

Penshurst CE Primary School	
Writing Policy	
Subject Leader	Katy Foy
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Writing Policy 2021-22

Intention

At Penshurst CE Primary School, writing is a crucial part of our curriculum. All children from Foundation Stage to Year 6 are provided with many opportunities to develop and apply their writing skills across the curriculum. We aim to enable our pupils to consider themselves as ‘writers’, to encourage the confidence and motivation to want to write and to have sufficient control over the mechanics of writing to allow for skilful development of the writing process.

Our intention is for pupils to be able to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. To be able to do this effectively, pupils will focus on developing effective transcription and effective composition. They will also develop an awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. We also intend for pupils to leave school being able to use fluent, legible and speedy handwriting.

Aims *(from the National Curriculum 2014)*

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 2 dimensions. In addition, pupils should be taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. These aspects of writing have been incorporated into the programmes of study 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.

Implementation

- At Penshurst CE Primary School, we use ‘The Write Stuff’ from Reception to Year 6 as the vehicle for teaching writing. This is to ensure a consistent and systematic approach to teaching the skills of writing across all year groups and cohorts. This also means children know what to expect when they change classes.
- Early writing is taught through early mark making then, when the children begin our ‘Penshurst Phonics Programme’, they are taught the letter formations using our rhymes as each letter is introduced. This begins with letter shapes, then CVC words, then onto short captions and sentences using the sounds and tricky words they have been taught.
- Reception children use ‘The Write Stuff’ to first explore then ‘Fantastics’, word collecting and using this developing vocabulary in verbal sentences, then progressing to longer teaching sequences as the year goes on.
- We also use ‘Drawing Club’ alongside this to explore vocabulary and use mark making and ‘messaging’ to create pictures around stories which then develop into labels, captions and sentences as the year progresses. Children are also encouraged to write independently in continuous provision where they have access to sound mats and other resources to support.

- From Years 1 to Year 6 children complete a 'Write Stuff' unit with an independent write. Teachers assess this piece of writing to identify the areas that their children will need to be taught specifically going forward, even if this means changes will need to be made to the upcoming 'Write Stuff' unit. This ensures that the unit is always adapted for the needs of the current children, which is especially important in mixed year classes.
- The 'Write Stuff' teaching method breaks writing down into sentences, and children explore in depth what makes an impactful sentence; using grammar, vocabulary and intent. The children create a 'sentence stacker' in the classroom - a collection of all their work across the unit - so they can see a high quality model of the text type they are working on. This is read to them daily so they are constantly hearing the high quality vocabulary and different sentence types. When the unit is complete they then plan and write their own independent write, using the different 'lenses' that have been practised over the unit.
- Teachers use the Write Stuff 'Progression through the Genres' assessment grids to assess each independent write. Cross year groups moderations are planned throughout the year so teachers have the opportunity to discuss their children and their writing with other teachers, before the data drops.
- We also chose 'The Write Stuff' as there is a focus on vocabulary and that was an area we wanted to improve across the school in previous years. In order to do this, and support the teaching of new and adventurous vocabulary across the school, teachers are encouraged to make full use of then resources available to them to find high quality texts to read and use with their children; The Write Stuff book lists, the CLPE core book lists and Pie Corbett's 'Page Turners' and 'Reading Spine'.
- We had also identified spelling as an area we wanted to improve, so have implemented the RWI spelling programme in Years 3 - 6. This is for children who have progressed from our 'Penshurst Phonics Programme' and are secure in all sets, also having passed the phonics screen.
- Children who still need phonic support still have access to our sound mats which match our phonics programme. This ensure there is a consistency of resources and children are familiar with what is available to them throughout the school.
- Grammar is taught through the model text within the 'Write Stuff' unit, but where any gaps of difficulties present themselves, they will also be taught discretely.
- There is an expectation that all teachers' use of grammar is accurate. To ensure progression in grammar skills, all teachers have been given a progression of grammar document to support their planning and subject knowledge. Any areas of weakness that are identified as a result of an independent write, are taught as part of the sentence stacking or in a grammar starters. Again, teachers are expected to track back to previous years objectives, if this is appropriate.
- Writing across the curriculum is also sometimes taught through the 'Write Stuff', as well as within the subject as a separate focus. We are very focused on raising the profile of writing in Foundation Subjects so that the writing is to an equally high standard, so will use the techniques and non-fiction shapes to help children plan and structure their writing within all genres.

Impact

The culture at Penshurst CE Primary School is one of continually using what we know in order to move on children's learning. This formative assessment happens all the time and may not necessarily be recorded. Teachers and other adults will use the information gathered through formative assessment to address gaps and to provide additional challenge for children as required and appropriate. This is most effective when done immediately and at the point of learning.

More formal summative assessments – "independent writing" - will take place at the end of each unit to identify progress and attainment as well as gaps in learning. This may be once or twice a year.

Successful Teaching, Learning and Assessment

- Teachers and other staff have a secure understanding of the age group they are working with and have relevant subject knowledge that is detailed and communicated well to pupils

- Assessment information is used to plan appropriate teaching and learning strategies, including to identify pupils who are falling behind in their learning or who need additional support, enabling all pupils to make good progress and achieve well
- Work is differentiated, demanding and challenging enough for all pupils
- The contribution of Teaching Assistants has a significant positive impact on children's progress
- Children demonstrate the characteristics of effective learning and positive learning behaviours
- Well-being and involvement in learning are high
- Progress over time is very good and in line with the milestones set out in the Writing Progression document.
- Achievement is high overall and ensures that the school meets National Curriculum standards