



## Writing Policy

Subject Leader: Mrs. J Thomas

Reviewed: October 2021; next review: October 2022

**Nb: Covid restrictions mean that certain areas of our school procedures are temporarily amended according to risk assessment and safety. This will be reviewed regularly in line with government guidance.**

*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.*

**English Purpose of Study, National Curriculum 2014, DFE**

### Our school Writing Intentions

- To encourage every child to become a confident writer who can communicate effectively using the written word.
- To promote a positive and enthusiastic attitude towards writing.
- To create an interest in words and their meanings in order to broaden vocabulary.
- To provide regular opportunities for pupils to write for a range of purposes and audiences.
- To create independent writers and spellers.
- To create writers who can re-read, edit and improve their own writing.
- To create writers with a legible, joined and fluent handwriting style.
- To prepare pupils for the next stages of their education.
- To develop a broad range of writing skills that can be applied to a wide range of text types and genres across the whole curriculum.

## **Organisation, Implementation and the Planning of Writing**

### **Writing in the Early Years**

It is the aim of the scheme of work that by the end of Foundation Stage children will be able to work at expected levels in both 'Physical Development (Moving and Handling), Communication and Language and Writing' also secure in Phase 3 Letters and Sounds. School has developed a list of non-negotiables that children must be able to complete by the end of Reception in order to make sure children are Year 1 ready in writing. Before Reception, writing is addressed through focused activities with adults and a continuous provision of mark making materials available for children to access indoors and out. Provision focuses upon transferring the spoken word into the written word. In the EYFS we provide opportunities for children to see adults writing and encourage children to experiment with writing for themselves through making marks, personal writing symbols and conventional scripts. We ensure children feel secure enough to 'have a go', learn new things and be adventurous, once letter sounds have been taught children are encouraged to write the sounds they can hear.

When writing in the EYFS, most shared writing sessions will begin with writing key skills. The thinking bubble is mostly discussed when sentence writing is being modelled.

In Reception, Literacy will take a more practical approach to improving children's awareness of Literacy. Elements of the Literacy sessions will be evident during planning, teaching and learning such as shared writing and guided writing. The implementation of the Literacy lessons is gradual throughout the year. Children will develop skills and concepts in Literacy through various adult directed and child-initiated activities in the autumn term, moving towards a more formal Literacy session by the end of the year, to ensure the children are ready to access literacy sessions in Year 1. In Foundation Stage, children will only begin to learn to spell the sight words once they have proved to the teacher that they are able to read them. Learning and Teaching in the Nursery is organised so that part-time children can access elements of UFS Literacy sessions if the teacher judges it appropriate.

More information on these approaches will be found in the EYFS policy.

### **Key Stages 1 and 2**

#### **Planning for Writing**

Pupils in Key Stages one and two will benefit from a daily Literacy lesson. These lessons are based upon carefully determined units of work: these may be non-fiction or fiction units which are based upon a class book or linked to one of the foundation subjects. Teachers plan to ensure they cover areas across the English National Curriculum.

When planning for writing, teachers link sentence and word level activities in meaningful, creative and engaging contexts. Children are given opportunities to write based on these experiences using a cross curricular approach. Quality texts are used as models on which to base children's writing.

Children will have regular practise at independent writing in a range of genres and for a variety of different purposes. They will be encouraged to develop a love for writing and use it for a wide range of purposes within the classroom (eg in KS1 writing notes to each other, personal writing on the writing table, writing in role and in KS2 reading diaries). Children are given opportunities to apply their writing skills not just in literacy sessions, but across the wider curriculum.

All teachers will do the following:

- Complete a long-term overview to map out literacy coverage for the year - this allows for a cross curricular approach towards ensuring that all genres are covered, and extended writing is included in science and the foundation subjects
- Complete a medium (termly) plan which maps out the sequence of individual lessons
- Complete detailed flipchart presentations to use with the pupils: objectives, success criteria, key vocabulary, key learning points, questions to be asked, task and differentiation will all be included here

### Approaches to the Teaching of Writing

In English, like all other subjects, we recognise the importance of the pedagogy (practice of teaching) that we choose to use to best enable pupils to know more, understand more and remember more. Across school, we use many differing teaching approaches to ensure that writing opportunities are as effective as possible to facilitate progression in all pupils regardless of their starting points. Some of these approaches are as follows:

- Direct teacher instruction; modelling skills and techniques; demonstration
- Inquiry-based learning; outdoor learning; key trips and visits to stimulate ideas and purpose for writing
- Questioning, modelling, individual/paired/group instruction
- Pupil-led learning; study buddy work; opportunities to showcase learning within writing
- Collecting key vocabulary; defining key vocabulary
- Opportunities to 'talk' like an author and identify examples
- Use of ICT to research, present and communicate meaning

