

# Writing Policy

## Meir Heath Academy



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‘If you wish to be a writer, write.’ **Epictetus**

‘The hard part is getting to the top of page one.’ **Tom Stoppard**

‘You’re not going to be a writer someday. You’re a writer today.’ **Jack Heffron**

‘What you write becomes who you are... So make sure you love what you write!’ **JK Rowling**

## **Aims**

At Meir Heath Academy, we have a number of specific writing aims:

- To ensure progression of writing skills across the school.
- Provide meaningful writing experiences using the contexts inspired by quality core texts and the IPC themes.
- Inspire pupils to write through exciting shared experiences.
- Model high standard writing to secure high expectations and inspire writers
- . Ensure children are taught and recognise the range of social functions that writing can perform e.g. persuade, instruct, inform, and entertain.
- Develop a clear understanding of the structure and language features associated with different genres of writing.
- Enable children to demonstrate the ability to choose the appropriate form and content to suit the purpose and audience.

## **Teaching and Learning**

- High quality texts are used to challenge, enthuse and engage children.
- Core texts, where possible, link to topic themes to enhance learning.
- There is a clear progression in the teaching of writing which includes the familiarisation of the text type through reading, the identification of structure and language features, modelled writing, shared writing, supported composition, guided writing and regular, independent opportunities.
- Progression of teaching writing includes exploring features, planning, drafting, assessing and editing.
- A form of modelled or shared and guided writing should take place in every session.
- Use topic themes to provide meaningful writing experiences through contexts
- Use of drama in English sessions is used within lessons to improve speaking and listening skills and build confidence and self-esteem, as well as a stimulus for further writing.

## **Modelled Writing**

The teacher talks aloud the thought processes as a writer. They have complete control over the writing and make explicit the structure, language features, spelling and punctuation of the text type as appropriate. Examples of each text type are to be found on the children's iPads, as well as on working walls.

## **Shared Writing**

This is a collaborative approach; pupils contribute their ideas and thoughts for the teacher to select the most appropriate. The teacher needs to give reasons for the choices made, often demonstrating how initial ideas can be 'uplevelled' (improved).

## **Guided Writing**

Pupils are grouped by writing ability according to their levels and/or target needs. The teacher works with each group in rotation during the week so that every child partakes in guided writing at least once per week. The task is carefully selected to provide an appropriate level of challenge and will focus on a particular aspect of the writing process as opposed to writing a complete piece. Tasks may include the processes of planning, drafting and editing pieces of writing. Teachers choose a target for each group to work on based on an assessment of their individual needs and previous writing. TAs are also expected to take guided writing groups when appropriate.

## **Independent Writing**

All children are given opportunities to apply their understanding of the text type in their own writing. This is vitally important if children are to develop their skills as writers within different genres

## **Practising and applying grammar and punctuation skills**

Using the national curriculum programme of study, age appropriate sentence and punctuation skills will be taught daily and, wherever possible, will be in context with the reading or topic material in use.

## **Spelling**

Children in EYFS and Key Stage One learn to spell through daily. From Year One, a daily spelling program is followed. This is based on proven strategies of teacher modelling followed by partner work, to embed learning. The programme covers all the word structures and spelling requirements for Years 1 to 6.

## **Handwriting**

The whole school follows the cursive handwriting scheme. Pupils are encouraged to develop a neat, legible, speedy handwriting style using continuous cursive letters that leads to producing letters and words automatically in independent writing. Handwriting is a cross-curriculum task and is taken into consideration during all lessons. In Foundation Stage, handwriting is addressed during daily phonics sessions and pupils also have one focused handwriting session each week.

## **Provision**

### **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS): Communication, language and English**

Each classroom has a well organised writing area that includes a variety of different resources for mark making and writing such as large sheets of paper, coloured paper, notebooks, diaries, postcards, clipboards, whiteboards, pens, pencils, high-frequency word cards, alphabet cards, interactive displays, messages and examples of children's writing. These resources should all be available for the children to use independently.

- . • The outside area also provides opportunities for reading, writing and role-play
- . • Activities to develop children's fine and gross motor skills are provided e.g. building wrist strength by twirling ribbon sticks, practising writing patterns with big brushes and water, making letters in the sand
- . • Children are able to access an iPad which has suitable reading and writing software in use.

- The interactive whiteboard is accessible to the children.
- Inviting book corners have a good variety of quality books - hard cover, soft cover, fiction, non-fiction and poetry.
- Displays celebrate children's achievements and support children's future learning, being interactive where appropriate. They also include typed and handwritten text and captions from adults and children.
- In the EYFS there must be a daily whole class phonics session and a regular literacy based session. These should be supported by linked independent and adult directed activities. These are to be clearly described on planning with the use of learning intentions and key questions, along with details of differentiation. Core texts should be used and links to the learning theme made where possible
- Children each have an English workbook in which directed activities are recorded.
  - Upper juniors have magpie books/sections in which they can capture new vocabulary for impact.

