

# English

# Writing Policy



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## Whale Hill Primary School Writing Policy

### Intent

At Whale Hill Primary School, we want our pupils to understand the power of the written word and use it effectively and creatively. Our role is to teach children to write independently and expressively. We want them to write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in, and for, a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.

We provide our children with the tools to write for a variety of audiences and purposes (such as, to entertain, inform and persuade) and equip them with the building blocks necessary for secondary school.

Importantly, we want children to understand and enjoy each part of the writing process from innovation to editing. In addition to this, children should develop a neat handwriting style and work towards consistently using the correct grammar, punctuation and spelling.

### Statutory Requirements

The statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are found in the National Curriculum in England: English Programmes of Study – Key Stages 1 and 2 (2013) and in the Communication and Language and Literacy sections of the Early Years Foundation Profile (2021).

### Teaching Writing

#### Spelling

##### **Early writing**

- The Read Write Inc. (RWI) programme allows children to become writers.
- From Reception, children are taught to hold, practise and rehearse a sentence before writing it (Hold a sentence).
- Children learn to spell quickly and accurately by applying their phonic knowledge.

Learning to spell is crucial to writing. This begins in the Early years, with the pupils learning Phonics. Through the teaching and learning of phonics, children learn to hear sounds and to represent them with letters; they learn to segment words into phonemes and to build and blend phonemes into words. The skills of segmenting and blending also supports the children's spelling ability. Alongside this, pupils are taught common exception and tricky words which do not follow a pattern – these are learnt by sight.

Towards the end of the RWI programme, when the pupils have a secure phonic understanding, the focus moves to spelling patterns and rules.

#### Spelling in Year 2 to Year 6

From Year 2 upwards, children use the RWI Spelling Scheme, which follows the guidance for spelling, as set out in the National Curriculum. Children work in spelling groups based on their spelling ability and these groups are monitored throughout the academic year. Spelling is taught in interactive, 15-minute-a-day spelling sessions and taught in units based on spelling rules. Children take home spellings each unit to learn at home for weekly or fortnightly spelling tests.

#### Handwriting and presentation

Handwriting is taught following the RWI handwriting scheme.

- Children are taught the RWI mantras for handwriting to help them form letters correctly.

- Handwriting is practised daily.
- EYFS take part in finger gym, pencil grip and letter formation practise alongside the RWI mantras.
- From Y1, children take part in an additional daily writing session linked to a high-quality and engaging text. Here we model and share collaborative writing to demonstrate good practice.
- In Key Stage Two, handwriting is taught in English lessons at the discretion of the class teacher.

### The Writing Process

Right from the start of Nursery, children in EYFS learn that marks and letters have meaning. Our children are exposed to high quality texts (shared stories, RWI, activities in continuous provision) and have many opportunities to mark make. Throughout their time in EYFS children learn to write letters, their own name, labels, lists, captions and simple sentences linked to stories or real-life experiences. Writing opportunities are planned for through RWI and as activities linked to the EYFS curriculum.

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 are taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. These aspects of writing have been incorporated into the English Scheme of Work 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 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.

Whale Hills' approach to the teaching and learning of writing is to create a community of writers in which teachers write alongside children. We aim to create a writing culture where there is a love of writing from both adults and children and where children's creativity is encouraged along with regular opportunities to practise different elements of writing throughout the process. This will allow them to master age-appropriate knowledge and skills as children are taught in sufficient depth and have opportunities to practise and apply their learning.

Quality teacher-led instruction at each stage of the writing process will form the basis of effective teaching and learning. Teacher's will write and share in class their own pieces in relation to topics, modelling and sharing the strategies they employ as well as appraising a range high quality example texts.

Teachers will ensure children have sufficient knowledge and background information of topics to support them in the writing process. Staff will take ownership of planning and resourcing, ensuring lessons are adapted and responsive to meet the needs of all children. Children will have the opportunity to write for sustained periods most days through mini-writing lessons focused on the different elements linked to a writing genre and they will

develop

the skills to talk and present their writing in positive and constructive ways.

