



# English

Reading, writing and communication 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.

## **Communication**

Communication is at the heart of all we do at Robert Ogden School and permeates the entire curriculum. All our pupils are encouraged to develop a successful and meaningful communication system. Throughout the school day pupils are given opportunities to communicate effectively – making requests, commenting, developing appropriate attention, taking part in turn taking and sharing activities etc.

All our pupils have an individual communication profile written by the Speech and Language Therapists. A variety of communication approaches are used, individualised for each pupil including PECS, signing, objects of reference and appropriate verbal communication.

Receptive language skills are developed according to the communication profile and all staff are aware of the need for our pupils to have appropriate processing time. Key word levels are identified in the profile. The Blanks Levels of questioning scales are used to ensure that questions are pitched at the correct levels and understanding.

## **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 focussed 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. 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, comics 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.

## **Phonics**

Phonics is taught creatively using multi-sensory approaches where needed.

We teach phonics using the phases of the 'Letters and Sounds' phonics programme to support reading, however, through this a range of resources are used to support teaching. The children read decodable books that match their phonics levels.

Approaches are sometimes used interchangeably to find the most suitable approach for the individual, ensuring a personalised curriculum rather than a 'one package fits all' approach that may not suit all pupils.

## **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/>

### **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 eventually progressing through to writing for a variety of purposes, for example shopping lists, recipes and instructions. We use a range of support materials including symbols and pictorial representatives of words and phrases. The computer programme Communicate in Print is used throughout the school in order to support both reading and writing. We also use Colourful Semantics in order to promote understanding and develop meaningful writing.

Pupils are encouraged to write in lessons and staff are mindful of the anxieties writing can illicit in our pupils.

### **Exams / Accreditation**

Pupils in our Secondary and Post 16 (Key Stage 3, 4 and Post 16) will have the opportunity to undertake accredited units of work within the qualification pathway. From Year 7 onwards, data is used to identify pupils to ensure they are working towards the most appropriate qualification. This is determined on an individual basis taking into account pupil's skills, strengths and needs ensuring these add value to individual learning.

Where formal qualifications are not appropriate, pupils learn English based life skills and concepts they need and simultaneously learn how to acquire, link and take ownership of new skills and concepts in preparation for adulthood and/or the next phase in their education.