



Wodensfield
Primary School

WRITING POLICY

AIM TO BE THE BEST YOU CAN



Adopted by: Wodensfield Primary School

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Amendments

"You can make anything by writing."

- C.S. Lewis

"A word after a word after a word is power."

- Margaret Atwood

"You should write because you love the shape of stories and sentences and the creation of different words on a page. Writing comes from reading, and reading is the finest teacher of how to write."

- Annie Proulx

Rationale

At Wodensfield, we recognise the critical importance of developing strong, confident writers. Writing is not only a fundamental communication tool but also a gateway to academic success and personal growth. Our writing curriculum aims to foster a love for writing, nurturing creativity, and ensuring consistent standards across all year levels.

Through this policy, we seek to achieve the following objectives:

Promote a Positive Writing Culture: We believe that writing should be celebrated and enjoyed. Our policy encourages teachers, children, and parents to appreciate the value of writing and create an environment where writing is seen as an exciting and meaningful activity.

Develop Essential Writing Skills: Our curriculum outlines the specific skills and techniques that students will acquire at each stage of their education. From basic sentence construction to advanced punctuation, we aim to equip our students with the tools they need to express themselves effectively.

Emphasise Process and Craft: Writing is not just about the final product; it is a process that involves planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Our curriculum emphasises teaching students how to approach writing systematically, paying attention to details, and refining their work.

Foster Creativity and Imagination: We recognise that writing is an outlet for creativity, self-expression and information. Our teachers provide opportunities for students to explore different writing purposes, experiment with language and unleash their imaginations.

Ensure Equity and Inclusion: Our writing policy is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of their background or abilities, have equal access to quality writing instruction. We provide adaptive support and accommodations to meet individual needs as required.

In summary, our writing policy sets the foundation for a vibrant and effective writing curriculum that prepares our children for a lifetime of successful communication, critical thinking and creativity.

Curriculum Statement

Intent

At Wodensfield, our curriculum strives to develop resilient, ambitious and independent learners who make progress across all areas and achieve the highest standards possible in a safe, secure environment where pupils can thrive.

In order to successfully deliver a structured, rich curriculum with clear progression of skills, we follow the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum 2014. We believe that English is essential for the educational and social progress of all our pupils, as it allows them to make sense of the ever-changing world around them. At Wodensfield, we value writing as key life skills, therefore high priority is given to the teaching of this subject within our school. We are dedicated to enabling all of our pupils to become confident, lifelong writers.

Being a confident writer and understanding how to write both informally and formally, for different purposes and audiences, has a direct impact on our pupil's skills, not only for the next stage of their education but also their future life opportunities. Writing helps us to: explain; instruct; persuade; inform; communicate; stimulate our imagination and creativity; acquire new skills and experiences; achieve our aspirations and succeed in life.

Our curriculum aims to ensure that children develop the knowledge (substantive and demonstrative) they need to be successful. In writing, substantive knowledge is the ability to effectively plan, draft, and construct writing for different purposes. We want our pupils to acquire a wide vocabulary; a solid understanding of grammar and be able to spell new words by effectively applying the spelling patterns and rules they learn throughout their time in primary school. 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 want our children to be able to find enjoyment in expressing their own thoughts, ideas, values and beliefs through the written form. Writing also provides the vehicle through which learning in other subjects can be expressed and captured, such as in PSHE, Science and History.

The curriculum enables children to develop their demonstrative knowledge and to 'think like a writer'. All good writers refine and edit their writing over time, so we want children to develop independence in being able to identify their own areas for improvement, and that of others, in all pieces of writing. We want our children to continue to develop a conscious awareness and control of their writing, to ensure that is effective and appropriate for the writing purpose and the audience, through editing their work effectively during and after the writing process.

There are clear expectations set out in the curriculum for each year group, and targets set across school. Throughout school, working with increasing accuracy, we expect our children to be able to evaluate and edit text and apply substantive knowledge to effectively write for a range of purposes (demonstrative knowledge). This is built into our writing curriculum and targets for the children, which challenges our highest students but allows teachers to adapt their lessons for those children needing more support, such as those with SEND.

It is essential that by the end of their time at Wodensfield, in Year 6, our pupils can write with confidence, and write for a range of writing purposes, to use their knowledge and skills in any subject (and when transitioning into secondary school). It is also essential for us that our children have developed the knowledge of a range of writing styles (e.g. to write for entertainment as well as for information), and through this use a wide vocabulary, which they can apply to all subjects. In this, reading and writing are intrinsically linked.

The aims and values of writing at Wodensfield Primary School are as follows:

- To establish an entitlement for children.
- To establish high standards of writing and to continue to drive these standards forwards.
- To promote the enjoyment of writing and for children to take pride in their work.
- To provide the fundamental right for children to use the written form as a way of communicating their own thoughts, feelings, values, ideas, beliefs and to understand the world around them.
- To develop confident literate pupils, who are fluent writers (transcriptional elements) and can plan, discuss, create and edit their compositions to convey meaning to the reader.
- To develop children who are confident when talking, reading and writing, and who are fluent and can monitor their own understanding.
- To provide our children with a range of writing opportunities and stimuli, including writing for a range of purposes and audiences.
- To develop and nurture children who can use the skills they learn within English lessons across the curriculum and out of school.

Implementation

Through our writing curriculum and structures, our children will be given opportunities to explore:

- Speaking and spoken language (to support writing).
- Listening and responding.
- Collaborative discussion and writing.
- Planning, shaping and editing texts independently and with others.
- Vocabulary development.
- How the written word differs from the spoken word.
- The conventions and structures of different writing styles.
- Grammar and punctuation at the sentence and text.
- Text structure and organisation.
- Handwriting and presentation, leading to pride in their work.

Writing at Wodensfield is based around a range of exciting and engaging stimuli, which includes books, film clips, music-videos, visitors and real-life experiences.

Across school, our children are provided with opportunities to write for a range of purposes including the following: writing to entertain, writing to inform, writing to persuade and writing to discuss. A balance over the year is expected. Teachers promote writing with reading and look for ways to inspire and motivate pupils so that they see themselves as 'writers'. Teachers establish the purpose and audience for writing and make teaching objectives explicit to pupils so they know why they are studying a particular text type, the kind of writing activities they need to undertake and what the expected outcome will be. Children are also expected to use the skills and knowledge they learn in their writing lessons across the full range of curriculum subjects.

At Wodensfield, writing is taught through a writing journey, which typically lasts between 2-3 weeks, and includes the following elements:

1. 'hook' lesson to engage children and 'launch' the new writing unit
2. deconstruct good model texts
3. speaking and listening is inherent in our teaching sequence
4. explicitly taught elements of grammar, language and text structure
5. shared writing as a class and writing with peers

6. planning
7. writing (can be broken down into sections)
8. proof reading and editing (including shared editing)

Our writing journey begins with a 'hook' to engage our children and interest them in writing from the onset. Where appropriate, children have the opportunity to see examples of best practice for each text type (e.g. model texts), which enable them to identify the National Curriculum elements and deepen their understanding of vocabulary, genre-specific structures and writing features. The writing journey also includes lessons, where pupils explicitly cover the writing objectives for their year group including the grammar and punctuation requirements. Children are provided with explicit opportunities to revisit prior learning, which enables them to know more and remember more. Each writing unit enables children to write collaboratively with others, which encourages pupil talk and learning from others. At the end of each unit, the children complete a final independent Big Write, where they can showcase their writing ability and evidence the knowledge and vocabulary they have been taught.

Pupils are taught how to edit and improve their work following feedback from teachers and their peers. Pupils are encouraged to use the knowledge they have learned in English across all areas of the curriculum.

As mentioned above, speaking and listening is an integral part of the writing process, especially for our younger children. Children need to practise their oral language skills by speaking and listening to different people, including school staff and their peers. They also need to explore their ideas, experiences and imaginary worlds through talk. Our curriculum intends for our children to become confident articulate speakers and attentive listeners, which in turn lays the foundations for them to become confident writers.

Right from the time our children enter EYFS, they are provided with rich opportunities to nurture the foundational elements of becoming a developing writer. Children are exposed to literature, which enables them to develop their understanding of vocabulary, themes, characters, settings, poems and songs. They are also expected to discuss and participate in texts, including re-telling stories and rhymes through helicopter stories, and orally composing and sequencing their own ideas. Our youngest children begin to make marks and understand the meaning of those marks, including letter and sound correspondences. The progression of children's fine motor skills (through a range of activities such as dough gym, using tweezers, letter and word writing practise) leads to children developing a tripod pencil grip and ultimately writing their own initial sentences by the time they leave reception.

Our children with any additional needs access the same high-quality teaching and learning in writing as their peers. Our curriculum is inclusive and supported by our staff, who will make necessary adaptations to allow all children to feel successful.

Where necessary, teachers will adapt the curriculum to take into account individual needs within the high-quality whole-class teaching. In writing, this could mean that a child:

- has a scribe to support with recording;
- benefits from more adult to pupil or pupil to pupil talk to share, discuss and record ideas;
- uses our spelling app on the iPad to support with spelling;
- has more visual models to support with the development of ideas;
- has extra time to help with processing and organising ideas;
- receives adapted materials, for example larger or coloured sheets of paper; and
- has alternative planning mechanisms to sequence and develop ideas.

At Wodensfield, we look to celebrate and showcase children's writing through displaying children's writing throughout school and celebrating 'Wodensfield's Wonderful Writers' in our half-termly celebration assembly, where children who have worked hard or produced super writing get to read their work out to others. We also actively look for opportunities to enter competitions and join in with writing initiatives.

During pupil voice sessions, our children expressed a desire for chances to write freely. Responding to this, we provide our children with opportunities to write for pleasure using 'Free Writes', where children can write freely and for pleasure in an English lesson.

Our pupils are taught cursive handwriting through the Letter-Join handwriting scheme. Our pupils are taught the National Curriculum spellings through Read Write Inc. (RWI) Spell Zone scheme, which guides the children through the various age-related spelling rules.

Impact

The impact of our curriculum will be that the pupils make significant progress at all key stages. Acquiring the skills and knowledge identified for each topic within the subject area. Key skills and knowledge will be delivered to ensure clear progression from year to year, with the pupils using existing skills and acquiring new ones as they move on through school. This will result in each pupil being equipped with a breadth of knowledge and skills to successfully support their educational journey. Robust assessment for learning, and clear identification of pupils' particular talents, interest and curiosity will be nurtured to ensure personal motivations and ambitions are encouraged and fostered.

As a result of our English curriculum, pupils will become well-rounded, engaged, inquisitive and academically prepared for life beyond primary school and throughout their educational journey. Assessment is carried out regularly to ensure children are consolidating and learning new knowledge and applying these to writing for a range of purposes and contexts. Children complete 'Big Writes' at the end of each writing unit, which are then evaluated and inform future planning and feedback with the children. This approach ensures that school stakeholders, including children, parents, teachers, governors and senior leaders, can see the impact of the 'writing journey'.

All our staff, senior leaders and Governors are involved in measuring the impact of our writing curriculum, alongside our writing subject lead. These include:

- Regular assessed pieces of writing (Big Writes at the end of each two-three week writing unit).
- Marking and feedback (mainly verbal) to inform children of their successes and next steps.
- Moderation of writing within school and with other local schools.
- Talking to children about writing.
- Learning walks and feedback.
- Subject leader book (and planning) scrutiny.
- Governor Board reviews and meetings between individual Governors and the subject lead.
- Actively working alongside Wolverhampton Council's Citizenship, Language and Learning (CLL) team to offer scrutiny, subject development and support.

Skills Progression

At Wodensfield, we have suite of progression documents to support teachers in the planning of English, to ensure progression and consolidation across the school and to support children in their learning. These include the following:

- Writing overview, which maps out the key writing units, stimuli, target skills and writing purpose for each year group across the school.
- Writing skill progression, which shows how fundamental skills and knowledge in writing, from the National Curriculum, develop within each strand.
- Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPAG) progression document, which includes the SPAG skills for each year group, with examples to support children and teachers.
- Writing for different purposes progression document, which sets out the four main writing purposes and how each progresses throughout the school.
- Writing toolkits (knowledge organisers) for each year group, which the children use in their lessons.
- Age-related expectation (ARE) statements, taken from the National Curriculum, which are used to assess against children's writing on a regular basis to inform next steps.

This suite of progression documents, and further information about writing, can be found on our school website: <https://www.wodensfield.org/writing>

Assessment

Assessment provides a framework within which educational objectives may be set and children's progress expressed and monitored. Assessment is incorporated systematically into teaching strategies in order to diagnose any problems and monitor progress. Assessment takes place as a regular part of teaching and learning as well as looking at their performance at the end of a specific task or unit of work. We have in place an assessment system based on entering, developing, secure and working at greater depth in relation to the age related expectations. This is used throughout the school.

