

Webheath Academy Primary school- Writing Policy

Rational:

At Webheath Academy Primary School, we recognise English skills underpin all elements of the school curriculum, and English in spoken and written form is the foundation for all our learning. It is integral to all aspects of life, and with this in mind, we aspire all our children to adopt a healthy and enthusiastic attitude towards writing which will stay with them beyond their primary years and for our children to communicate effectively, coherently and creatively. Writing enables pupils to impart their thoughts and opinions, express their emotions and share experiences and explanations; thus enabling their communication skills to grow in order to become effective communicators within society and be literate adults in the 21st Century.

Aims:

- To foster an enjoyment of writing amongst pupils, and a recognition of its value.
- To develop imagination, creativity, expressive language and critical awareness through writing.
- To use language coherently in a range of context, applying how and what is said to suit the purpose and audience.
- To contribute to discussions and actively listen to others in order to respond effectively, taking turns in conversation.
- To become aware of the characteristics of spoken English and understand that language varies through dialect and purpose.
- To acquire a wide range of vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for writing and spoken language.
- To use grammar and pronunciation accurately.
- To ensure the teaching of Writing is effectively planned, and responsive to learners' needs
- To plan, draft, revise and edit and learn how to self and peer assess against criteria to improve written compositions.
- To write for meaningful and real purposes.
- To write in a range of genres.
- To use language styles, structures, plot, setting and characterisation appropriate to the genre in order to engage the reader.
- To develop phonic knowledge skills and understanding of spelling conventions and use them to spell accurately.
- To develop a fluent, cursive and neat handwriting style.

As staff we will achieve these aims by:

- Planning the teaching of both Writing composition and Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG) in conjunction with the National Curriculum.
- Using quality text as a stimulus and/or model for writing
- Providing learning opportunities which are progressive and build upon prior learning and experiences
- Employing effective assessment procedures (both formative and summative)
- Planning and delivering daily SPaG and English lessons.

- SPaG lessons which will prepare pupils and build upon the skills that are required for their daily English lessons.
- Teaching daily spellings following 'No Nonsense' spelling scheme for Years 2 -6.
- Teaching writing and applying grammar skills through shared, guided, modelled writing and 'starter' tasks.
- Creating sequences of lessons which are responsive and 'Hook' the children, providing opportunities for exploration, innovation and independent learning.
- Providing the children with stimulating and purposeful writing opportunities which are relevant and engaging to them.
- Using quality text and picture books as a model and stimulus to inspire and motivate pupils to talk and write.
- Modelling a wide range of vocabulary which exposes the children to new and unfamiliar words.
- Holding high expectations about the way children work and standards in their own presentation.
- Using AFL and adapting planning and provision using a range of teaching and learning strategies.
- Modelling writing in all areas of the curriculum using a neat, fluid and cursive handwriting style.

Spoken Language:

It is our aim to develop our pupil's capacity to communicate effectively, building upon their knowledge of language and understanding of the spoken word in order to maximise their potential as learners and also support their social and emotional development. In achieving this, the skills of speaking and listening may be taught through drama, reading and retelling stories, presentations, conversations and discussions.

Throughout the school, we aim that our children become confident in using a wide range of vocabulary and they are exposed to new and unfamiliar vocabulary which opens opportunity to discuss language and its meaning. Age appropriate dictionaries and thesaurus are easily accessible in every classroom to support in knowledge and understanding of words and up-levelling language.

Writing:

We believe in providing the children with exciting and purposeful stimulus for writing (Hook). We aim to link our writing outcomes with quality text and curriculum themes (where appropriate) with spelling, punctuation, grammar and handwriting skills. These skills should be taught discretely and applied and practised through shared and modelled writing. A range of purposes, audiences and genres should be planned for and revisited to embed skills, and regular opportunities to present and publish writing should be given to create a sense of pride and achievement. Children should have some time to write 'freely and creatively' as well as focused tasks and extended writing opportunities are timely.

Children should be exposed to the correct terminology and this should be used by teachers and supporting staff consistently. Where possible, children should orally rehearse what they write and develop the vocabulary that is required. In EYFS, after mark making using a range of medium, children practise orally what they want to write- 'say it'- then 'copy it' modelled using 'Marvellous Marvin' (handwriting scheme); progressing to increasing independence apply initial sounds and CVC words.

