



Bishop Bridgeman C.E. Primary School

Part of Archbishop Temple Multi Academy Trust

We Work, We Play, We Care, We Pray

“Love God, Love Yourself, Love Your Neighbour” Luke 10:27

WRITING CURRICULUM POLICY

At Bishop Bridgeman, we give our children the very best. Through a supportive and purposeful curriculum linked with national curriculum objectives, we strive to ensure that all our pupils are able to succeed and find their unique talents and strengths. Our staff are committed to developing a love of learning, whilst developing the skills and values to support the all-round development of every pupil. Bishop Bridgeman C of E Primary School is a special place where we work, we play, we care and we pray.

RATIONALE

It is our intention, when teaching the English writing curriculum, that our pupils develop a positive attitude towards writing and acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding to become lifelong learners. We aim to immerse pupils in quality texts to provide meaningful contexts and purposes for writing as well as allowing pupils to build a wide and rich vocabulary.

English is a core subject of the national curriculum and a second language for many of our pupils. We understand that English is a prerequisite for educational and social progress, as it underpins the work undertaken in all other areas of the curriculum. The acquisition of language skills is of the utmost importance therefore, the teaching of all aspects of English is given a high priority within our school.

Pupils at Bishop Bridgeman Primary School Will Leave Year 6:

- writing with confidence, clarity and imagination using a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct;
- with an interest in words and their meanings; developing a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms;
- understanding a range genres and media types;
- able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the situation;
- having a suitable technical vocabulary to articulate their responses and discuss their writing;
- writing clearly and accurately, applying their knowledge of phonics and spellings.

Statutory Requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum English Document (2013) and in the Communication and Language and Literacy sections of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2012).

The new English programme of study (2014) is based on 4 areas:

- Spoken language
- Reading – word reading, comprehension
- Writing – transcription, spelling, handwriting, composition
- Spelling, vocabulary, grammar and punctuation

TEACHING AND LEARNING

INTENT

Leaders have carefully planned and sequenced the curriculum so that there are clear end points for what pupils will know and be able to do at key points. There is daily discrete teaching of English where the skills of writing are taught in a logical progression, systematically and explicitly enough for all pupils to acquire the intended knowledge and skills. For vulnerable pupils, including those with special education needs, the curriculum has been adapted to ensure the curriculum contains the content that leaders have identified as most useful.

For those pupils who are achieving below age-related expectations, teachers support pupils in addressing gaps in learning so that they are not disadvantaged. The Birmingham Skills Toolkit is used to assess and provide specific steps in learning appropriate for children's stage of development. Teachers provide children with differentiated activities which are clear and support children in securing the knowledge and skills that teachers have identified as most useful. Additional adults are deployed effectively to support pupils' progress and the teacher continually monitors all pupils to ensure they achieve the best possible outcomes.

By constructing an ambitious curriculum that gives pupils the cultural capital needed to succeed in life, leaders strive to address issues of social disadvantage. 'Social justice requires that we provide an education which gives the less privileged access to the knowledge they need to succeed.' Ofsted 2018.

IMPLEMENTATION

Strategies we use to develop writing skills:

- Both transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition skills (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing) are explicitly taught.
- Transcription and composition skills are also applied and developed in writing for curriculum areas.
- Children have frequent opportunities to read aloud their written work for an audience.
- Throughout the teaching of writing, links are made to reading.
- Pupils are taught how to plan, edit and redraft their writing throughout each unit of work studied.
- Pupils are taught effective composition by forming, articulating and communicating ideas, before 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.
- Reciprocal units of writing are used to provide a context and model of different writing genres.
- Read, Write, Perform strategies are used to allow pupils to make links between texts, use grammar, vocabulary and punctuation creatively in order to bring their work to life.
- Weekly grammar sessions provide children with the basic skills they need to become fluent in writing.
- Children are provided with diverse and inclusive texts which allow them to 'Love God, Love themselves and their neighbours'.

Teachers have a strong subject knowledge and are kept up to date through the investment in continued professional development and their own personal reading.

The intent for writing has been logically and carefully sequenced and teachers utilise this when planning writing. Within units of English work, learning builds up towards clear identified end points so that pupils can apply new learning to a piece of work. The sequence of learning supports and scaffolds pupils to gain the necessary knowledge to fluently apply this in their writing. Leaders have prioritised the teaching of grammar as this is a typical gap in children's knowledge and as such the teaching of grammar is contextualised so that pupils understand it within the context of their learning.

Developing Writing Skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription: that is, spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the morphology and orthography of words. This understanding begins in EYFS through daily, high quality phonics lessons.

