

Woodston Primary School

Writing Policy

Our Intent for Writing

At Woodston, we believe that the ability to write fluently with confidence and accuracy is an essential life skill. Our intent for writing is to ensure that our pupils are able to achieve, or exceed, national expectations as a result of high-quality teaching. Writing is a complex process, which involves the ability to effectively communicate ideas, information and opinions through the written word in a variety of contexts with accurate spelling and clear, legible handwriting. Successful writers understand the social function and characteristics of writing in order to use different genres appropriately, matching it to audience and purpose. Writing also requires the writer to understand and accurately apply the conventions of syntax, spelling and punctuation. We aim to equip children with the skills necessary to achieve this throughout the curriculum.

We believe that high-quality literature plays a key role in developing children's knowledge and understanding of the writing process, by providing rich language models and structures from which children can develop their understanding of how writing works. At Woodston, we use 'The Power of Reading' to support our approach to writing. We believe that Power of Reading provides our children with a rich diet of quality texts from a range of genres, which supports them in finding their own reasons for writing as well as helping them to develop a writing style, which is appropriate for the purpose and audience for which it is intended. As they move through the school, children build on their repertoire of well-known texts, picture books, novels, poetry and non-fiction texts from a range of authors.

Aims

Our aims are for all children to:

- Write creatively with confidence, clarity and cohesion;
- Develop a broad and varied vocabulary;
- Have appreciation of our rich and varied literary heritage;
- Write for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences;
- Understand and apply their knowledge of phonics and spelling with increasing accuracy;
- Acquire a deep understanding of grammar and the linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language;
- Understand and apply their knowledge of new vocabulary;

- Understand how to write in a range of genres (including fiction, non-fiction and poetry), using the appropriate style, structure and features;
- Plan, draft, revise and edit their own work, and learn how to self- and peer-assess against the success criteria;
- Develop technical vocabulary through which to understand and discuss their writing;
- Develop their imagination, creativity, expressive language and critical awareness through their writing.

We aim to develop the following attitudes through our teaching of writing:

- Curiosity,
- Pleasure and thoughtfulness,
- Critical appraisal,
- Interest and independence,
- Confidence,
- Perseverance,
- Imagination.

Action and Implementation

Children are provided with opportunities to write in a range of subjects across the curriculum in order to support them in writing for a range of purposes. At Woodston, we follow the National Curriculum (2014) which ensures that a range of genres are covered from narrative, to non-fiction and poetry. Genres are introduced through Power of Reading and studied for their form, purpose and audience. We explicitly look at the links between reading and writing, ensuring that children learn to read as writers and write as readers.

Writing is taught in a range of ways:

Modelling Writing

The teacher talks aloud the thought processes as a writer. They model strategies in front of the children, communicating the strategies being used. Teachers may model writing skills such as punctuation, rehearsal, proof reading, editing, word selection, sentence construction and paragraphing.

Shared Writing

This is a collaborative approach in which the pupils contribute their ideas and thoughts for the teacher to write. The teacher models and teaches specific writing skills and there is the opportunity for discussion to choose the most effective or suitable ideas.

Supported Composition

The children work in pairs to provide the next sentence of the text. This may follow from the modelled or the shared writing process.

Guided Writing

Pupils are grouped by writing ability. The teacher or other adult works with the group on a carefully selected task appropriate to that group's needs and targets. This will focus on a particular aspect of the writing process rather than writing a complete piece.

Independent Writing

Children are given opportunities to apply their understanding of the text type in their own writing. They are encouraged to plan, draft, write, edit and assess their work, applying the skills they have learnt throughout the unit of work on that particular genre.

The teaching and learning of writing varies across the age range in school. In the early years emergent writing is encouraged through the use of different writing materials, including felt tipped pens, crayons, chalk, sand, magnetic letters, big brushes, water, paint and computers, as well as writing in the role-play areas, such as postcards, menus, invitations, labels etc... Alongside this, children take part in activities to encourage and develop gross and fine motor skills necessary to write in a legible script. They are also taught letter formation in line with Little Wandle phases.

Reception and Year 1 children have daily phonics lessons to build their phonic and spelling knowledge to enable them to segment words and spell tricky words correctly. From Year 2 throughout KS2, year groups have spellings to learn relevant to their age, and these focus on high frequency words or a particular spelling pattern.

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar

Direct vocabulary instruction involves the intentional focus on words and their meanings. Teachers use a variety of methods to help students learn new vocabulary words directly.