Planning:

In KS1 and KS2 teachers follow the National Curriculum (2014) for English, which outlines the skills that need to be taught in each year group. Daily English, SPaG and Spellings is taught. In KS2 handwriting is embedded into these lessons and in KS1 handwriting is taught weekly and practised daily in written work. Each year group cover a range of fiction and non-fiction.

Each class teacher is responsible for preparing daily and weekly plans. Half termly plans are submitted and available for viewing on the school's software for all teachers to access. These plans specify the learning objective for each lesson and provide tasks to promote limitless learning opportunities. Plans should encompass opportunities for exploration of genres, innovation and independent writing and time allocated to revise and edit compositions.

Inclusion:

English forms part of the school policy to provide a broad and balanced education for all children. We provide learning opportunities that enable to make progress, providing suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's needs. Through assessment, each child's attainment and progress is tracked. More able pupils are given opportunities to extend their learning. Intervention programmes are used with pupils experiencing difficulties accessing the English curriculum.

Assessment and Recording:

All strands of English are recorded in one book. Assessments are timely and are made in-line with the school's assessment policy. Pupil progress is tracked using Arbor and targets are set for each pupil.

Pupils are assessed through observation, discussions with pupils and written work. Every half term children complete an independent piece of writing which is assessed and the application of SPaG is assessed in these pieces to monitor progress (these are completed at a time appropriate to the learning within the classroom). Children are given opportunities to reflect on their assessed pieces so they can see their achievements and follow next steps to move their learning forward.

Evidence for the assessment of progress and attainment is taken from learning and work across the curriculum and through comparative marking (No More Marking Standardisation). Key Performance Indicators and learning objectives are used to share targets with the children and identify next steps for learning.

Teachers are responsible for sharing children's progress in English with parents at Parents Evenings, annually in school reports and at other times if deemed necessary.

Learning Environment:

An engaging, stimulating and purposeful learning environment is a key part of a teacher's repertoire and contributes significantly to children's continuous learning. It should reflect the current learning and include an English working wall which is easily accessed by the children. These working walls should reflect the 'Big Picture' and the steps children need to get there. Resources to support writing should be freely available and easily accessible. Children in EYFS have access to a writing area with a variety of mark making tools, paper and writing frames, this is also echoed in the outdoor learning area where mark making can be on a larger scale.

Role of the English Leader:

- Take the lead in policy development and implementation
- Ensure progression and continuity in English throughout the school
- Monitor and evaluate standards of achievement in English and advise the SLT on action
- Monitor the learning environment
- Support and monitor English teaching and learning by : observation of English lessons, learning walks and drop-ins, sampling of plans/books/learning, facilitating moderation across year and phase groups, a review of progress and attainment of all significant groups G&T/EAL/SEN/PP/Gender
- Support colleagues in their development of plans
- To organise personalized CPD for staff according to their needs
- Take responsibility for the purchase and organisation of resources
- Keep up-to-date with developments in English education, attend courses and disseminate information to colleagues both informally and as INSET, and to parents as appropriate.

The Teaching of Basic Skills

This policy supports our school aim of raising standards across the school in English.

1: Grammar

Rationale:

At Webheath Academy Primary School, we value the importance of enabling children to become confident, literate individuals, who are able to deliberately select and use a wide range of grammatical forms. We work from the principle that the ideal vehicle for the teaching of Grammar is through the wider teaching of Writing composition.

Aims:

- 1) To successfully deliver the National Curriculum for Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation to all pupils, as appropriate to their learning needs.
- 2) To ensure that the teaching of Grammar is effectively planned for through selecting grammatical ideas and principles relevant to the year group, and pertinent to the text / learning being covered.
- 3) To maximise the progress of pupils through referring to grammatical concepts as key teaching points (underpinned by success criteria) by “thinking out loud” during writing composition.
- 4) To feedback on pupils’ understanding of grammatical concepts through marking / pupil and peer feedback.
- 5) To improve outcomes for Webheath pupils in end of Key Stage SPAG tests.

