

## **St Catherine's RC Primary School Writing Policy**

**Autumn 2018**

### **Purpose:**

*English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others, and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.*

DfE 2014

### **At St Catherine's, we follow the Aims of the National Curriculum English Programmes of Study**

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- 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
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate

### **Equality of Opportunity**

The school recognises that some pupils may have barriers to learning which may be socioeconomic or come under the protected characteristics of Equality Duty. We monitor provision and access, adjusting where necessary to enable all pupils to achieve their best. In order to do this we provide a range of writing platforms, which enable all of our pupils to access writing. These resources are adapted where necessary, in order for all children to fulfil their full potential.

Familiarisation with a text type (fiction or non-fiction) through discussion and guided/shared reading/storytelling



Talk for writing: generating ideas and clarifying understanding of a text type: A text map and actions help children to internalise the underlying text structure. This is then turned into shared and independent writing. Actions are used to support the language patterns until these are internalised. Grammar conventions can be built into the text and taught and internalised in the same way. This can be done in pairs, groups or as a whole class.



Modelling of Writing (Shared/Guided writing)

We use what we already know and adapt it using the underlying pattern and text structure to create something new. Eg This may involve changing a setting or character for example but keeping the structure of a story otherwise the same.



Independent Writing

Invention: make up a new one yourself (based on what has gone before and text structures and grammar that have been internalised)



Teacher/peer/self-assessment against Success Criteria



Editing and improving



**Writing in the Early Years Foundation Stage:** In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the teaching of writing is based on the specific learning area of Literacy. In addition, children are given daily opportunities to develop their fine motor skills and pencil control. A range of genres are introduced and modelled, such as shopping lists, greetings cards, captions and speech bubbles, and children are supported and encouraged to write in these forms. Phonics is taught through the *Read, Write Inc* programme. The children learn to form each letter, spell correctly, compose their ideas step-by-step and are encouraged to use their phonetic knowledge in their writing. When modelling writing, the focus is on basic sentence structure; one of the phonics non-negotiables is to be able to write a sentence at the end of a session. The school's marking procedures are introduced when a child is working at an appropriate level. Writing is assessed against the early learning goals for writing.

To enable children to communicate effectively through both the spoken and written word, writing needs to be linked closely to reading and oral storytelling. Children are given real purpose for their writing, making it meaningful and engaging. Teaching of writing is structured using the following process, across the curriculum. The 'Talk for Writing' approach enables children to internalise the language of writing and effectively imitate it, writing from concrete experience and with confidence and enthusiasm.

**Familiarisation with a text type:** this is done within whole-class guided reading sessions or English lessons. It allows the children to gain experience of a specific text type and builds an understanding of and familiarity with the features of a text type, allows children to be the reader and experience the purpose of the texts. Storytelling and reading to children is built in daily as part of regular classroom practice so children experience a wide range of texts and are able to write from concrete experience. In Key Stage One children learn several familiar children's stories and use the familiar structure of these, once learnt, to scaffold their own independent writing.

**Modelled writing:** Modelling the structure and tone of a piece of writing enables children to write from experience and a position of knowledge. The teacher writes a passage of text in front of the class, thinking aloud to demonstrate the writing and editing process. This can be used to teach a range of skills: grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, drawing the reader in, authorial voice, how to edit.

**Shared writing:** This is a collaborative approach where the children contribute ideas for the teacher to use to create a piece of writing. A short text is created together and there is an opportunity for discussion as the class work together to choose and agree the most suitable and effective ideas for the text, which is edited and improved as it is written.

**Guided writing:** The teacher or teaching assistant works together with a group, focussing on a specific learning and teaching point. Children may have the same starting point that they go on to develop individually with guidance from the adult.

**Independent writing:** Using the text structures they have been taught and a familiar context, previously planned through the 'talk for writing' approach, children create their own written texts, demonstrating their learning and achievements. Children apply their grammatical knowledge and extended writing is used to assess achievement and progress and plan children's individual next steps for development of their written work

**Editing and Improving:** Children use all feedback, written or verbal, to edit and develop their work further, to ensure progress is made.

**Cross-Curricular Writing:** The same approach to writing is used across the curriculum. Children write extended pieces of text in all curriculum subjects, including RE and these are planned and taught in the same way, attention being paid to the vocabulary, spelling, grammar and punctuation that should be being used by a child of that age. Writing in the foundation subjects is moderated to ensure that standards in writing are as high in other subjects as they are in writing in English lessons.

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**Planning:** Planning is reactive: teachers plan according to their ongoing assessments of children's work and necessary next steps to be taken to ensure progress. Learning objectives are taken from the National Curriculum and are broken down appropriately. There is a focus on what children are to learn and how they can demonstrate their learning successfully. Planning is shared and sometimes planned with the Teaching Assistant when appropriate.

**Spelling, Grammar, Punctuation and Handwriting:** Spelling, grammar and punctuation (SPaG) are taught discreetly in additional short sessions within the week, however the bulk of children's SPaG learning occurs within the context of teaching in English lessons. SPaG objectives are carefully matched to units of work enabling them to be taught and learnt within a meaningful context. English starters are often linked to spelling and grammar to reinforce learning. Examples of SPaG will often be drawn out of whole-class guided reading sessions so that children can see how features of grammar can be applied to good effect in writing (ie how the experts do it!). Spelling tests are completed each week. We use the Nelson Handwriting Programme through Key Stages 1 and 2, which develops each child's personal handwriting style to ensure they meet the 'expected standard' in the end of key stage writing teacher assessments

**Speaking and Listening:** Speaking and listening are vital for developing vocabulary and grammar and underpin reading and writing. They are taught and modelled by adults across the school. Staff have high expectations of how children speak and listen carefully to the spoken word; they support children in developing their competence and confidence in the spoken language through our talk for writing approach. The use of Standard English is encouraged in the classroom environment. Opportunities are created for talk in a range of contexts and forms: whole class discussion, small group discussion, paired discussion, individual contribution, role play etc.

**Assessment of writing:** Assessment is ongoing and can take several forms. Peer assessment involves children sharing their work and receiving feedback from their peers on how to improve it further; it may involve children evaluating their writing against an agreed list of success criteria for a specific task. Feedback can also be verbal and instant improvement is often seen as a result (See Marking Policy for more detail). Children complete a piece of extended writing each week, which can be Topic, Science or RE related. Writing is formally assessed every half term and Trackers are updated to show progress and to identify any gaps. Moderation is carried out both internally and externally over the course of the year. The Writing Lead is currently a Key Stage 2 moderator for the Local Authority.

**Monitoring:** The Senior Leadership team, the Writing Lead and the Governor responsible for English, monitor the quality of teaching of writing and children's achievement and progress in writing through learning walks, lesson observations, drop-ins, book scrutinies, moderation and standardisation of work and analysis of data. Findings are shared with staff and next steps fed into performance management targets and the subject development plans.

**Parental Involvement:** Parents and carers are encouraged to be actively involved in their children's writing by helping them to write for a range of purposes such as shopping lists, letters, stories and diaries, as well as supporting them with written homework tasks. This begins in the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum, as soon as children enter school.