Explicit instruction gives children rich enough information to comprehend what a word means deeply and accurately. The reason this is important is that unless children can

find out what a word means, they will neither understand the text they are reading, nor learn the new words they come across.

Explicit instruction requires higher levels of thinking and more active engagement with words. These active methods enhance both the learning and the memorisation of new words much more effectively than incidental, passive word learning during reading.

Importantly, explicit vocabulary instruction gradually increases word consciousness, meaning that children become more aware of relationships between words, as well as how language works in general and how they interact with it. Greater word consciousness not only helps children consolidate, integrate, access, and demonstrate the word knowledge they already possess, but it also helps them access and employ the new words they acquire. Children with higher word consciousness also become more competent at inferring the meaning of unknown words by themselves. At Woodston, we have vocabulary lessons daily.

Spellings are taught through the use of Spelling Shed, which maps out the progression of spellings for each year group.

Grammar and punctuation is planned and taught through discrete lessons as well as through the Power of Reading and English sessions.

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Direct Vocabulary Instruction takes place daily. Up to eight words are selected from the Power of Reading text being studied. These are Tier 2 words which will enhance both understanding of the text and general vocabulary.

DVI sessions are based on the Word Aware approach:

1. Get excited about words
 - a. Play word games
 - b. Word challenges
 - c. Retrieval practice of previously learned words
2. Teach words (Goldilocks Words/Tier 2 Words)
 - a. Share the word and identify the word class.

- b. Count syllables and notice any rhyming patterns.
 - c. Teach the meaning in a real-life context.
 - d. Children orally rehearse the word in a sentence before writing.
3. Independent word learning
 - a. Children to explore words using thesaurus and dictionary.
 - b. Children to use similar skills to discover the meaning of other unfamiliar words eg in science, RE, history, etc

Vocabulary is also taught in non-core lessons. This is generally Tier 3, subject-specific language which is needed for the content of the lesson to be understood. This vocabulary is included on the knowledge strip for the lesson as an aide memoire.

Children's writing is shared and celebrated in a range of ways across school:

- Writer of the week
- Writer's 'Hall of Fame' classroom displays
- Peer evaluation
- Poetry Slams
- Sharing of excellent work with other classes

Home/School Links

Parents and carers are strongly encouraged to be actively involved in their children's writing at all ages, by encouraging them to write for a range of purposes such as shopping lists, diaries, notes, letters, cards, stories and holiday writing challenges etc...

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

We aim to give all our pupils the opportunity to succeed and reach the highest level of personal achievement and to promote the individuality of all our pupils, irrespective of ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background.

All children have particular learning needs, including SEN and more able. Levels are monitored termly (see section below 'Monitoring and Assessment'), as well as through formative classroom assessment, and provisions are put into place to support identified children, such as Wave 2 and Wave 3 support. Writing support is carefully chosen to meet the needs of all children, particularly those who need extra support or challenge. These include 1:1 sessions, small writing groups, precision teaching and phonics intervention groups.

Monitoring and Assessment

Assessment is used to inform the planning and teaching of writing. We analyse and assess children's writing using the following domains:

- Transcription
- Handwriting
- Composition: Composition and effect, text structure/organisation and sentence structure.
- Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation

Assessment against these criteria takes various formats:

- Insight objectives: objectives are used to support teachers in identifying progress and the children's achievements and weaknesses in writing. (N.C 2014)
- Termly independent written pieces into 'Black Books' for assessment and analysed to plan for future progress.
- SATs Writing Assessment at the end of Key Stage One (Y2) and end of Key Stage Two (Y6)
- Reception and Year 1 use the Little Wandle assessments half termly and gaps in learning are identified with 'keep up' sessions organised to ensure children are not left behind.
- Year 1 children also use previous years phonics screening checks, half termly.
- Success criteria created by the teacher and the children, which is used to self- and peer-assess.

The English Leaders and SLT regularly undertake work sampling, lesson observations and monitoring of planning.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Head teacher, Senior Leadership team and subject leaders will monitor and evaluate the work achieved and ensure this policy is kept up to date. The English Leaders will regularly review the teaching of writing arrangements, identify areas for development, resource needs and moderate standards across the school. The English Leaders will also liaise with the link Governor and will attend meetings where required to keep the Governing Body informed and updated.

Writing Policy: Written December 2022

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English Lead: A Garner & L Brough