## **Planning**

The Foundation Stage uses the EYFS Framework to inform planning. Each class plans around a core text that should be linked to the current theme for learning; where possible, mark making and writing experiences are linked to these learning themes. Within the EYFS the planning for self-initiated learning takes place on a daily basis as it is dependent on and informed by the children's interests and progress. Whole class teaching and small group adult directed activities (adult led and independent) should be planned by the Friday previous to the week the plan is for. The EYFS and Key Stage One follow the Ruth Miskin Read Write Inc Phonic Scheme and this should be used where necessary in Key Stage Two. Both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 follow the schools core text curriculum when planning literacy. Texts are identified across KS1 and KS2 that are high quality and link to IPC themes. The core text allows daily reading as well as providing a meaningful context for writing. Each week is usually themed around writing a particular text type. Across each week, children are given opportunities to explore features and examples, writing sections or versions of a text before planning, drafting and editing their own written text.

Teachers are required to set high expectations during each English session to ensure children are being stretched. This means that children are required to write at length on a regular basis and for an extended period at least once a week. If a shorter writing activity is planned, the teacher will provide an extension activity. The extension should provide a learning experience that builds on learning and targets progress to the next level, it may be a form of self

or peer assessment. Planning should show where each adult is placed within the class. Learning Intentions are included on all planning and are shared with the class. Every lesson has at least two success criteria; these are either shared with the pupils or created with the pupils depending on age and ability. Learning intentions and success criteria are displayed on pupils work; they are printed and children have a space to include their next step from the previous day's feedback. The success criteria are taken from the Year Group Overviews to target children's learning and move them on. The success criteria are the skills children need to demonstrate to achieve the Learning Intention.

### **Assessment, Monitoring and Moderation**

Children in the EYFS are assessed on an ongoing basis through observation, 1:1 interaction, small group activities and whole class teaching. Parents are strongly encouraged to contribute to these assessments. Baseline assessments of the children will take place during the first three weeks of the autumn term, these will be used to inform planning and the organisation of interventions and activities designed to support the children's individual needs. Each child will have a Development Matters Profile in which their progress will be recorded. Their attainment will be entered onto the School Information Management System (SIMS) termly. Moderation of observations and teachers judgements will take place internally along with externally between local schools.

In Key Stage One and Key Stage Two the grades for each child are put on DCPRO at the end of each half term and teachers report to the SLT the writing grade of every child in the class. Children from Year 1 to 6 are assessed against the new curriculum objectives for each year group. Teachers are expected to update excel sheets for their year groups termly, stating if the child has achieved an objective in Autumn, Spring or Summer. These will then indicate if a child is emerging, at the expected level or at greater depth- school numbering system and St .Bart's MAT systems run concurrently. These are then used to input data on DC PRO. Half-termly progress meetings identify strategies addressing any concerns. On a weekly basis, teachers evaluate the progress of PPG children in order to track their progress and highlight any concerns.

Strategic leaders and SLT moderate writing on a half termly basis, ensuring the whole school is moderated across a half term. Moderation for the following half term responds to the school needs identified at the end of the previous half term. All English work is to be marked so that imminent guided groups are up to date, highlighting against the SC and a number/statement explaining what children need to do to improve next time. See marking policy for further clarification of the expectations of marking within English.

## **Equal opportunities and Special needs**

All children must have the opportunity and the encouragement to reach their full potential regardless of race, creed or sex. Many intervention groups operate in year groups- see whole school intervention documents. Other interventions are put in place where needed, e.g. tuition and EAL or SEN support.

## **Resources**

High quality texts and resources are continually purchased to enable meaningful writing experiences. Resources for story writing etc are stored in appropriate classrooms. Planning guidance documents are stored in each year group as well as the Staff Shared Area on the school network. These can be found in the Staff drive within the literacy folder or through the literacy link within all programs.

## **Use of ICT**

ICT is used to support and enhance children's learning on a regular basis. There are a range of high quality resources available that should be used regularly to support and develop children as writers, these include: From May, 2021, iPads in each classroom (Y1 to Y6) provide opportunities for children to edit, redraft and present their writing in a variety of ways. Supporting the school's targets regarding metacognition and the promotion of each pupil's self-awareness of learning, iPads are also excellent tools for shaping, organising and improving many aspects of the writing process.

## **Homework**

English will be given as part of the general homework policy. This will generally be reinforcement of class based work, usually including spelling practice.