Writing will usually have a clear writing focus within each lesson as a main teaching strategy. Learning objectives are accompanied by success criteria using the following model:

- 'I know...' (prior learning that the pupil will build on in the lesson)
- 'I understand... e.g...' (the concept that has been introduced within the lesson and may include an example here for pupils to refer to)
- 'I can...' (how the child will apply their new learning)

Across a unit of literacy work, teachers may use a sequence of writing using the following approach:

- **Reading an example piece of writing (age appropriate and related to the topic):** teachers demonstrate how to be an expert in writing; pupils evaluate and analyse what makes this 'good' writing - picking out the features.

- **Studying, learning and practising relevant grammatical and vocabulary-based skills which lend themselves to the genre:** teachers instruct pupils in new/revision of learning, model skills and techniques; pupils employ these grammatical and vocabulary techniques and practise how to include such features within their own writing using shorter writing composition opportunities.
- **Supported Composition:** The teacher guides children through the writing experience: planning and creating longer pieces of writing. This writing will include the grammatical / vocabulary features.
- **Evaluating and self/peer assessing pieces of writing:** pupils are taught to proof-read and edit their work. They may also be given the opportunity to re-draft sections where appropriate.

Throughout the unit, teachers will ensure a balance between these approaches, although this will depend on the type of writing being taught and children's experience with the different genres.

### **Chance to Shine Writing**

We recognise the importance of extended writing. Teachers will plan for children to do extended writing on a regular basis and will indicate this in their daily/weekly planning. Approximately twice each half term (or at the end of a block of teaching), pupils complete an independent 'Chance to Shine' piece of writing which is a celebration of the unit of work they have just completed. At the end of this block of work, planning will be more independent rather than guided as the children prepare for and compose a 'Chance to Shine' piece of work where their progress can be assessed, and new targets can be identified. Children apply their knowledge of their 'Steps to Success' - a series of age-appropriate targets which pupils work towards across the year. Chance to Shine writing allows pupils to develop fluency and speed in composition and handwriting.

### **Speaking and Listening**

*'Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. Teachers should therefore ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills.'* English Purpose of Study, National Curriculum 2014, DFE

Speaking and Listening is at the heart of our Literacy curriculum and we believe that developing orally confident pupils within a language-rich environment is essential to vocabulary acquisition across the curriculum and is the key to teaching successful reading and writing. This begins in the school's early years curriculum. As a school, we firmly believe in giving children 'real' contexts for their learning, frequently giving children the opportunity to write from real experiences both across the curriculum and through visits within the wider community.

A rich cross-curricular vocabulary is planned into all subjects and is evident in classrooms, within learning walls and at the beginning of new topics (e.g. science terminology).

Speaking and Listening is planned for within the Literacy and Guided Reading sessions, by identifying appropriate objectives from the National Curriculum and ensuring that artistic and drama strategies such as acting, time-out, hot-seating and paired discussion are regularly incorporated into weekly planning. In addition, end of key stage performances allow children the opportunity to perform on a larger scale in front of audiences.

## **Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling**

Spelling is taught as an integral element of literacy. Spellings are taken from the National Curriculum objectives, National Curriculum Word Lists and Letters and Sounds. KS2 children use resources including Purple Mash, CGP but primarily Read, Write Inc. to support the learning of spelling.

Children are given spellings appropriate to their age, which are first taught in class, looking at the etymology of words to help pupils see the links between spellings. This helps pupils to apply their knowledge to new and unfamiliar words. We link cursive handwriting practise with spellings to aid children in building a 'muscle memory.' Children are actively encouraged to learn spellings using a variety of strategies and practise them at home applying grammatical knowledge within sentence use. Class teachers organise spelling assessments as appropriate.

Grammar has always been part of English teaching at Newdale. Following the introduction of the Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar tests in Year 6 in 2014, staff may ensure that grammar is taught explicitly at a specific time during the school day as well as forming an integral part of literacy sessions. Further information can be found in the Phonics, Spelling and Grammar Policy.

## **Handwriting**

Handwriting is taught in line with the National Curriculum objectives. As a whole school we have decided to implement a joined cursive handwriting style from Reception. Children will be taught the main handwriting joins using a variety of different approaches (dependent on age and ability). Handwriting is linked to spelling wherever possible. Children will be given the opportunity to practise words from National Curriculum objectives, National Curriculum word lists and Letters and Sounds. Handwriting is taught in three 15-minute sessions every week. Further information can be found in the Handwriting Policy.

