

St. Paul's CE Primary School



English - Writing Overview

"Write your first draft with your heart. Rewrite with your head."

Mike Rich

English Rationale

At St. Paul's CE Primary School, it is our intent for English to be promoted as a discrete subject in its own right, but first and foremost, for it to be respected as a structural underpinning of the entire curriculum. In order to ready children for the next stage of their education, as well as their future lives, we aim to develop each individual into an imaginative communicator. They will be well-equipped with the basic reading, writing and oracy skills they need to articulate themselves through life's journey; key in this is the skills, knowledge, understanding and application of English in all its forms. The English curriculum at St Paul's is designed to promote and instil a love for reading, writing and high-quality literature into pupils of all ages. English is embedded within lessons across the curriculum and we strive to achieve a high level of English for every individual, regardless of their background; it is our aim to ensure that every child becomes a fluent reader, capable writer and confident speaker by the time they leave St Paul's CE Primary School.

Writing - Intent

Through our English curriculum, we intend for every child to become confident writers by developing a love of language, its origins and the written word. Regular, specific vocabulary lessons addressing Tier 2 vocabulary are designed to address gaps in pupil's knowledge and skills due to social disadvantage and life experiences. We want to instil in our children a thirst for imagination through a curriculum designed upon a text-based approach, sequencing learning around carefully selected high-quality age-appropriate texts. In life, reading and writing go hand-in-hand and this approach to English lessons allows children to appreciate the link between these two forms of English. At St Paul's CE, we also intend to build children's resilience and perseverance by careful reflection and editing; we want to create writers who are both able to flourish in their writing yet reflect carefully on their outcomes. In doing so, children will be able to re-read, edit and improve their outcomes and confidently use the essential skills of grammar, punctuation and spelling to help them achieve this.

Writing - Implementation

At St. Paul's CE, we use the CLPE's 'Power of Reading' strategy to form the basis of our English lessons, ensuring that high-quality texts are at the centre of what we do. We feel that a text-based approach to the English curriculum provides all children, regardless of their life experiences, with a common, meaningful, real purpose for writing, allowing their imaginations to be ignited and their creativity to flourish. It allows children to recognise the role reading plays in developing writers and, by analysing the work of professional authors and their processes, it allows them to develop the craft of writing. This approach allows children to become immersed in reading and writing, using it as a stimulus to embark on 'life's great adventure'.

Through text-based, whole-class teaching, teachers plan to provide opportunities for phonics, word reading, grammar, punctuation, spelling and vocabulary to be embedded in context. In addition to the creative teaching approaches from the 'Power of Reading' which help to build imagination and give time for oral rehearsal, teachers can utilise strategies from 'Talk 4 Writing', such as 'boxing-up', in conjunction with CLPE approaches. The combination of these will help to build children's skills in imitating language and adopting high quality language in their speaking and listening.

The aims of the National Curriculum are carefully considered at the planning stage and this is supported by a clear skills and knowledge progression which also provides an assessment framework for writing. This ensures that skills and knowledge are built on year-by-year and sequenced appropriately to maximise learning for all children. To facilitate planning, long term planning of writing genres has been developed for all year groups to ensure for consistent and precise coverage of the four main domains of text types: writing to entertain; writing to inform; writing to persuade and writing to discuss (Michael Tidd). Within the LTP there are opportunities for children to be taught discrete units of work on a particular genre, allowing them to analyse high quality examples, identify features, understand the writing structure, edit and re-draft, before applying this in context within a Power of Reading unit. Planning for writing must:

- create a learning journey and a build-up of skills to a specific outcome
- allow children to master the skills of different text types and genre through the rapid building of the skills required to shape them
- incorporate daily writing through a combination of shared, guided, modelled, paired and independent writing.

- include particular writing skills which are modelled to the children for them to rehearse and improve upon before writing independently.
- demonstrate the importance of drafting, editing and improving as part of the writing process.
- ensure editing and improvement lessons are planned for with a specific focus and learning intention - editing must be carefully modelled by class teachers so that children master the skill of self-review.

The aim of the above is to develop children's ability to produce well-structured, detailed writing in which the meaning is clear and which engages the interest of the audience. To enhance this, teachers clearly model writing skills and document the learning journey through consistent working walls. In addition, teachers plan and deliver lessons that cater for the needs of all pupils through careful scaffolding, vocabulary planning and precise questioning, including Chris Quigley's idea of 'B.A.D.' questioning.

A note on texts types:

- It is important that teachers understand how and what to teach for particular text types.
- The quality of teaching and learning must be high to ensure that the children are producing quality outcomes (what does a 'good one' look like?).
- Teachers must consider how to build skills to build texts – e.g. writing quality introductions, linking sections / paragraphs of writing, including conclusions, structuring arguments that are clearly backed up by detail or evidence.
- Planning should start with an outcome first and then work backwards through the skills required to produce the outcome (over a sequence of linked lessons).
- Prior to planning a unit of work, class teachers must have read the text under study to inform planning decisions.
- Planning should be undertaken alongside the text and with reference to the CLPE Power of Reading planning overviews.

Writing - Impact

Writing within the English curriculum is well thought out and planned to demonstrate progression. The impact of this is measured and this information will be monitored by the English Writing Subject Leader; the summative data inputted termly on the MIS (Arbor) is used to ensure teaching is targeted and appropriate for each pupil, class and year group as well as to feedback on progress to SLT and stakeholders.

Impact is measured in a number of ways:

- Independent writing assessments (at least 2 per half term in English) completed in children's 'Red Hot Writing' books. These books will not be marked in order for children to be able to return to a piece of writing at a later date and improve it, but each piece will be assessed using a skills progression assessment grid. These will be kept in the independent writing folder in each class.
- Extended cross-curricular writing should take place each half term (at least one in science and one in geography or history). These teaching for these pieces of work should focus on the objectives of the subject involved, not the writing process, in order for it to be considered as an opportunity for independent application of English skills.

- Children will have weekly spelling tests as well as grammar and spelling assessments each term to track children's attainment and progress.
- Looking at children's books through both formal and informal monitoring.
- Learning walks involving looking at working walls and lesson observations.
- The pupil's voice about their learning.
- Analysis of writing data across the school.

The impact on our children is clear: progress, sustained learning and transferable skills. With the implementation of the writing journey being well established and taught thoroughly across the key stages, children will become confident writers. By the end of Key Stage 1, children will have an understanding of how reading and writing are so intrinsically linked and they will be familiar with the key components of the basic written genres. By the time they are in Upper Key Stage 2, a whole range of genres will be familiar to them enabling the teaching to focus on creativity, writer's craft, sustained writing and manipulation of grammar and punctuation skills. As all aspects of English are an integral part of the curriculum, cross-curricular writing standards will also be good with skills taught in English lessons being transferred to other subjects. This will show consolidation of skills and a deeper understanding of how and when to use specific vocabulary, grammar and punctuation.