understand interpretations of history; to acquire evidence from historical sources.

When appropriate, visits are organised and visitors invited into school to enhance the curriculum and help bring periods of history to life, such as Ancient Egypt, Roman Times and Ancient Greece.

Geography

The study of Geography helps children make sense of their surroundings and the wider world. It is a bridge between the human and physical sciences.

The topics for teaching the new national curriculum are as follows:

- Year 3: Welcome to RG45, comparing Crowthorne and the Scilly Isles.
- Year 4: Why do we live where we live? Town planning. European city study – Rome.
- Year 5: Investigating rivers, the Amazon rainforest and the Brazilian people.
- Year 6: Investigating coastlines. Why are mountains important?

Children have the opportunity to experience practical activities and fieldwork within the school grounds and on class visits within the local area. In addition a variety of fieldwork is undertaken during our residential trips in Year 4 and Year 6.

Physical Education

Pupils are taught a balanced mix of educational gymnastics, dance, games, athletics and swimming. Years 4, 5 and 6 are timetabled for one hour per week of hall time and one hour outside on the school field or playground. Year 3 is timetabled for 2 half-hour lessons in the hall and one hour outdoor lesson. Children have the opportunity to learn new skills across a wide range of sports. Learning objectives and success expectations are differentiated for individual pupils according to abilities and challenge. The school is well resourced for P.E. equipment.

A range of activities is offered during the four year programme. Football, netball, hockey, tag-rugby, short tennis, rounders, lacrosse and cricket are some of the sports in which skills are developed through a variety of activities and team games.

In summer the children take part in athletics. The school field is marked with a track and a throwing arc. We also have a high jump and long jump pit. A structured short swimming course is offered in Year 5. This takes place at the Carnival Pool in Wokingham.

A number of extra-curricular clubs and events are organised for children who show interest or ability e.g. sessions are offered in cross-country running, tag-rugby, hockey, netball, football, badminton, kurling, golf, tennis and cricket. These activities aim to promote healthy exercise, good sportsmanship and interest in sport offering coaching to a high standard.

Our sports clubs provide a fun environment to play sport whilst developing a pool of players for inter-school, district and county competitions. It is the school's policy to encourage competition in a variety of sports and to give the children the opportunity to represent Oaklands Junior School against suitable opposition.

Parental help and outside coaches are used wherever appropriate and possible.

Music

Each class has a lesson every week with a specialist music teacher. We have a good selection of classroom percussion instruments.

Our Music policy follows the guidelines set down in the National Curriculum. In lessons, pupils learn to compose and perform their own music and develop critical listening skills through music from a wide variety of musical traditions. All children get the opportunity to compose music using musical notation software on the computers in the computer suite. They also learn to read traditional musical notation.

We have visiting peripatetic music teachers in violin, classical guitar, woodwind, recorder, drums and brass instruments and children participating in these lessons have an opportunity to join orchestral groups organised by the Berkshire Maestros. We run a thriving and very popular school choir as well as a belleplates group. We also offer after school guitar and keyboard lessons organised by The Rock & Pop Foundation.

From time to time the children take part in outside musical events, such as the Crowthorne Festival, as well as year group productions for pupils and their families.

French

French is taught in all year groups. Our plans have been adapted from the Catherine Cheater scheme to ensure all the required strands of language learning are covered during the children's time at Oaklands.

The French curriculum at Oaklands is diverse, interesting and fun. The children will be learning a varied vocabulary and phrases in which to place that vocabulary. This includes: colours, numbers, classroom commands, food, classroom objects, animals, clothes and the alphabet. Children are given the opportunity to rehearse and use this vocabulary both verbally and in written form. Furthermore, we are moving towards using French within the context of other curriculum areas as well as learning about France and its culture and comparing it to our own.

Religious Education

The school follows the Wokingham Agreed Syllabus and ensures that the requirements of the 1996 Education Act are met with respect to religious education and collective worship. A copy of the syllabus is available for inspection in school, on request to the school office. Lessons cover elements of religious beliefs, practices and values from five of the main religions. Year 3 study Sikhism, Year 4 Judaism, Year 5 Hinduism and Year 6 Islam. More coverage is given to Christian beliefs and festivals (the dominant faith in our community). There is an act of collective worship/assembly each day, taken by staff or an appropriate visitor to the school.