Teaching and Learning:

- Grammatical concepts are introduced to the children through the texts studied. Teachers plan to teach the full Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation content of the National Curriculum, selecting which concepts are best suited to each given text / learning focus.
- Lessons, or sections of lessons may then be devoted to consolidating the understanding of the grammar principle in question. Evidence of this teaching will appear in the pupils writing books.
- Grammatical concepts will then appear as success criteria in writing composition lessons, and as such will be explicitly referenced / exemplified during modelled writing (e.g. through teachers “thinking out loud” / making deliberate mistakes).

Assessment

- Pupils’ learning in Grammar will be assessed against the (National Curriculum derived) targets on Arbor. Progress against the expectations will be discussed and shared with the children via oral or written feedback.
- Progress will also be validated and monitored through the application of SPaG within timely assessed writing compositions half termly.

2: Spelling

Rationale

At Webheath Academy Primary School we believe that good spelling is an essential skill which allows the children to communicate their understanding in all subjects. In order for pupils to develop into effective and confident writers they need to develop and use a range of strategies, we equip them with the independence to attempt spellings before asking for adult help.

Aims

1. Develop and teach the children to use a range of effective spelling strategies
2. Encourage creativity and the use of more ambitious vocabulary in their writing
3. Enhance proof reading and editing skills
4. Encourage children to identify patterns in words and spelling
5. Promote a positive and confident attitude towards spellings
6. To help children use a range of dictionaries and spell checks effectively
7. Provide equal opportunities for all pupils to achieve success in spelling
8. Guide each child towards becoming an effective speller

Teaching and Learning

EYFS and Year 1

In EYFS and Year 1 our pupils follow a high-quality, systematic programme of phonics teaching following the Letters and Sounds (DfE 2007) teaching programme together with some Jolly Phonics. Our phonics teaching makes strong links between blending for reading, segmenting for spelling and handwriting. We encourage all of our pupils to apply their phonic knowledge when spelling. A discreet phonics lesson of approximately 20 minutes will take place daily.

By the end of Year 1, it is our expectation that the vast majority of our pupils will be secure at spelling Phase 5 words and common exception words. Pupils who do not secure Phase 5 by the end of Year 1 are given additional support and intervention.

Year 2

The National Curriculum spelling objectives for Year 2 work in line with Phase 6 of Letters and Sounds. From Year 2 onwards, pupils are taught the age related spelling content using a published scheme 'No Nonsense Spelling'. This scheme of work provides us with a manageable tool for meeting the requirements of the 2014 National Curriculum, has a clear progression through blocks of teaching units across the year and supports our teachers with the teaching of spelling. Pupils in Year 2 participate in five spelling sessions per week.

Key Stage 2

An investigative approach is taken to the teaching of spelling in Key Stage 2, in line with the spelling objectives in the 2014 English Curriculum. These are supported by the 'No Nonsense Spelling' scheme. Spelling sessions take place at least three times a week to ensure children have the opportunity to practise and embed new spellings. This will include the learning of the statutory word lists in the 2014 English curriculum.

Where necessary, some pupils will consolidate the phonic knowledge and skills from Key Stage One.

Strategies for Learning Spellings

The following strategies are introduced incrementally through the 'No Nonsense Spelling' programme and can be used to support pupils' spelling across school and at home. A more detailed description of each strategy can be found in the 'No Nonsense Spelling' teachers handbooks.

- Look, say, cover, write, check
- Trace, copy and replicate (then check)
- Segmentation strategy
- Quickwrite
- Drawing around the word to show the shape
- Drawing an image around the word
- Words without vowels
- Pyramid words
- Rainbow writing
- Memorable 'silly sentences'
- Clapping and counting syllables

Approaches to Teaching Spelling

Our focus on teaching spelling embraces the knowledge of spelling conventions, patterns and rules. Moreover, we promote the learning of spellings, through the use of multi-sensory strategies, including combining the teaching of spelling and handwriting. Our teaching of spelling includes common exception words, high frequency words, statutory words and personal and topic spelling.

Assessment

We have high expectations of spelling and teachers will use their professional judgement and knowledge of their pupils to mark work and provide feedback accordingly.

Children are assessed at the end of each phase during the 'Letters and Sounds' programme before moving onto the next phase. There are no weekly spelling tests as evidence suggests that children do not learn spellings through testing alone, but through regular reviews of previous learning and application in their work.