## **Writing and Computing**

In a digital age, Newdale recognises the importance of providing opportunities to present the written word in a variety of ways. Opportunities for using Computing will be planned for and used to support the teaching and learning of writing if it is appropriate and will further enhance the learning. This could be using Information Technology such as to create presentations and documents; practising keyboard skills; being creative in how to convey written meaning effectively; researching and learning using carefully chosen websites; storing and manipulating documents; and retrieving previously saved digital content.

## **Homework and Celebration of Reading**

Planned and purposeful homework tasks can consolidate, support and further extend pupils' learning. Homework will be regularly set, linked to current learning and usually with a grammar link. Homework will be differentiated as necessary and devised to ensure that pupils are able to complete it independently at home. All children who are given homework are expected to complete it within the time limits specified.

## **The Role of Parents and the Wider Community**

We believe that parents' involvement in their child's learning is invaluable. Parents are actively encouraged to support their children at home. Encouraging children to write at home in a range of situations can help children develop their skills and become more confident writers.

We hold two parents' evenings each year (in the Autumn and Spring term) where parents can look at their children's books and discuss attainment, targets and progress with their class teachers. In addition, we regularly invite parents into school for family lunch events and informal parents' evenings.

We have held parental workshops to aid parents in supporting their children with their learning and hold regular coffee mornings for this too. A scheme run to help develop parent's skills in teaching their children early Literacy skills has been successfully running in school for a number of years now and targets Reception and Key Stage 1 parents.

Governors regularly monitor teaching and learning in school and as part of Curriculum Committee meeting will look at children's writing within a literacy context but also across the wider curriculum.

## **Assessment**

Continuous feedback is given to children orally within class. We operate a system of Close the Gap marking to develop children's written work. This can be used to mark children's work who are working alongside the class teacher or independently. This marking will be a focus group mark or a verbal feedback mark and will not be present in every child's book every day. More information on this can be found in the school Marking and Feedback Policy.

Written feedback will take the form of yellow highlighted success criteria to indicate the child has met the objective, and this can also be present in the work to indicate to the child that they have been successful. Green highlighter will indicate that the child has not met the objective; in the work itself, will tell the child they have a 'wish' which could relate to spelling, grammar, or the understanding of the work itself. Refer to the marking policy for more information.

In the Foundation Stage, assessments are ongoing throughout the year and in Reception, teachers will complete statutory Good Level of Development assessments.

In KS1 and KS2, the outcomes from Chance to Shine pieces of work are used to inform planning and next steps for children's achievement. Assessment information feeds into pupil progress meetings and is used to identify children who require specific teaching input or intervention from teaching assistants and/or class teachers.

We frequently hold writing moderation meetings to ensure the consistency of attainment and progress of children. These take place between year groups, in phases and across the whole school. This ensures that all staff have a good understanding of our assessment system and reading progression across the primary years. We also moderate with other schools across the borough to ensure that standards are rigorous and fair.

## **Inclusion and Equal Opportunity**

As a school, we strive to teach Literacy within contexts that are meaningful and engaging for all learners, regardless of race, religion, gender or socio-economic background.

We challenge all children regardless of ability to reach their potential. We meet the needs of SEND children, by providing targeted, focused support with areas of the Literacy curriculum which they are finding challenging. We quickly identify pupils who are under-achieving and put intervention strategies into place to support progress and attainment. These interventions are carried out by both class teachers and our dedicated team of teaching assistants.

We also meet the needs of our more able children, by providing deeper challenge to enrich, deepen, broaden and accelerate their learning, and reach their full potential.

## **Subject Leader Role / Monitoring and Review**

The English subject lead is responsible for raising the standards of teaching and learning in Reading. Data from across the school is analysed to identify strengths and areas for improvement. From this analysis, the School Development Plan each year will focus on any key issues which need to be implemented, monitored and evaluated. Some of the following monitoring strategies may be used:

- Scrutinising pupil work
- Monitoring Literacy planning
- Lesson observations
- Planning CPD opportunities for staff
- Delivering training and staff meetings to teachers and teaching assistants
- Phonics / spelling observations
- Learning walks
- Pupil voice
- Listening to pupils read
- Attending relevant courses from our school advisor
- Keeping up to date with important developments in Literacy
- Communicating regularly with Governors
- Purchasing new resources

## **Policy Review**

The English policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the subject leader, teachers, the head teacher and governors. The date for the next policy review is Autumn Term of 2022.

Agreed by staff: October 2021

Agreed by Governors: October 2021

