



Writing at St Mary's CE Primary School

Writing Curriculum Rationale

At St Mary's CE we are creative and thoughtful writers! We want the children at our school to love writing, words and the English language. We want our children to aim high, be ambitious and grow up wanting to be authors, journalists, poets or playwrights. Our vision at St Mary's CE Primary School is to encourage and nurture the growth of every individual and their uniqueness, so that all flourish and become all that they can be and all that God made them to be.

The writing curriculum has been carefully designed and sequenced so that our children develop their writing capital. We want our children to remember their writing lessons in our school and embrace the writing opportunities they are presented with! As an example, our Year 2 writers enjoy making 'disgusting sandwiches' after following a set of instructions. They then innovate by making their own versions and write a comprehensive set of instructions of their own. Bringing writing alive, thereby making it purposeful and enjoyable is important at St Mary's CE Primary School.

Curriculum Intent

The writing curriculum is ambitious and allows our children to become independent and resilient – like all curriculum areas.

We want to equip our pupils with all the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and also prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences in the next stage of their education and beyond. We want our children to learn from other cultures, respect diversity, co-operate with one another and appreciate what they have. We achieve this by providing a strong SMSC curriculum, with British Values and our core values placed at the heart of everything we do. We celebrate innovation and the freedom of choice that British Society represents and as a result our pupils are encouraged to become free thinkers, with ambitious ideas. We encourage and celebrate this individuality. This often feeds into the writing curriculum where we enrich their time in our school with memorable, unforgettable experiences and provide opportunities, which are normally out of reach, to engage and intrigue our pupils. When revising the writing long term plan as part of our Literacy Overview, we have ensured that there is a clear 'hook' in place, with excellent reading opportunities and models for which to use as a quality starting point for writing. Writing is given a purpose – for instance to raise awareness of the plight of the orangutan in Borneo – and an audience such as the readers of the school website. As a result, our pupils are inspired and see the power of what can be achieved by producing a quality piece of individual, innovative writing.

We firmly believe that it is not just about what happens in the classroom, it is about the benefit we offer to really inspire our children. Writing opportunities are planned for in a writing cycle and also celebrated when the occasion presents itself. Basing some figurative poetry on the Winter Olympics for example, can be a timely way to help develop a love of the English language. During the 2020 European football championships, writing to the England manager to congratulate the team performance was a further example of how our children write for a purpose.

Curriculum Implementation

When reviewing the writing curriculum, genres were carefully planned, in order to ensure that there is a clear progression of knowledge and vocabulary, embedding key aspects of learning as genres are revisited. We have included inspiring writers and poets from a range of cultures and localities. The medium term plans are constantly under review and are adapted by the subject leader or class teacher to ensure that the progression document is clearly reflected in the sequence of learning within any given topic. The assessment points and milestones are defined and developed to reflect the key learning required in each year group. This ensures the way writing is taught throughout our school follows a consistent structure.

Over a two week cycle (unless writing poetry or if an alternative learning opportunity arises), pupils explore and practise the writing skills involved within the genre to be studied and then write their own innovative pieces in that style. They plan, write, edit and re-draft or uplevel their writing. A final piece is produced, which is the culmination of their hard work. This approach and sequence is taken for every writing topic. Genre-specific characteristics, which we expect the children to demonstrate in their work, have been developed in long and medium-term plans. However, the overall aims of the writing curriculum are:

- to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.
- to acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- to write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences

We achieve these aims by encouraging and teaching our children in:

- reading examples of quality texts in order to form a base model for a quality piece of writing in that style
- knowing the style, organisational features and format of a given genre.
- adopting a particular authorial style in their own work
- knowledge and application of the correct style of vocabulary and punctuation a particular genre of writing may require
- taking risks to become more resourceful, innovative, enterprising and capable young writers
- writing for particular purposes and audiences in order to engage the children as writers and their audience as readers

All subjects are taught discretely but staff make meaningful links across subjects where appropriate. They link prior knowledge to new learning to deepen children's learning. For example, in Year 1 when our children write an information text about the weather (geography) - focusing on writing in full coherent sentences - this is built upon in Year 3 where the children write in more detail and description in a non-chronological report about the Stone Age (history). Our children are taught connected knowledge within and across subjects.

Class Teachers have devised year group long-term curriculum plans which outline when the different subjects and topics will be taught across the academic year within the year group.

Teachers plan learning challenges for each lesson and closely reference the key learning, vocabulary and progression document.

Staff teach a daily literacy lesson as part of the writing cycle. This works in direct symbiosis with the reading curriculum. The opportunities to alter their long-term memory and thus improve the rates of progress they make are good, because of our rigorous daily lessons and our cyclical approach to the teaching of writing.

Curriculum Impact

We use both formative and summative assessment information in every writing lesson. Staff use this information to inform their short-term planning and support. This helps us provide the best possible support for all of our pupils, including the more able. The progression document and the assessment points for each year group ensure that skills in writing are progressive and build year on year.

Our aim is for staff to use writing formative assessment methods to systematically assess what the children know as the lessons progress and inform their future planning. This formative assessment is then used to inform summative assessment judgements at each assessment point.

Assessment information in writing is collected four times a year and analysed as part of our monitoring cycle. This process provides an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the quality of education in writing. A comprehensive monitoring cycle is developed at the beginning of each academic year. This identifies when monitoring is undertaken. Monitoring in writing includes: book scrutinies, lesson observations and/or learning walks, pupil voice and parental views. All of this information is gathered and reviewed. It is used to inform further curriculum developments and provision is adapted accordingly.

At St Mary's CE Primary School,

we are

WRITERS!

Statutory Framework for Early Years

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

The National Curriculum for writing at Key Stage 1 and 2

The programmes of study for writing at key stages 1 and 2 are constructed similarly to those for reading: transcription (spelling and handwriting) composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing). It is essential that teaching develops pupils' competence in these two dimensions. In addition, pupils should be taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. These aspects of writing have been incorporated into the programmes of study for composition. Writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription: that is, on spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words. Effective composition involves forming, articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting.