

Writing

Intent

At Bacton Primary School, writing is a crucial part of our curriculum. All children from Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 6 are provided with many opportunities to develop and apply their writing skills across the curriculum. We aim to enable our pupils to consider themselves as 'writers', to encourage the confidence and motivation to want to write and to have sufficient control over the mechanics of writing to allow for skilful development of the writing process.

Our intention is for pupils to be able to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. To be able to do this effectively, pupils will focus on developing effective transcription and effective composition. They will also develop an awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. We also intend for pupils to leave school being able to use fluent, legible and speedy handwriting.

Aims (from the National Curriculum 2014)

The programmes of study for writing at key stages 1 and 2 are constructed similarly to those for reading:

- transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing)

It is essential that teaching develops pupils' competence in these two dimensions. In addition, pupils should be taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. These aspects of writing have been incorporated into the programmes of study for composition. Writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription: that is, on spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words. Effective composition involves articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting.

Implementation

Early writing is taught through early mark making and Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised where they are taught letter formations using mnemonics. Writing begins with forming letter shapes, then writing CVC words, then onto short captions and sentences using the sounds and tricky words they have been taught.

We also encourage children to explore vocabulary and use mark making through the use of carefully selected texts. Children in EYFS draw pictures around these stories which then develop into labels, captions and sentences as the year progresses. Children are also encouraged to write independently in continuous provision where they have access to sound mats and other resources to support.

In Years 1 to Year 6, we use a selection of carefully considered texts as the vehicle for teaching writing. This is to ensure our children are exposed to a rich, diverse and inclusive range of literature. Progression of skills is planned and monitored across all cohorts.

Writing units are taught as 'blocks' with the first week of each block focusing on the skills needed to produce a piece of writing in that genre. In the second week children put those skills into practise and produce an independent piece of writing based on the model. Teachers assess this piece of

writing to identify the areas that their children will need to be taught specifically going forward. This ensures that the unit is always adapted for the needs of the current children, which is especially important in mixed year classes. Writing genres are revisited each year so that children have the opportunity to recap the knowledge and skills and then embed them more securely.

Teachers use assessment grids to assess each independent write. Cross year group (and Trust schools) moderations are planned throughout the year so teachers have the opportunity to discuss their children and their writing with other teachers. We build on the Little Wandle teaching of spelling by using EdShed in Years 1 – 6. This links in with the writing units once a week so that children are applying their spelling knowledge to independent writing. Children who still need phonic support have access to our sound mats which match our phonics programme. This ensures there is a consistency of resources and children are familiar with what is available to them throughout the school.

Grammar is taught through the modelled text, but where any gaps or difficulties present themselves, they will also be taught discretely. There is an expectation that all teachers' use of grammar is accurate. To ensure progression in grammar skills, all teachers have been given a progression of grammar document to support their planning and subject knowledge. Any areas of weakness that are identified as a result of an independent write, are taught as part of the next appropriate block. Again, teachers are expected to track back to previous year's objectives, if this is appropriate. We raise the profile of writing in Foundation Subjects so that the writing is to an equally high standard.

Impact

The culture at Bacton Primary School is one of continually using what we know in order to move on children's learning. This formative assessment happens all the time and may not necessarily be recorded. Teachers and other adults will use the information gathered through formative assessment to address gaps and to provide additional challenge for children as required and appropriate. This is most effective when done immediately and at the point of learning. More formal summative assessments, 'independent writing', take place at the end of each block to identify progress and attainment as well as gaps in learning.

Successful Teaching, Learning and Assessment

- Teachers and other staff have a secure understanding of the age group they are working with and have relevant subject knowledge that is detailed and communicated well to pupils
- Assessment information is used to plan appropriate teaching and learning strategies, including to identify pupils who are falling behind in their learning, who need additional support, or challenging, enabling all pupils to make good progress and achieve well.
- Work is differentiated, demanding and challenging enough for all pupils.
- The contribution of support staff has a significant positive impact on children's progress.
- Children demonstrate the characteristics of effective learning and positive learning behaviours.
- Well-being and involvement in learning are high.
- Progress over time is very good and in line with the milestones set out in the Writing Progression document.