

St Mary's C.E. (A) First School

Whole School Writing Policy

Rationale

Language is a fundamental life skill and central to living and learning. It is a right of all children to have the opportunity to experience that Language is:

- A source of pleasure, enjoyment and richness.
- An opportunity to develop powers of creativity, imagination and critical thinking.
- A means of partaking in a range of activities in public, cultural and working life.

At St Mary's, the staff are committed to promoting language development as one of the school's main priorities.

Our Teaching Philosophy

We believe that the strategies for 'Talk for Writing' are excellent tools for enriching the language of our pupils. In our school, we strive to have pupils immersed in a stimulating language environment, where reading materials are presented in an inviting and attractive way and opportunities to infuse the pupils with language are fully utilised. Furthermore, within English lessons we create an environment which stimulates the generation of ideas and where all ideas are accepted, allowing creativity to develop. Teachers act as role models in their enthusiasm for reading and writing, and by keeping up to date with current children's literature. High expectations of children's writing is a key driving force behind raising standards as well as a clear understanding of progression in writing. The development of writing cannot be seen in isolation from reading, speaking and listening. The best writers in the class are usually avid readers. Strategies for reading, speaking and listening/drama therefore form an integral part of this writing policy.

Aims

- To provide a language rich environment that promotes a culture of reading and writing.
- To promote ways of working within the classroom, which encourage full participation of pupils.
- To develop in pupils an enthusiasm for and a love of books, literature and writing that will not only support their learning across the curriculum but also enrich their lives.
- To teach children the craft of writing in order to develop in children the confidence and skills to write well for a range of purposes and audience.
- To ensure a solid grounding in spelling, handwriting and punctuation so that children can focus on liberating their creativity with language.
- To value and celebrate diversity in culture and language.
- To use drama and role-play where appropriate to immerse the children in the text and give them contextual experiences in which to learn.
- To promote an interest in words, their meanings and developing a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms.
- To create opportunities for developing the powers of imagination, creativity and critical thinking.

Teaching Approaches Fiction

- St Mary's uses "text based" planning method: one quality text is used each half term and this will be the stimulus for fiction and non-fiction work.
- Teachers use different approaches to teaching writing: shared writing with class (teacher as scribe, children providing ideas) and modelled writing (teacher writing at board talking out loud to show the process of a writing thinking, children listening: not providing ideas)
- 'Talk for Writing' strategies will be used in English lessons (imitation, innovation, invention)
- Stories are mapped and planned using the "boxing up" approach and S shaped story maps.
- Drama is used as a stimulus for writing.
- Children are encouraged to talk through their stories before writing as part of the planning process, and to share their stories after writing as a way of celebrating their work.
- Working walls are used to collect key vocabulary and phrases
- Working walls show what "good" work looks like.

Teaching Approaches Non- Fiction

- All year groups will teach a range of non-fiction types each year using progression documents to aid planning.
- Non- Fiction texts, where possible, will link with Topic work or the main English Text.
- Non-fiction skills taught in English will be applied to Topic/RE work writing in the afternoon.
- Working walls are used to collect key vocabulary and phrases
- Working walls show what "good" work looks like.

Writing Expectations

- Children will complete at least one piece of extended piece of writing in English and one in Topic/RE each week.
- Children will be provided with Success Criteria for Big Writes and use this to self-assess.
- Time will be provided for children to edit their work using editing pens.
- Children are given opportunities to read and share their work.

Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation

- Progression in spelling, grammar and punctuation will be taught according to the National Curriculum for English.
- Spelling will be taught through investigation, application and enforcement (zero tolerance of misspelt words).
- Spelling booklets will be sent home and contain spellings to be tested weekly. Spelling booklets are progressive throughout the school and completion of booklets is celebrated in awards assemblies.
- Alan Peat sentence types are used progressively throughout the school to show variety in sentence types. Punctuation will be taught alongside Alan Peat sentence types.
- Grammar is included in English lesson at least once per week. Punctuation will be taught alongside grammar.

Assessment

The assessment of writing and responding to children's writing is covered in detail in the school marking and assessment policies. Children will complete at least one piece of independent writing each term to aid formative assessment. National tests are completed in Year 1 and Year 2.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Head and Deputy Head teacher will:

- Provide support by encouraging staff and praising good practice.
- Monitor learning and teaching through lesson observations.
- Monitor planning and assessment
- Support staff development through in service training and provision of resources.
- Monitor English in the school e.g. through lesson observations, termly curriculum walks and the scrutiny of children's work, teacher's planning, assessments and evaluations.

The English Leader will:

- Ensure continuity in levelling throughout the school and lead practical staff meetings to support this.
- Monitor English in the school.
- Keep up to date with new developments and keep the staff informed.
- Play a key role in formulating, maintaining and reviewing the English policy.
- Lead colleagues and be supportive.
- Audit resources regularly.

Formulated: January 2015

Agreed by: staff and governors

Reviewed: January 2017

Review: January 2021