We use summative and formative assessment to ensure children are consolidating and learning new knowledge and applying these to writing for a range of purposes and contexts. Children complete 'Big Writes' at the end of each writing unit, which are then evaluated and inform future planning and feedback with the children. This approach ensures that school stakeholders, including children, parents, teachers, governors and senior leaders, can see the impact of the 'writing journey'.

Teachers across school are equipped with age-related expectations, developed from the National Curriculum, which enables them to assess children attainment and progress.

Cross-Curricular Links

Across school, opportunities are provided for children to write about (and continue learning about) topics or subject areas, which they are learning about in other curriculum areas, such as in History or in Science or PSHE. Writing provides a wonderful opportunity for children to showcase their learning from these other, important subject areas.

Diversity

Writing and literature is the perfect vehicle through which children can recognise, discuss and celebrate diversity. Children can explore different perspectives, cultures and backgrounds, fostering empathy and understanding. When children create their own stories, poems, reports or other forms, they have the opportunity to express their unique identities and experiences, whether through characters, settings or themes. Children can read and write about their own heritage, traditions or family histories, allowing them to share their own individual narratives. Additionally, exposure to diverse literature broadens children's horizons. By valuing and celebrating each child's voice, writing becomes a tool for unity, promoting a sense of belonging and acceptance within the school community.

Planning and Resources

Writing in our school is progressive and teachers are expected to plan units which delivers the curriculum expectations for their year group, offers a balance of writing purposes and engages learners. This approach ensures that teachers remain in control of ensuring that their teaching reflects the needs of their children and it ensures that teaching can be flexible, whilst still ensuring that appropriate skills and age-related expectations are met, in line with the progression documents discuss above.

Teachers plan writing units, typically lasting two-three weeks, which are documented on a planning template, which is then stored centrally on Microsoft Teams, for other adults to access as necessary. Teachers use SMART notebook IWB files (and/or Microsoft Powerpoint) to develop and resource the teaching activities which will be used with the children in classrooms.

Resources for writing are ordered at specific points during the year, following consultation with staff, as necessary.

Role of the Subject Leader

The subject leader's responsibilities are:

- To ensure a high profile of the subject;
- To ensure a full range of relevant and effective resources are available to enhance and support learning;
- To model the teaching of writing;
- To ensure progression of the key knowledge and skills identified within each unit and that these are integral to the programme of study and secure at the end of each age phase;
- To monitor the quality of learning and teaching and report to the senior leadership team and Governing body;
- To lead further improvement and development of the subject as informed by effective subject overview;
- To ensure that the writing curriculum has a positive effect on all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or have low attainment;
- To ensure that approaches are informed by and in line with current identified good practice and pedagogy.

Equal Opportunities

At Wodensfield, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all children, irrespective of race, gender, culture, social class, special educational need or disability. Teachers use a range of strategies to ensure inclusion. We will adhere to the legal definitions of these protected characteristics as set out by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) code of practice.

Inclusion

All pupils are entitled to access the writing curriculum at a level appropriate to their needs. Independent tasks, as well as teaching, are also well-adapted to ensure full accessibility, as well as to provide appropriate challenge to different groups of learners. The school makes full use of additional adults who are deployed effectively to ensure that identified children are able to make progress in each curriculum area, according to their full potential. Teaching takes account of children's own interests to ensure topic relevance. Support for specific individuals is well-considered and planned for, with consideration given to how greater depth and further challenge can be implemented.

Health and Safety

The curriculum will be delivered in a safe and healthy manner; every effort will be taken to identify risks associated with a curriculum subject/activity and the appropriate control measures will be implemented. Pupils will be educated about health and safety issues as and when the opportunity arises throughout the course of normal teaching.

For practical lessons, where appropriate, class teachers will risk assess the activity using appropriate guidance from the subject experts.

Role of the Governors

Governors are responsible for ensuring the effective delivery of the National Curriculum in Writing. The subject leader will ensure that the Governing Body is kept up-to-date with the actions and initiatives which are relevant to the subject. Action plans are provided to the governors each year and the governors meet with subject leaders annually. Governors provide reports linked to their visits and the School Improvement Priorities to the standards and safeguarding committee.