

A Curriculum to Inspire @ Mountfields Lodge

CURRICULUM STATEMENT: Writing



Our Curriculum Intent for Writing

The 'drivers' around which our curriculum is centred, without any subject preference or bias, are:

EXPLORE PERSEVERE (BE) INDEPENDENT COMMUNICATE

We want our pupils to develop EPIC qualities and become EPIC learners.

E: We want our pupils to have a love of exploring facts, finding information and developing new skills; we want them to be inquisitive and enquiring.

P: We want them not to give up at the first hurdle (or even the second); we want them to know that effort, commitment and hard work can pay dividends; we want them to persevere.

I: We want them to learn how to learn; to learn how to pursue lines of enquiry and interest themselves; we want them to develop independence.

C: We want them to be able to tell others, with confidence and clarity, what they know, what they think, what they imagine...we want them to be good communicators.

Whilst our 'Curriculum to Inspire' is based on the EYFS Curriculum and the National Curriculum, we have been proactive in our school by developing a new curriculum which inspires our children to learn and is relevant to their needs now - and in the future. We have tried to balance the 'have to' aspects alongside the 'got to' and the 'want to' aspects.

The aim of our curriculum is for pupils to have the requisite skills to be successful, independent and motivated learners in readiness for their next stage of education.

The Key Characteristics that we have identified, and that we believe, will make a **GOOD WRITER** are:

- To ability to explore with their imagination and use writing skills to engage readers.
- To independently use a broad range of writing skills.
- The ability to write fluently with interesting detail across our curriculum.
- The ability to use a rich vocabulary and apply a range of writing techniques.
- The ability to use transcription skills so that their work is well presented, correctly punctuated and with accurate spelling.
- The ability to write grammatically correct sentences.
- To develop an enjoyment of writing and an appreciation of its educational, cultural and entertainment value.
- The ability to manipulate sentences to create a desired effect.
- To persevere, with independence, through the writing process from drafting, proof reading and editing to present a finished piece of work.

Writing is important in everyday life. Therefore, we endeavour to ensure that children develop a positive and enthusiastic attitude towards writing which will stay with them.

Our Curriculum Implementation for Writing

At Mountfields Lodge School our approach to teaching writing is based on the programme of study in the National Curriculum. The programme of study has two strands Transcription (spelling and handwriting) and Composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing).

Pupils develop competence and confidence in these two strands through daily teaching in both short discrete skills lessons and applying those skills in writing tasks in a range of contexts across our curriculum.

EYFS

Our approach to teaching writing in the Foundation Stage is a combined approach of developing fine motor skills, phonic knowledge and highly motivational 'hooks'. Early writing skills focus upon developing a secure awareness of letters and their sounds. A significant theme underpinning the teaching of our phonics is to be able to 'tune into' the sounds we hear but not just in words but also in the sounds around us. Being able to discriminate what sounds we can hear forms a significant part of our children's learning journey.

We use daily teaching of synthetic phonics to

develop children's knowledge of letters and sounds. This is done through a multisensory approach using songs, pictorial representations, signs/gesture and ditties. Alongside sound discrimination development is the physical ability to hold a writing implement and to be able to do so over a period of time. Value is given to developing children's fine motor skills either through adult directed activities or through continuous provision activities within the classroom e.g. bead threading, using tweezers and scissors, playdough manipulation. With control comes letter formation and the ability to write for more sustained periods. But arguably the most important part of our teaching of writing is the power we have to inspire children to *want to write* for a purpose. With highly engaging 'hooks' the children want to write. Initially this 'writing' may be in the form of marks on paper (emergent writing) that the children need to 'translate,' to children drawing together their fine motor skills alongside their understanding of phonic sounds and letters to create words that can be read back by others. We foster this approach to children writing for a purpose by incorporating writing into all areas of development, through adult directed tasks as well as encouraging writing into our continuous provision: with free access to pens, pencils, exciting writing materials within the classroom, role-play areas and outdoors.

