



How we teach English at Claycots

At Claycots, we recognise the importance of reading and writing as key life skills and are dedicated to ensuring every child is equipped with the skills need to: access the curriculum, make personal choices about the books they read and communicate effectively to a wide range of audiences. Both our English and wider curriculum topics are centred around high quality texts which ensure that throughout the school children are exposed to a wide range of authors and genres which help to nurture children's love of reading. At Claycots, we believe in excellence and are dedicated to ensuring that all children are equipped with a strong command of the English language that will prepare them to lead fulfilling lives, in education and beyond.

Phonics

At Claycots, we teach a phonics programme based on Letters and Sounds which follows comprehensive lesson plans that teach children to hear, read, write and apply phonemes in reading and writing. We use a quality first approach to daily teaching of phonics through a whole class teaching input. All Phonics teaching is systematic, engaging, lively and interactive. Where pupils are identified as needing extra support (including in KS2), targeted intervention programs (including sight words) are delivered by fully trained members of staff. In Nursey phonics is taught daily using a group approach. Throughout KS1, pupils are given home reading books which closely match their decoding & comprehension abilities to allow them to further practise these skills.

Reading

At Claycots, reading is central to the curriculum. It is a source of pleasure and enrichment in itself, but also a primary means of obtaining information and building many key skills such as retelling information. Children are given many opportunities during the school day to develop their reading as well as the explicit teaching of reading skills through guided and shared reading.

In class, children are exposed a range of texts through English lessons as well as other texts their teachers read and discuss. Throughout the week, children are taught as a whole class with mixed ability through shared reading where teachers explicitly model the skills of proficient readers. From Reception to Year 6, reading strategies including: decoding, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension are taught during these sessions whilst nursery focus on demonstrating concepts of print. Through daily guided reading, all pupils are then given a chance to independently apply these skills to texts that closely match to their comprehension and decoding abilities. As part of guided reading, all pupils read with a teacher at least once a week.

Across the school we use Oxford Reading Tree, Pearson's Bug Club and Collins Big Cat reading schemes to support children in applying their phonics and reading skills.

As a school we prioritise additional opportunities to celebrate reading including the celebration of World Book Day, lunchtime library clubs, numerous author visits and workshops and local library trips. As a school we have large and well-stocked libraries which we regularly update with the newest publications.



Writing

At Claycots, children are immersed in Talk for Writing from Nursery to Year 6. Its three phases (Imitation, Innovation and Independent Application) mean that children are explicitly taught how to compose a variety of fiction & non-fiction texts. All writing units use high quality texts as a stimulus which pupils internalise through the imitation stage. To support children in moving towards independent writing, teachers use shared and modelled writing; showing children their thought process by thinking out loud and involving them in the composition by taking suggestions. Children are taught how to structure a piece of work, ensuring the key features that will help them to make progress have been included. There are regular opportunities for children's writing and ideas to be shared, displayed, published and celebrated.

Grammar is taught explicitly through Talk for Writing units, as research shows that knowledge is best internalised when taught within a familiar context. Additionally, we use the no-nonsense spelling scheme to support the teaching of spelling. We recognise the importance of handwriting and this is explicitly taught throughout the school.