

WRITING POLICY

“Growing in Love, in the Spirit of Christ, for the Benefit of All.”

Intent

As a Catholic Academy, religious education and faith development are at the heart of our school curriculum, developing the Catholicism and spirituality of our pupils.

We believe that Literacy is an essential part of children's learning. It enables children to be able to communicate effectively with others for a variety of purposes and to examine their own and others' experiences, feelings and ideas, giving these order and meaning. This policy outlines the teaching, learning and assessment of Writing at St Joseph's Catholic Primary and Nursery School. Our school's policy for Writing is based on the National Curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2. The EYFS framework forms the structure of focus of the Foundation stages.

Through our Writing curriculum, we intend to provide children with the chance to communicate effectively and creatively, giving them the opportunity to write for a purpose and an audience. Through doing this, we aim to ensure that children enjoy and appreciate literature, and its rich variety and forms.

Our Writing curriculum is underpinned by our principle value of providing high quality educational experiences which are focused on continued improvement in standards and the development of independent and responsible learners.

These are the core values upon which we have based our Writing curriculum:

- Ambition for all our pupils;
- Meeting the needs of all our pupils from their individual starting points, building sequentially on prior learning;
- Recognising that every child has a range of different strengths, interests and learning styles;
- Encouraging children to have self-belief and to experience success in Writing.
- Providing children with a balanced education in Writing which covers the understanding of grammatical techniques and the opportunity to apply this to pieces of writing.

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- Teaching a range of text types to allow children to broaden their knowledge of different types of communication through writing.
- Providing opportunities for all children to share their writing with a range of audiences.
- Making cross-curricular links between Writing and other areas of the curriculum to further provide opportunities for children to write for a range of audiences and purposes.

Through this, we aim to:

- Promote high standards of attainment and achievement;
- Promote a positive attitude towards Writing so that children develop a life-long love of the subject.
- Enable all children to have high self-esteem and pride in their work.
- Ensure children understand the purpose of their writing and how it can be applied in different contexts, for different purposes, and across the curriculum.
- Encourage children to value and produce high quality work, taking pride in all that they do and being proud to showcase their achievements.
- Encourage and support children in taking ownership of their learning, providing them with opportunities to work independently.

Implementation

The curriculum at St. Joseph's is rooted in the teachings of the Catholic Church; the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum and the National Curriculum.

From Foundation Stage, our pupils are taught key grammar skills through Writing which range from basic sentence structure in the Early Years to more complex, multi-clause structures in Upper Key Stage 2. This content is taught through the implementation of Rainbow Grammar which enables children to colour code their sentences according to their structure and grammatical features.

Children are then taught to apply their learning in grammar to their writing. During this process, the 'Reading as a Writer' approach is used from Key Stage 1 upwards. The 'Reading as a Writer' approach is a half-termly unit which incorporates a progressive sequence of lessons; these build from an engaging experience to introduce the model text to children, through grammar lessons to

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shared writing, independent writing and opportunities for editing and reviewing. This culminates in an opportunity to publish their writing at the end of a unit.

The teaching of spelling is through the Emile Spelling Scheme which builds progressively across KS2 and incorporates opportunities to revisit and embed previously learned spelling rules and patterns.

See phonics policy for more information on spelling in EYFS and KS1.

Foundation Stage

In the Foundation Stage, children are exposed to a wide range of opportunities to write in a number of creative ways, such as mark-making in sand or using paints, to foster a love of learning to write. They also engage in conversations about what they are writing and who they are writing for which readies them for Key Stage 1 where writing for a purpose becomes more formalised.

These activities are balanced between those which are child-initiated, adult-initiated and adult-directed. This ensures that, whilst children are given the chance to shape their own learning and explore what they find interesting, their development in Writing is also facilitated by adult input to allow them to meet specific targets. These activities are linked to the current topic wherever possible.

Furthermore, handwriting sessions are introduced in Foundation Stage 2 and children are taught to write in a pre-cursive style which then prepares them to begin joining their handwriting in Year 2 by the Spring 2 term. This aids their overall presentation in Writing lessons and across the curriculum, encouraging children to take pride in their work.

Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1, children study a different text type every half-term and over the year, this will vary between fiction and non-fiction. This is to allow the chance for children to write for a range of purposes and audiences, and to learn about genre specific features (both grammatical and structural).

A pre-learning task is given to the children before the unit of writing begins which asks them to complete short tasks linked to the text type and specific grammatical features. Their achievement on this is then used to inform future teaching.

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The first week in the unit of work provides an engaging activity to immerse children in the model text and an opportunity to identify and discuss the author's intentions. This is then followed by work on the first grammar focus which is supported by Rainbow Grammar.

During the second week, children work on the second grammar focus, again supported by Rainbow Grammar, and then begin a shared write. This is where the teacher models planning and writing an innovated version of the text type, incorporating children's ideas and emphasising the use of the grammatical focuses. A structure strip (which is differentiated where appropriate) is used to guide the structure and content of the writing. Children then use this modelled writing and their own structure strips to support their writing of their own innovated version of the model text, building up a complete piece of writing day-by-day, into the third week.