KS1

The Transcription strand is taught through Daily Phonic lessons using Letter and Sounds supplemented with elements of Jolly Phonics and Read Write Inc., daily spelling lessons in Y2 and daily practice of spelling of common exception words - High 5 Words. Handwriting is taught using Letter-Join as our primary resource and is used as an opportunity to follow-up and consolidate phonics and current spellings.

Additionally, children are taught grammar and punctuation in a discrete session each week.

Writing composition is primarily taught using a 'Talk for Writing' approach. Units of work are taught using the following progression:

A Cold Writing Task is used to assess children learning needs for the unit ahead against expected learning objectives

Immerse:

- Begin to learn the exemplar text and actions.
- Activities that focus on familiarising children with text type and specific language and grammar skills related to the text type.
- Familiarisation of the text type through text maps and boxing the text up.

Innovation:

- Children develop their understanding of the ‘writer’s toolkit’ for that text type.
- Practise language skills.
- Innovating on the exemplar text by making small changes.
- Children individually writing sections of text making their own innovations.

Hot Task- using the same learning objectives as the cold is used to assess progress and attainment in writing.

Additionally, as the year progresses, short writing tasks are used for children to practise and apply skills that have recently been taught.

In Y1 Children do ‘Rainbow Writing’- a weekly recount at their start of the week to build up their writing stamina.

In Y2 Rainbow Writing takes place each Monday and develops into writing in a wider range of genres as the year progresses.

KS2

In lower KS2, Spelling or Grammar is taught every day in a short session of 15-20 minutes throughout the week so that over a 2-week period approximately 5 spelling and 5 grammar lessons will have been taught. In Upper KS 2, Spelling is taught discreetly at least once a week while grammar is taught daily as part of the English lesson. Our main resource for teaching spelling is the ‘No Nonsense spelling Programme’. Progress in spelling is assessed with a test at the end of each cycle. Handwriting is taught using ‘Letter-Join’ as our primary resource. In Year 3 and 4, two short sessions are taught each week reducing to one session a week in Years 5 and 6. The learning from these lessons is consolidated in other English lessons and in other subject areas across the curriculum.

In Years 3 and 4 writing is taught using elements of the ‘Talk for Writing’ approach although the time spent learning texts through repetition and the use of signs and movement phases out by the end of year 4 and more time is spent learning texts using text maps, story mountains and ‘Boxing up’.

As in KS1, a unit of work begins with a ‘Cold Writing Task’ in the genre which is going to be taught. The assessment of this informs the focus of the teaching and learning. Over the course of a unit of work, children are taught writing skills relating to grammar, sentence construction, punctuation and vocabulary. Throughout a unit, children have short writing tasks with one or two clear objectives, in which they can practise these recently taught skills. These short writing tasks provide the teachers with evidence to assess progress.

Children also have opportunities to practice and develop their writing skills in planned lessons in other areas of our curriculum including in Science, Exploring or World and, Art, Music and RE.

Agreed Expectations for Writing

Cold and Hot Tasks

- Cold and Hot tasks for each writing genre have the same success criteria used for both.
- Success Criteria must be in child friendly language and must be specific e.g. Use inverted commas correctly for direct speech rather than 'punctuation'.
- Maximum of 8 objectives covering text structure, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure or vocabulary based. These are the objectives that are going to be taught.
- (Handwriting expectations run through all writing so doesn't need to be an objective).
- Cold/Hot Task Objectives are highlighted in pink or green to make it clear to the pupil what has been done successfully and what they need to improve. The step symbol alongside the green to identify any specific or particular target.
- No other teacher comment needed for Cold Task.
- Following the marking of the cold task, opportunity for whole class feedback, reflection and response to marking. Children use a red pen to edit their work and respond to marking.
- The use of the agreed marking symbols for transcription errors are used in the margin of the line that contains the error. The error is marked so the pupil can easily identify what they need to correct. As the children gain greater skill in proof-reading, less scaffolding is given and just a symbol in the margin corresponding to the error may be used.
- 'Hot Task' summary comment needed for e.g. You have improved with...