As part of the end of Key Stage 1 and 2 testing, the children in Year 2 and Year 6 will undertake the 'Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar' test.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Teaching staff monitor their pupils through observation, teacher assessment, marking work and regular reviews. The Spelling subject leader will review the spelling across the school and will work with the English subject leader and SLT to evaluate and amend the policy accordingly.

• 3. Handwriting

- Children are encouraged to join their handwriting as early as possible. Marvellous Marvin is used to introduce the cursive script. KS2 use Nelson Scheme to develop children's joined cursive handwriting, with the view to developing their own style. The Nelson Scheme will phase out as the KS1 children progress through the school.
- Teachers' handwriting is neatly presented using a cursive, style both in books, whiteboards and ICT. From Year 2, a joined style is always modelled by teachers. Posters and other visual aids are used to model a cursive style.
- Black handwriting pens should be given as soon as a confident style has been developed and this is then used for recording across the curriculum with the exception of maths, where pencils continue to be used. In Key Stage 2, children are able to choose their own black handwriting pen that they feel is 'right' for their style.
- All children work towards the use of joined handwriting in their everyday writing tasks. Where progress on this appears to be slow, additional tailored handwriting support is organised.

English Implementation and Progression Document

Writing

Children are given opportunities to 'freely write' as often as possible. Writing books are used to gather evidence across the curriculum. Children use their books to draft, practise skills, plan and develop their ideas to evidence their whole learning journey. The learning objective provides the title for their writing and the terms Hook, Exploration, Innovation or Independence should be evident. Children's writing standards should be equally as high in all subject areas, and marking should reflect the quality of Literacy and presentation skills.

Developing Language

Wordism List: A list is created to celebrate new vocabulary within the class. Children are encouraged to use a 'wordism word' to up-level their writing where appropriate.

Year group 'Spelling Lists' are displayed and use is encouraged by teachers.

Quality Text

In the teaching and learning, high quality texts are used as a stimulus and model for different speaking and listening opportunities and to develop an understanding of variations in writing genre.

Understanding Grammar and Punctuation

All children are taught the technical terms for grammatical language from the beginning of their school life.

Key language which is associated with an action;

Noun- the name of a person, place, object or thing (action: star shape)

Verb- a doing word (action: run on spot)

Adjective- describes a noun (action: jazz hands)

Adverb- describes a verb (action: slow run motion)

Conjunction- a word which links two sentences (action: linking fingers together)

All classrooms display posters showing the word, meaning and action. Actions are used to consolidate the children's understanding of these terms. All year group teachers use these actions in order to have a consistent whole school approach in teaching English. Other grammatical language terms are displayed in classrooms when appropriate to the learning focus.

Sentences

Children are taught to write a sentence at a time. They practise speaking a sentence aloud, recording it using speaking buttons, Siri and postcards, then writing the sentence down. They use a capital

letter to begin (green to indicate 'Go' to consolidate understanding). After they have written it down they end up ending their writing with a full-stop (red to indicate 'Stop'). This process is then repeated for the next sentence. This is then developed to introduce exclamation and question marks (also red to indicate the end of a sentence).

Commas, semi colons, and ellipsis also follow this introductory system (orange to indicate 'Amber' - a pause but not a complete full-stop).

Powerful vocabulary is colour-coded blue.

Developing Sentences

Acronyms are taught to introduce conjunctions and posters of these are displayed in the classrooms to support children in using them within their writing:

ABS- and, because, so

BOY-but, or, yet

WHAM- while, hence, also, meanwhile

HANDS- however, although, nevertheless, despite, since

Sentence Types

Children are encouraged to use a wide range of sentence types suitable for the writing genre. To support this, a range of sentence types are taught to develop sentence variation, punctuation and language choices. Posters, which are appropriate to the current learning, are displayed to consolidate the development of sentence variation.

Paragraphing

Paragraphing is taught by referencing the 'Hamburger Technique'. Children are taught to understand that writing always has an opening (bottom), a filling (often more than one) and a close (top). Writing which has many fillings, needs to be organised carefully so they fit together.

When children begin to write in paragraphs they are initially taught to leave a line between each paragraph. By the time they enter Upper Key Stage 2, children write paragraphs beginning to use a 2 finger indentation on the next line. When children recognise a paragraph has been missed through drafting and re-reading, a new paragraph can be marked 'NP' next to the first word of the missed paragraph to evidence they recognise their error.