



Oaktree Nursery and Primary School

Teaching and Learning Policy

2025 - 2026

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<u>Date of last amendment</u>	

Next Review	January 2027
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Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day

Aims

This policy aims to:

Explain how we'll create an environment at Oaktree Nursery and Primary School where pupils learn best and love to do so

- o Summarise expectations to make sure everyone is committed to achieving a consistent approach to teaching and learning across our school
- o Promote high expectations and raise standards of achievement for all pupils in our school
- o Involve pupils, parents/carers and the wider school community in pupils' learning and development
- o Promote consistency across all classes in the school

Our school vision is 'Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day'. At Oaktree, we want all children to learn to the best of their ability and develop as life-long learners, in order that they develop the skills and knowledge to succeed whilst at school and in their future. We want all children to enjoy learning opportunities and believe that a Growth Mindset approach where children understand 'they may not be able to do it yet' helps learners to develop the resilience to persevere.

We believe that children learn best within a supportive and stimulating environment, in which they have the confidence to learn and take risks through a range of different experiences which cater for the wide variety of learning styles and needs in our school. We believe that a curriculum that is exciting, broad and balanced gives all learners a chance to develop new skills and to identify strengths and interests for life.

Pupils learn best at our school when they:

- o Have their basic physical needs met
- o Feel secure, safe and valued
- o Feel a sense of belonging to the group
- o Are engaged and motivated
- o Can see the relevance of what they are doing
- o Know what outcome is intended
- o Can link what they are doing to other experiences
- o Understand the task
- o Have the physical space and the tools needed
- o Have access to the necessary materials

- o Are not disrupted or distracted by others
- o Can work with others or on their own, depending on the task
- o Are guided, taught or helped in appropriate ways at appropriate times
- o Can practise what they are learning
- o Can apply the learning in both familiar and new contexts
- o Can persevere when learning is hard
- o Can manage their emotions if things are not going well
- o Recognise that all learners make mistakes and mistakes can help us learn

We aim to provide a rich variety of learning opportunities that allow learners to develop to their full potential. Successful teaching and learning relies on thorough knowledge of the whole child using assessment from observations, class work and test results. We aim to use these to plan work at an appropriate level of challenge.

We believe it is essential to personalise learning so that it is inclusive of all children and that children can learn in the way that best suits them. We aim to provide equal opportunities for our full range of learners including girls and boys, all ethnic groups within our school community, learners with English as an additional language, learners with SEND, learners with SEMH, children who are young carers, and children who are Looked After.

Effective Teaching and Learning

At Oaktree, we have developed a set of effective teaching and learning principles, based on research, that we believe are best suited to our pupils' needs and context. On entry, a high proportion of our children's speech and language development is significantly below the national average (WELCOMM). This trend is also prevalent in our SEND cohort, with over 60% having an identified speech, language or communication need (compared with 24% nationally for the same group). We want our children to experience a language and vocabulary rich curriculum.



Oaktree Effective Principles of Teaching and Learning



Always Linked to the Why

Effective teaching begins with clarity of purpose. Research from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) highlights that metacognitive strategies and explicit instruction significantly improve pupil outcomes when learners understand *why* they are engaging with a task. Linking each lesson to its broader purpose within a carefully sequenced curriculum ensures that students can connect new knowledge to prior learning, fostering deeper understanding and long-term retention. When teachers articulate the rationale behind activities and demonstrate how they fit into the learning journey, pupils are more motivated and better equipped to self-regulate their learning. This approach aligns with evidence that structured, coherent sequences reduce cognitive overload and support progress for all learners, particularly those who are disadvantaged.



Language and Vocabulary Explained

Language development is a cornerstone of learning and begins well before formal schooling, with evidence showing that vocabulary growth from the age of two strongly predicts later academic success (Education Endowment Foundation, 2021). Early exposure to rich, varied language environments helps children build the foundations for communication, reading, and writing. In nursery settings, this can be achieved through high-quality interactions such as sustained shared thinking, storytelling, and introducing new words in meaningful contexts. For example, practitioners narrate everyday routines (“Let’s pour the water slowly into the jug”) or use dialogic reading techniques to encourage children to talk about pictures and ideas. In school, strategies like pre-teaching key vocabulary, using word walls, and embedding language instruction across the curriculum ensure that pupils continue to expand their vocabulary. Research highlights that explicit vocabulary teaching combined with opportunities for oral language practice significantly improves comprehension and attainment (EEF Oral Language Interventions Guidance Report). By prioritising language development from the earliest years, we lay the foundation for lifelong learning.



Scaffolding and Adaptation

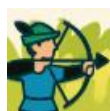
Effective teaching requires carefully structured support that enables all learners to access and master new concepts. Scaffolding involves breaking learning into manageable steps and gradually reducing support as pupils gain independence. Evidence from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) highlights that well-designed scaffolding improves outcomes by ensuring pupils can engage with challenging content without cognitive overload (EEF, *Metacognition and Self-Regulated Learning*). A key principle is moving from concrete to abstract representations, which helps pupils build secure conceptual understanding. For example, in mathematics, teachers might begin with physical manipulatives (e.g., counters or base-ten blocks), progress to pictorial representations, and finally introduce symbolic notation. Similarly, in science, using real-life examples before abstract models supports deeper comprehension. Adaptation ensures that scaffolds are responsive to individual needs—such as providing sentence starters for writing or visual prompts for EAL learners—while maintaining high expectations. By gradually

withdrawing support, teachers foster independence and resilience, enabling pupils to apply knowledge flexibly across contexts.



Modelling and Metacognition

High-quality modelling is essential for making learning explicit and supporting pupils to develop independent thinking skills. Research from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF, *Metacognition and Self-Regulated Learning Guidance Report*) shows that modelling combined with metacognitive strategies significantly improves pupil outcomes. Teachers should use precise language and clear explanations, breaking down complex tasks into logical steps. Thinking aloud is a powerful technique, as it makes the cognitive processes behind problem-solving visible to learners—for example, verbalising how to approach a maths problem or plan a piece of writing. This helps pupils understand not just *what* to do, but *why* and *how* decisions are made. Effective modelling also includes demonstrating strategies for monitoring progress and evaluating outcomes, enabling pupils to become reflective and self-regulated learners. By embedding metacognitive talk and structured reflection, teachers equip pupils with transferable skills that enhance learning across the curriculum.



Purposeful and Fun Task Design

Engaging and enjoyable tasks play a vital role in motivating pupils and fostering a positive learning environment. Evidence from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF, *Improving Behaviour in Schools* and *Motivation and Engagement* research) suggests that when pupils experience success and enjoyment in learning, their effort and persistence increase. Purposeful tasks should be clearly linked to learning objectives while incorporating elements of creativity, collaboration, and challenge. Humour and kindness are powerful tools for building relationships and reducing anxiety, helping pupils feel safe to take risks in their learning. For example, teachers might use light-hearted examples when introducing new concepts, design interactive games to reinforce key vocabulary, or incorporate collaborative problem-solving activities that spark curiosity. By combining academic rigour with engaging approaches, teachers create a classroom culture where pupils are motivated, confident, and eager to learn.



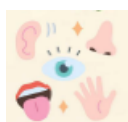
Assessment and Immediate Feedback

Assessment is most effective when it informs teaching and supports pupils to make rapid progress. Evidence from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF, *Feedback Guidance Report*) and the Department for Education highlights that timely, specific feedback has a high impact on learning. Verbal feedback during lessons is particularly powerful, as it allows misconceptions to be addressed immediately and reinforces success criteria. Teachers should strive to be world-class noticers, identifying subtle errors or gaps in understanding through questioning, observation, and pupil responses. Summative assessments are followed by rigorous gap analysis, enabling teachers to plan targeted interventions and adapt future teaching. Strategies such as ‘think-backs’—where pupils revisit prior learning—and structured review sessions help consolidate knowledge and strengthen long-term retention. By combining ongoing formative assessment with immediate, actionable feedback, teachers create a responsive learning environment that maximises progress for all pupils.



Problem Solving with Talk

Collaborative problem solving is a powerful driver of learning, promoting both cognitive and social development. Evidence from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF, *Oral Language Interventions* and *Collaborative Learning Approaches*) and the Department for Education highlights that structured talk and group tasks significantly improve attainment and language skills. When pupils work together on challenging problems, they develop a sense of belonging, practise co-operation, and learn to articulate their thinking clearly, which strengthens vocabulary and conceptual understanding. Group tasks also nurture leadership qualities and encourage pupils to take responsibility for roles within the team, fostering confidence and resilience. Creativity thrives in these contexts, as pupils share diverse ideas and negotiate solutions. Effective strategies include using structured discussion protocols (e.g., “think-pair-share”), assigning clear roles within groups, and modelling language for reasoning and justification. By embedding purposeful talk and collaborative problem solving across the curriculum, schools create inclusive environments where pupils learn not only academic content but also essential life skills



Multi-Sensory and Practical Learning

Learning is most effective when pupils engage through multiple senses, as this strengthens memory and deepens understanding. Evidence from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF, *Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools* and *Cognitive Science Approaches*) and the Department for Education emphasises that varied, hands-on experiences support all learners, particularly those with SEND. Multi-sensory approaches—combining visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic elements—help pupils process information in different ways and reduce barriers to learning. For example, in literacy, teachers might pair phonics instruction with tactile letter tiles and oral rehearsal; in mathematics, use manipulatives such as counters or Numicon alongside verbal reasoning and pictorial representations. For pupils with SEND, strategies include textured resources for fine motor development, colour-coded prompts for organisation, and practical tasks broken into clear, manageable steps. Incorporating movement, real-life contexts, and technology (e.g., interactive simulations) adds variety and engagement, ensuring that lessons cater to diverse learning styles while maintaining high expectations for all