After this, in the third week of the unit, children begin to edit and review their writing. They work as a class to identify high-quality examples of writing, before repeating this in pairs. This results in a collection of excellent examples to be used in their own writing.

This is then followed by a session in the fourth week of the half-term where children edit and review their writing through swapping, adding, cutting, moving and then checking for grammatical and spelling errors as well as accurate punctuation. This is all modelled by the teacher and is focused either on one day of the shared write that presents the most opportunity for improvement, or by a specifically identified section of writing chosen by the teacher and identified with a blue box.

The fourth week then continues with a revisit of both grammar focuses before the independent writing begins. This follows a similar process as the shared writing but gives children the chance to plan and write their own version of the text type independently, taking more responsibility for the content and making their own creative choices about their writing. At this point, the teacher does not create a shared model for the writing but instead facilitates the children's own independent writing through questioning and the use of mini-plenaries to recap and/or refocus their writing during the session. This continues into the fifth week.

Starter tasks are incorporated into shared writing and independent writing sessions so that children have the opportunity to recap key grammar skills, adding Rainbow Grammar colours to strengthen their understanding.

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In the sixth and final week, the children edit and review their work again as they did after their shared writing sessions. They are then given the opportunity to publish their writing. This can be done in a variety of ways and can be linked to the text type itself. Examples could include typing into a newspaper report, publishing on the school website as a blog post or filming themselves reading their writing as a speech. This enables the children to see their writing has having a purpose.

Lastly, there is a session at the end of the unit which is used to teach outstanding grammar focuses which are not explicitly linked to a text type. They also complete a post-learning task which evidences the progress that they have made across the unit of work and highlights any further areas for development.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2, children are taught using the same half-termly structure as in Key Stage 1. The quantity of writing per lesson is expected to increase in Lower Key Stage 2 and onwards in comparison to Key Stage 1 to reflect the stamina of the children in writing.

Planning

The Writing progression document provides a long term plan from Foundation Stage 2 upwards which details the sentence structures and grammatical features that will be covered over the academic year. This ensures that children can meet the expectations of the National Curriculum and Early Years Framework.

Medium term planning is created and used to show the teaching and learning over the year, detailing the progression of sentence structure and grammar in each term.

For a detailed overview of grammatical features covered in each year group, see Writing Progression document.

Children with Special Educational Needs

The curriculum in our school is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school. If we think it necessary to adapt the

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curriculum to meet the needs of individual children, based on an accurate understanding of the strengths and gaps in learning which may exist, we may do so.

If a child has a special need which has an effect on their writing, further resources are used to support them in their learning. For example, word banks containing key vocabulary, Rainbow Grammar cards which are easily erasable and/or group writing can also support children with special needs to make progress.

Interventions are also used to boost progress for those children with special needs where appropriate. These mainly consist of Rainbow Grammar practice to support children in writing full, accurate sentences.

Furthermore, teaching assistants are available in every class to support children and can do so in Writing by supporting them in their sentence structure.

Impact

Our curriculum has ambition for high achievement of all pupils irrespective of background and starting point.

The teaching and learning process is cyclical, therefore assessments are used to inform teaching, but also to measure progress. We continually measure the impact of our curriculum by scrutinising pupils' books, speaking to pupils about their learning and through the use of internal assessments.

Assessment in Writing is carried out in a number of ways for different purposes in order to measure the impact of teaching and learning. On a day-to-day basis, teachers and support staff use questioning and mini-plenaries within lesson to check understanding and provide further support where needed. Where a child is in need of support, pre-teaching is sometimes used prior to the lesson.

The pre-learning task that children complete at the start of each six-week block evidences their current understanding of the text type and grammar and highlights their next steps. This then informs planning and ability groupings within lesson, ensuring that each child is having their educational needs met.

The post-learning task at the end of the block evidences the progress that the child in question has made and again, highlights any next steps that may need to be taken to recap or reteach.

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Furthermore, children complete termly Cornerstones assessments in grammar and spelling which highlight cohort strengths and areas for improvement, as well as provide useful assessment data on individual children's progress. This then informs future planning.

Lastly, both internal moderation and moderation with colleagues from other schools is used to verify assessment judgements.

Roles and Responsibilities

- The Headteacher has the responsibility for the leadership of the curriculum and delegates responsibility to key staff;
- The Deputy Headteacher co-ordinates the work of the subject leaders and ensures that the curriculum has progression and appropriate coverage;
- Subject leaders are responsible for the medium term plans and liaising with class teachers over the content and delivery of the units of work. They evaluate and monitor standards in their subject;
- Class teachers ensure that the curriculum is taught and that the aims are achieved for their class. They plan collaboratively to ensure parity across the year group;
- The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher ensure that the progress of each pupil is tracked and that there is appropriate challenge support and intervention;
- Governors monitor the success of the curriculum at whole Governing Body meetings through the Headteacher's report and reports from subject leaders.

Reviewed: September 2024

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