Short Writing Tasks

- These are to be clearly identified as short write.
- Success criteria used (maximum of 3) objectives taken from Year group skills (identified from Green areas for growth from cold task banding).
- Pink and green used on the success criteria and in the text.
- Could be to teach and practice proof-reading and editing skills.
- Used regularly throughout a unit of work and will be on average once a week.

English Display

- English writing wall in all classrooms showing the objectives and expected learning for the unit being taught. WAGOLs of texts. Examples of punctuation, sentence structures and text organisation with the key vocabulary linked to theme/genre displayed and referred to.
- Writing wall to be reflective of the teaching and learning.

Other agreed expectations

- Evidence of frequent, independent writing across the curriculum. On average children should be writing every day.
- All handwritten adult comments to model school handwriting scheme.

The Progression Map for Writing

x-ref: Overview of progression of Writing Skills.

Enrichment

In addition to our writing curriculum the school offers enrichment opportunities for children to engage with writing.

Where possible pupils have opportunities to enter Writing Competitions e.g. 500 words, Young Writers Times and to write about school events such as theatre productions. Some children identified as more able writers in Year 5 participate in producing the 'Smarty Pants' magazine in conjunction with other children in the LPAP group of schools. Some children in Year 6, who are identified as having 'higher learning potential' in writing are invited to attend Writing master classes at the Loughborough Endowed Schools.

Where possible the school grounds are used as a writing teaching resource and as an 'active learning facility' to inspire and engage; this continues to be an aspect of provision that school is seeking to promote and develop further.

Our Curriculum Impact for Writing:

The impact of our teaching and the children's learning is assessed through the progress made from cold to hot tasks and the steps along the learning journey through short writing tasks.

The cold task identifies key learning needs from which the majority of objectives for the unit are set. These objectives guide the learning journey. The hot task is used as an end of unit assessment.

Marking is used against the learning objectives but will also highlight spelling, punctuation or grammatical errors that the teacher decides should be brought to an individual pupil's attention. This enables us to provide effective and individualised feedback to pupils on their performance.

Teachers use green highlighter pen to indicate parts of the pupils' writing that needs to be improved and pink to highlight where pupils have met the learning objectives effectively. We actively involve pupils in their own learning, by giving pupils time to reflect and respond to written and oral feedback. Pupils use a red pen when responding to marking and correcting and improving their writing. Proof-reading and editing sessions are planned into each writing unit.

Teachers respond to the learning needs highlighted from marking to plan additional teaching of a learning objective if needed or next steps.

We aim to promote the motivation of our pupils and their desire to improve, asking them to evaluate their own learning and recognise their achievement.

Ongoing summative assessments are made based on a pupil's writing using the LPAP Writing banding sheets. These sheets contain the KPIs and other writing objectives based on the National Curriculum for each year group. Teachers use the banding sheets to inform their termly assessments of attainment.

Writing Moderation

Writing moderation takes place informally amongst cohorts of teachers within each phase as part of our ongoing professional discussions. Each term, formal writing moderation takes place within year groups with an agreed assessment which is recorded on a writing moderation form.

Additionally, writing moderation with other schools in the LPAP group takes place at least once a year to ensure consistency of assessment across the group of schools.

Monitoring and Evaluation

A programme of book sampling is carried out by members of the SLT and the English Coordinator to assess progress in writing and ensure consistency of teaching and learning in writing.

We assess how engaged and motivated children are in writing through yearly pupil interviews and curriculum reviews with our staff. Our pupil's voice is important to us and helps us to plan and build an exciting and engaging writing curriculum.

We monitor and evaluate end-of-term teacher assessment data in Writing and track pupil progress trajectories and pupil individual, group (disadvantaged and SEND, gender) and cohort attainment data. We use National EYFS, Y2 and Y6 data as our benchmark using this to make judgements of our successes and identify our 'next steps'.