There are three stages to the writing process:

### **Stage 1 – The Investigation Stage**

### **Stage 2 – Teaching and Collaboration Stage**

### **Stage 3 – Show Me Stage**

#### **Stage 1 – The Investigation Stage**

- The class will discuss the genre, audience and purpose of the text. Teachers will show them model texts and the class will scrutinise the text. In addition, children will explore a range of other texts within the genre including examples that the teacher has written. This may include examples that have different purposes, audiences.
- Children will explore techniques, discuss preferences giving reasons why and make reasoned judgements on effectiveness.
- They will explore techniques used in reading and writing in greater depth such as, facts and opinions, chronology, making predictions, summarisation, authorial intent, inference and the expression of feelings.
- The class will explore other genres/writing opportunities that cross over into the topic being taught.
- Children will be taught to read as writers, collecting ambitious words and phrases along the way in vocabulary books.

#### **Stage 2 – Teaching and Collaboration**

- Modelled and shared writing will ensure that children have examples of what a great piece looks like.
- Teacher led instruction through the teaching model: I do, we do, you do or shared, guided, independent will build confident and creative writers across school.
- This is done through mini lessons where a different component of the writing is taught each day.
- Taking examples of children's work and identifying strengths and making improvements.
- Focusing on different elements each day through short writing pieces e.g. setting the scene, character description, introductions, conclusions, argument for and against, presenting evidence, development of points
- Bringing in other genres that link for opportunities for short pieces of writing.
- Editing and improving short pieces.
- Extending vocabulary on working walls.
- Drama, discussions, hot seating, marketplace research activities.

#### **Stage 3 – Show Me Stage**

- Box planning for final piece.
- Children have a range of options to choose from linked to the topic area.
- Children write their sustained piece of writing linked to the given genre.

#### How writing is marked

See school marking and feedback policy

English Marking will depend on whether the task is reading or writing focussed, but here are some points to consider.

Pupils should be expected to apply and consolidate English skills (spelling and grammar and punctuation) across each piece of written work, whether the focus is on reading or writing skills.

Sentence books are not expected to include written feedback. Acknowledgement marking is expected in reading journals.

## Assessing Writing

For children in Key Stage Two, one piece of independent writing each half term is assessed and given a level which is shared with children in their books. This piece of writing must be independent as per the advice set out in the Key Stage 2 teacher assessment guidance which is detailed below:

### Independent Writing

Teachers should keep in mind that the national curriculum states writing can also be produced through discussion with the teacher and peers. A piece of independent writing may therefore provide evidence of a pupil demonstrating some 'pupil can' statements independently, but not others. For example, a pupil may produce an independent piece of writing that meets many of the statements relating to composition and the use of grammar but does not demonstrate independent spelling. This could be because the teacher has provided the pupil with domain-specific words or corrected their spelling.

Teachers may use success criteria in lessons to help them judge whether a pupil has met the objectives for a piece of writing and to help pupils understand what they have learnt. Using success criteria does not mean that a pupil's writing is not independent, providing they are limited to describing the task and the intended overall purpose and effect of the writing, rather than modelling or over-scaffolding the expected outcome. Furthermore, using detailed success criteria as a teaching tool for one aspect of writing could still provide independent evidence of other 'pupil can' statements which have not been mentioned.

### **Writing is likely to be independent if it:**

emerges from a text, topic, visit or curriculum experience in which pupils have had opportunities to discuss and rehearse what is to be written about

enables pupils to use their own ideas and provides them with an element of choice – for example, writing from the perspective of a character they have chosen themselves

has been edited, if required, by the pupil without the support of the teacher, although this may be in response to self, peer or group evaluation

is produced by pupils who have, if required, sought out classroom resources, such as a dictionary or thesaurus, without being prompted to do so by the teacher

### **Writing is not independent if it has been:**

modelled or heavily scaffolded - as part of external moderation, local authority moderators can discuss where they find modelled or scaffold writing, and they may ask for further examples of pupil work to support the standard and judgement

copied or paraphrased, including producing work that demonstrates an over-reliance on a model text

edited or re-written because of direct intervention by a teacher or other adult – for example, when the pupil has been directed to change specific words for greater impact, where incorrect or omitted punctuation has been indicated, or when incorrectly spelt words have been identified by an adult for the pupil to correct

produced with the support of electronic aids that automatically provide correct spelling, synonyms, punctuation or predictive text. If the electronic aid is turned off, for example spell check in a word programme, this would be considered independent

supported by detailed success criteria that specifically direct pupils what to include, or where to include it, in their writing – such as directing them to include specific vocabulary, grammatical features or punctuation.