



Writing Policy

'Hand in hand together with faith we will strive to achieve all things'

'I am able to do all things through him (Jesus) who strengthens me'

Philippians 4:13

"For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope."

Romans 15:4

Rationale

At Bilston Church of England Primary School, we believe that teaching children to understand the power of writing is an important part of our job as practitioners. We believe that if we equip the children with the correct writing tools, they will be able to use them effectively within a literate world.

As practitioners, we are responsible for providing children in Bilston CE Primary School with a stimulating writing environment in which we offer encouragement and good quality modelling of writing. We aim to have clear expectations of writing and to communicate these targets to the children. We aim to have high expectations of the finished writing product and to encourage the children to maintain the same standards at all times.

Aims and Objectives

We believe that a **successful** writing classroom should include:

- Clear expectations, targets and regular observation and assessment of progress towards the targets.
- A stimulating writing environment with
 - displayed and celebrated examples of children's own writing
 - Opportunities for cross-curricular writing.
- All adults (not just teachers) as role models who use writing explicitly in the classroom for a variety of purposes and demonstrate on a regular basis what they are doing.
- A wide experience of reading as the primary source of knowledge about how written language looks and sounds. The systematic, regular and direct teaching of phonics, spelling and grammar. Rich oral experience of Speaking and Listening opportunities and Drama as a preparation for writing.
- Regular Shared and Guided Writing sessions in order to teach and refine the skills of text composition. Opportunities for supported and independent writing linked to and developed from Shared Writing.

It is our aim therefore, to provide these important factors within our classrooms in order to provide a supportive and stimulating writing environment.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing body should, in cooperation with the head teacher, determine the school's general policy and approach to writing at Bilston Church of England Primary School.

The English coordinator should advise the Headteacher, staff and Governors of the current and changing practice in writing at Bilston Church of England Primary School and keep them up to date with new initiatives put forward by the Government and LEA.

The Teaching Staff should in cooperation with the Head teacher and English coordinator, plan and deliver effective writing lessons which reflect the school policy.

The Inclusion Manager should, in cooperation with the Head teacher, English Coordinator and teaching staff provide support and additional writing resources for children with Special Educational Needs.

Practice

DEVELOPING WRITING

- In order to be an effective and successful writer, we need to:
 - Teach children to perceive the power of writing and equip them to use it well.
 - Teach children to enjoy writing and to be competent, confident and not to hesitate in putting their ideas on paper.
 - Teach children to recognise the need to adapt their writing to suit a range of audiences and purposes.
 - Teach the children the most appropriate form of writing for a given task.
 - Teach children to use spelling and grammar accurately and with confidence.
 - Teach children a fluent and legible handwriting style in which to write.
 - Opportunities to listen to quality English throughout the school day.

The Teaching of Writing

In Bilston Church of England Primary School, we follow the New National Curriculum for teaching and teach the specific objectives which are the most appropriate to our children's needs. In general, we aim to consolidate three key features of writing which are particularly important:

Transcription

- To be able to present neatly
- To spell correctly
- To punctuate accurately.

Composition

- To write with a purpose.
- To use imaginative description.
- To organise writing appropriately.

- To use paragraphs.

Analyse and Present

- To analyse writing.
- To present writing.

Word Choice and Modification

In KS1, children are taught to select words and phrases that add precision to their writing. This is achieved by choosing and discussing rich vocabulary from the books read and shared.

In KS2, children are taught and encouraged to enhance their meaning through the choice of words and through modifying nouns and verbs to add focus, and variety for the reader. We are aware that some children pick up these features easily but for the majority, the nature of different writing texts need to be investigated and taught.

WRITING ROUTINES IN BILSTON CE PRIMARY

Planning English

Each teacher is responsible for ensuring that the New National Curriculum is used within the classroom. This document is the **Long Term** plan for English and gives specific ideas of what to teach in each year group. Each teacher is responsible for assessing the English set and teaching the objectives relevant to the needs of the children.

It is important that teachers plan over a block of work, to ensure the development of the reading and writing process.

There are also Medium Term plans that inform staff of the objectives and genre that need to be taught related to the New National Curriculum. Opportunities for Cross Curricular Links are also expected to be planned for as part of the English curriculum. By using the links, children are able to broaden and enhance their command of English by having different contexts in which to develop their writing.