Assessment and Monitoring of Learning

We use a range of assessments to track children’s progress as individuals, as a cohort and within specific groups throughout the school. Assessments include:

- Teacher assessment against National Curriculum and year group objectives
- Assessment for Learning during lessons and using evidence in children’s books
- In-school assessments such as Read Write Inc phonics assessments
- In school and cluster moderation using examples of work to evidence objectives and benchmark
- Pupil conferencing by teachers and subject leaders
- Formal assessments such as End of Key Stage SATs

Learning Walks, lesson observations and book scrutinies are carried out regularly throughout the year.

Pupil Attainment Meetings and SEND progress meetings are held three times a year to identify strengths and weaknesses. These inform planning and enable support and interventions to be put in place.

Parents and carers are informed of their child’s progress through regular consultation meetings and reports.

Assessment strategies used within class include:

Sharing clear learning objectives or targets with learners

Sharing or creating success criteria for self or peer assessment of work

Sharing, where appropriate, timely feedback with learners on their progress and work

Providing constructive feedback to learners about their work in order to help children to progress and to experience success

Interventions

We use a range of interventions in all Year Groups to target learners who need additional support to make progress or to access work fully. These intervention groups may be delivered by teachers, Learning Support Assistants and specialist teachers who work solely with small groups or individuals

Interventions used in school include Assessment for Learning 'Scoop' Groups, Read Write Inc 1:1 support, Right Start phonics support, Maths intervention groups and knowledge SEMH interventions through Rainbow Room (Nurture support).

Interventions are organised in discussion with class teachers, the SENDCO, Key Stage Leaders and this is done regularly during Pupil Progress Meetings which are held 3 times a year. Concerns can be raised at any time and intervention groups are run flexibly to best meet the needs of all learners. The views of parents, carers and learners are also sought and used to inform groupings.

Pupil Groupings

Children will be taught in a variety of groupings. We believe that in many instances children learn best in mixed ability groupings, having a chance to share ideas and to learn and be supported by other learners. This is used in the majority of subjects. Children will be given opportunities to learn and work within whole class, small group and paired or individually.

The Learning Environment and Curriculum Organisation

We believe that classrooms should reflect the current learning. We use a mixture of Working Walls, displays for information and displays to celebrate achievement. Independence is developed by ensuring resources are available throughout the school.

We understand that learning in a range of environments has many benefits and we ensure that all children have access to our wildlife area, our 'forest', our allotment area and our outdoor classrooms for use when appropriate. Sensory gardens also provide space for learning and well-being.

Children are able access the library for resources to support enquiries and also provide a wide range of reading books.

We use the National Curriculum and skills progressions and the EYFS statutory framework. These provide clear objectives and aims as to what should be taught in each Year Group, which we use in our medium term and short term planning. Our curriculum planning is also supported by Curious City (Lighting Up Learning) which is an Enquiry approach. This enables planning and teaching to be personalised to the needs of the children.

Celebrating Learning and Achievements

We value celebrating children's achievements through our weekly celebration assemblies which parents and carers are invited to join. We also share examples of work and good learning with parents and carers through online communication such as our website. We encourage collaborative achievement through awarding class points in which children then vote to choose a class award. We celebrate achievement and improvement in our end of year assembly and, when possible, invite parents and carers to attend work showcases, performances and other events.

Supporting Children's Wider Needs

At Oaktree we place great emphasis on ensuring that we know the children well and that they feel safe and ready to learn. Relationships between staff, children and parents and carers are key to achieving this. In turn, this enables to identify barriers to learning, allowing us to address these and to personalise learning as needed. In order to achieve this, for example, we use or provide:

Rainbow room (Nurture) support
Parent Support Advisor
Play therapists
EWO
Learning Support Services
School Nurse

Where additional support from outside agencies is required, Early Help Records and Team Around the Child meetings will be held.

Parental support is encouraged through supporting children to access their learning and practise key skills at home. We regularly remind all parents and carers of the importance of the best possible attendance record and work to support parents, carers and children to ensure this. We encourage positive communication with all parents and carers in order that we are made aware of any issues that may affect their child's performance or behaviour in school.

The Role of Governors

Our governors support, monitor and review the school policies on teaching and learning, particularly to:
Ensure that successful teaching and learning raises attainment, promotes good progress and supports well-being
Monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising attainment
Monitor the effectiveness of provision of the curriculum and ensure that it is broad and balanced for all learners.
Monitor CPD needs to ensure development of staff needs are met

Links to other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with all curriculum subject policies, and particularly:

English
Maths
Science
Computing
Geography
History
SEN
G & T
Marking
Assessment