Whilst it is hoped that all pupils will participate in these activities, Oaklands Junior School recognises that it is a parent's right to withdraw their child, on request. Arrangements for this should be discussed with the Headteacher. If there are any concerns relating to own beliefs, parents are invited to come and discuss the nature and content of Religious Education in school with the Headteacher.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship

PSHE and Citizenship enables children to develop confidence and responsibility and make the most of their abilities. It prepares them to play an active role as citizens in a democratic society, developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people while encouraging them to develop a safe and healthy lifestyle.

PSHE and Citizenship is delivered through a whole school approach which is flexible and includes a variety of activities such as discussion, drama, circle time, school assembly, and the expertise of occasional visiting speakers. Aspects of PSHE include Heartstart, sex and relationships education and drugs education.

Sex and Relationship Education

Sex Education is part of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and also part of the National Curriculum for Science. It involves teaching how the body functions, but it is also concerned with relationships and responsibilities towards oneself and others. Governors and staff feel that Sex Education should be an ongoing subject throughout the school; this gives natural progression and is more easily understood by pupils. The Sex and Relationship Education programme is designed to fit in with current topics already being studied, thus forming an extension to the children's work. A copy of the policy, which explains clearly what is taught in each year group, is available to view, on request, from the school office.

Parents have a right to withdraw pupils from any part of Sex Education which is not included in the National Curriculum. However, as a school we consider it is desirable that all pupils should be included to gain their knowledge first hand. If a parent has strong objections to their child's participation, for whatever reason, and wishes to withdraw their child, the school requires notice of this in writing. It is hoped that the parent will make an appointment to see the Headteacher or class teacher first so that any concerns can be discussed and any misconceptions dispelled.

Parents should note that human reproduction forms part of the National Curriculum for Science and pupils are required to be present for this subject by law. A child withdrawn from Sex Education will be given alternative work and he/she will be required to attend a science lesson on human reproduction at a later date.

Drugs Education

Drugs Education is taught in an age appropriate way as a formal topic within our Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum. As a school we aim to give our pupils the knowledge, skills and understanding to help them to deal with any drug-related situation. The school uses the word 'drug' to include all drugs whatever their legal or social status, including alcohol, tobacco, solvents and medicines. A copy of the school's Drugs policy is available to view from the school office, on request.

British Values

We promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. We also recognise that these values are not solely exclusive to Britain and that these values have developed in Britain through a process over a substantial period of time and can only be maintained and developed by active

engagement of citizens in democratic, lawful and respectful institutions and processes, of which our Primary School is one element.

Global Learning

We aim to include global learning in a cross-curricular and engaging way throughout the school. This will involve looking at the implications of a modern globalised world and develop an understanding of issues around poverty, human rights, sustainability and diversity. We aim to enhance critical thinking skills in our pupils and, with discussion, to provide opportunities for them to make a difference in our world.

Extra-curricular Activities

- The Police Community Liaison officer is invited into school to talk to the children about various topics. Pupils in Year 6 work with the local police officers on a 'Police Week' project annually during the Summer term. This is designed to promote communication and investigational skills.
- We offer bikeability training to pupils in Year 6 and road safety is also discussed in other contexts.
- A curriculum week focuses on a different curriculum area agreed by the staff every year. Details are shared with parents through newsletters.
- As part of the curriculum, each year group performs a play with a dress rehearsal to the whole school. An afternoon and an evening performance for parents takes place on different days; Year 3 production is in the Autumn term; Year 4 and Year 5 in the Spring term and Year 6 at the end of the Summer term.
- Parents are invited to two class assemblies every year which are generally in the Autumn and Spring term on a Wednesday or Thursday morning for 15 minutes from 9.00am. Dates will be shared in the relevant termly curriculum booklets. Please ensure that you enter the hall via the playground, as the office is very busy first thing in the morning.
- Sex education is part of Year 5's science curriculum and parents are invited to an information evening before this is taught in the Summer term to learn what is taught in Y5 part 1. Year 6 parents will be invited into school for a further information evening, before part 2 is taught during the Summer term.
- Transition visits and activities ensure that children are happy and confident when making the move to their new school, whether this is from Y2 to Y3 or from Y6 to Y7. Vulnerable children will have extra visits to ensure that transition runs smoothly.
- There are many clubs provided freely by staff. These form part of our termly curriculum booklet and we encourage children to take advantage of the many and varied clubs which are on offer each term at lunchtime or after school. After school activities will require parental permission. There are also other fee-paying activities that are run by outside agencies before and after school, as well as during lunchtimes and these will also be shared in our termly curriculum booklet.