The Short term plans (weekly plans) explain how we teach the objectives from the New National Curriculum.

On the Short Term plan, several important features are identified. For example, the unit, the objective for each lesson is identified on the plan and should show a progression of skills from day to day. There should be regular teaching of Shared Reading and Shared Writing. Spelling, punctuation and Grammar are also identified on the planning.

The Independent section is differentiated and explains the learning objectives and what the children will be doing.

In the Guided Writing section, teachers are encouraged to identify a specific group and what teaching method they will employ-i.e. teacher-demonstrating/teacher scribing/supported composition.

The plenary is also written down which may be of various types. The plenary could also be as mini pit stops throughout the lesson.

There is an evaluation and next steps section to write down any issues concerned.

Shared, Independent and Guided Writing.

As part of a English unit in any Year group, there will be opportunities for Shared, Independent and Guided Writing. At Bilston CE Primary, we firmly believe that children are inspired to write by firstly engaging in good quality texts, which act as a model for what the children will be asked to write later in the unit.

Shared Writing.

Shared writing can be observed in all classrooms at the appropriate times. We believe that shared writing enables us as teachers to work with the whole class, to model, explore and discuss the choices writers make at the point of writing. It is also invaluable for making links between reading and writing by investigating how an author has used language to achieve a particular effect. During Shared Writing we also scaffold aspects of writing-e.g. - spelling and concentrate children's attention on how to tackle more difficult words. Shared Writing is invaluable for allowing the opportunity to teach different aspects of the Writing Process. In all KS1 and KS2 classrooms, teachers model how to plan, draft, edit and proofread writing.

As part of our Learning process, we believe that Shared Writing should be as interactive and as fun as possible. Therefore, we tend to use one or a combination of the following teaching techniques:

- Teacher Demonstration - we demonstrate how to write a text or a particular feature of that text.
- Teacher Scribing- the pupils offer their contributions building upon the teacher's demonstration.
- Supported Composition- Children use white boards or books to write in pairs or individually a limited amount of the text to ensure understanding.
- By using an appropriate combination of these techniques, it ensures that the children are fully engaged in the Teaching of Writing process.

Independent Writing.

It is our aim in Bilston CE Primary to make the flow from Shared Writing to Independent Writing as smooth as possible. By engaging in Shared Writing first, every child in the class has been 'warmed up' and is ready to work. There should be no occasions where children are given books or paper and asked to write without any Shared Reading or Writing to support them. (The exception to this may be if the writing is part of SATS revision)

Independent writing tasks can take many forms but must flow from Shared Writing and take the child on to the next step of becoming an independent writer.

In the 'independent' part of the lesson, children will also have opportunities to work in pairs and groups on the writing process. We believe this is an important way of sharing ideas and improving the quality of what the children produce.

Guided Writing

It is our aim in Bilston CE Primary to devote Guided Writing time to each group in the class when appropriate. For example, during a Shared Writing lesson, the teacher will work with a different group each day. The group and the objective for Guided Writing are identified on the Short Term plan but Guided Writing will mainly cover the following teaching points:

- To support children in planning and drafting their own work.
- To revise and edit work in progress
- To provide differentiated support for particular groups.

It is our aim to devote two-thirds of the 'Whole class work' to Shared Reading and Writing and one-third to Word/Sentence level or visa-versa depending on which is the most appropriate for the particular unit being taught.

Big Write.

It is our aim at Bilston CE Primary to allow an extended or sustained writing time each week. Therefore a Big Write lesson is taught in every class each week. With Reception having an emphasis on Big Talk.

Big Write is divided into two sessions;

- Session 1 is used for planning, drafting, modelling and developing knowledge and skills in vocabulary, connectives, openers and punctuation (V.C.O.P)
- Session 2 the children explore a variety of writing styles and genres. All from previously taught units of work.

Speaking and Listening

Speaking and Listening is a vital step in enhancing children's writing. Children are given the opportunity to use a variety of techniques such as, response partners, role play, hot seating and drama. In this way children can develop their ideas and language skills and therefore improve their writing.

Cross-Curricular Links.

The staff work hard to find cross-curricular links so that the writing skills learnt in English can be used appropriately in other subjects. For example, non-chronological reports are taught in English which is particularly useful in Science when they have to write a report about a particular creature's habitat. Each subject will maintain its integrity however with for example, History skills being taught in History and English skills being taught in English. As Writing skills are so important in many other subjects however, we aim to make the most of cross-curricular links where appropriate.

The Teaching of Grammar.

As a staff, we firmly believe that grammar is the means to an end and not an end in itself and must therefore, be strongly embedded in the teaching of shared reading and writing at both Key Stages. However, we ensure that the objectives of these lessons are explicitly on grammatical features. In general, the teaching of writing follows a similar pattern:

Shared Reading

Sentence level teaching

Shared Writing

Guided Writing

Independent Writing

Each week there is also a planned session with the learning objective being linked to Grammar and Punctuation.

In this sense, the children are given the opportunity to investigate the effects of vocabulary and grammatical choices within the context of purposeful reading and well chosen texts. Children are given the experience of exploring written texts in order to identify some important grammatical choices writers have made to achieve their purpose- e.g. choice of verbs, use of pronouns, sentence structure. We try to make investigations as active as possible so that children are more likely to remember the features and apply them to their own writing. Children are not expected to write however, unless the teacher has demonstrated the type of writing first.

The Teaching of Spelling.

The teaching of spelling has been given considerable thought in Bilston CE Primary School as it is an important aspect of writing. The fundamental principles and the practice of teaching spelling in this school is written in a separate Spelling Policy but the main concern in writing is that spelling must not be allowed to dominate our responses to children's writing. Very good efforts at writing can often be dismissed because of basic spelling errors and this can damage a child's perception of him/herself as writers. We try to have a more positive and interactive approach to spelling that enables children to explore spelling patterns and investigate how words are constructed. When drafting writing, children are encouraged to 'have a go' at unfamiliar spellings in order to continue the 'creative flow'. Then during the editing and proof-reading stage, children can use the different spelling strategies explained in the policy to check their spellings. Teachers ensure that they cover the relevant Word level objectives concerning spelling within the English lesson. Teachers follow a whole school scheme of work for Grammar and Punctuation. The units planned are linked to National Curriculum and Strategy expectations.

The Use of ICT.

As a school, we are fully committed to developing the use of ICT in English lessons, particularly in the teaching of writing. The use of the Interactive whiteboard and multimedia resources are a valuable tool in stimulating interest in writing. Having laptops available for children to use can enhance the writing process at all stages. The Internet is also used for research purposes where appropriate.

As a staff, we are dedicated to keeping up to date with the latest changes and advancements. The English coordinators and ICT coordinator will ensure that staff are given training on the teaching of English using ICT where appropriate.

MARKING AND ASSESSMENT OF WRITING.

Responses to Writing within the Lesson.

Within the English lesson, it is important that we use good quality texts when doing Shared Reading so that children are introduced to well-established and respected authors. In the Shared Writing aspect of the English lesson, teachers ensure that they model good forms of writing for the children to learn from. Throughout these sessions, the teachers are constantly assessing the children's reactions to the texts and giving feedback on children's responses and questions. Within Guided Writing sessions, teachers are again giving relevant feedback to the children. These observations are used for STAT Sheffield. The plenary also provides an opportunity for assessment when we share and reflect on the writing achieved.

Teacher's stamps reflect the learning objective indicating either   and identify a positive comment and a 'next steps'  to help improve the child's writing skills.

Every child has a copy of the appropriate STAT Sheffield assessment- English books have ARE for Reading, Writing and SPAG in the front as I can statements. Big Write books have ARE moderation sheets, which are marked after every big write, building a bank of evidence to support the assessment for writing.

Homework

The specific guidelines for the setting of English homework is written in the Homework Policy. The English homework set is usually relevant to the work that has been undertaken in class for that week or may be preparation for the work planned for the week after. Spelling homework is also given and again will be relevant to the investigations in class.

Special Educational Needs/ EAL/ Speech & Language/G&T

In each class, it is standard practise that teachers will differentiate work to suit the ability of the class. English groups are often ability set and the Guided Writing and Guided Reading sessions are planned to each group's ability.

Writing targets set after each assessment are specific to the child and therefore at their ability.

Assessments are very carefully analysed in order to identify children that may be either struggling or excelling in Writing and the teacher is made aware of those children so that they can be accommodated within the English lesson.