In the Foundation Stage, children are encouraged to attempt their own emergent writing and their efforts are valued and celebrated. As their phonic knowledge increases, so does their ability to write independently. At the same time, their knowledge of key words is supported through reading and writing activities, including shared reading and writing. A wide variety of opportunities are provided for children to engage in writing activities and independently apply their phonic skills through role play, creative activities, computing and the outdoor area.

Developing Writing Skills in Key Stages 1 and 2

Modelled Writing

This is used in English lessons. During this style of teaching, the teacher thinks aloud while writing and models strategies in front of the children, communicating the strategies being used. Teachers may model writing skills such as punctuation, rehearsing, proofreading, editing, word selection, sentence construction and paragraphing.

Shared Writing

This can take place in any curriculum lesson but most frequently during English lessons. This strategy has far greater input from the children than modelled writing. The teacher invites contributions from the children and teaches writing skills such as rehearsal, proofreading and editing, and production of a final draft. Teachers may also demonstrate how to create or use success criteria to self or peer assess.

Talk for Writing

Across EYFS and KS1, we adopt Pie Corbett's Talk for Writing approach to the teaching of narrative and non-fiction writing. Through this strategy, children learn to internalise text structures and widen both their spoken and written vocabulary. This understanding is then used as the basis for their own writing innovations. This strategy also provides a variety of speaking and listening opportunities, crucial to the development of writing. Teachers also plan for talking opportunities through drama, talk partners and group discussion to enable children to verbally rehearse their ideas before writing.

Wrapping Around a Text (Reciprocal Units)

Teachers use high quality texts or resources as a stimulus for writing so that pupils can immerse themselves within a text. Examples include 'The Giant's Necklace' and 'The Bear and the Piano'. Within these units, teachers plan opportunities for pupils to unpick the language features and consider the writer's style and intent so that pupils understand the writing process and can use this as a model for their own work.

Read Write Perform

At Bishop Bridgeman, we have adopted the Read, Write, Perform approach to writing to run alongside the reciprocal units of work. This encourages learners to actively engage with a variety of media to give their writing purpose. This strategy involves providing children with an example text, which exemplifies the final pieces they are aiming to create. The teacher then helps the children to deconstruct this to give them a clearer understanding of the genre itself and the language choices the author has made. Comparative texts are then introduced so that pupils can learn from a range of authors. Once they have written their own versions, children then bring their work to life using a range of technology to turn their work into an engaging form of media. This not only allows pupils to develop their crucial speaking and listening skills, ability to connect to and engage an audience but also develops their digital literacy skills.

Independent Writing

We want children to enjoy writing from an early age. Our ultimate intention is to enable children to independently and effectively communicate in writing for a wide range of audiences. In the EYFS children are encouraged to write independently using their own emergent writing from the time they come into school. Throughout Key Stages 1 and 2, children have the opportunity to write independently, frequently during units of work and in other areas of the curriculum.

Grammar and Spelling

At Bishop Bridgeman, we firmly believe that a sound understanding of grammar will lead to an improved understanding of English and how the written and oral language works. Grammar is taught in Key Stage 1 and 2, in line with the objectives in the new curriculum. We believe that the teaching of grammar should, as far as possible, feed into the writing activity that the children are undertaking and should not be taught in isolation. Punctuation and grammar skills are taught within English lessons; however specific grammar lessons are taught where new skills are introduced. Within these lessons, children are taught the terminology and subject content specified in the national curriculum. Subsequent lessons are then planned for the children to apply their learning.

In EYFS and Key Stage 1, spellings are taught through phonics lessons on a daily basis which are then applied in a weekly spelling test. In Key Stage 2, children are set spellings appropriate to their ability, with a focus on learning and applying spelling rules as identified in the 'spelling shed' spelling programme. This resource builds on the high-quality phonics teaching by supporting children in understanding morphology (word structure), spelling strategies, the orthographic (spelling structure) nature of words, patterns, word origins, common exception words and personal spellings. They then have a weekly test to apply their knowledge. All teachers follow the expectations set by the spelling guidance within the New Curriculum Framework 2014.

Handwriting

At Bishop Bridgeman we follow the 'Nelson Handwriting' scheme. This programme offers clear progression through five developmental stages. It teaches children a fast and fluent handwriting style to help them achieve by joining letters. It is an expectation that all children demonstrate good posture when writing and hold their pencil/pen accordingly. High standards of handwriting are expected across all subjects.

In Early Years, children practise manipulative skills in order to prepare them for writing. They are taught to hold a pencil effectively and form recognisable letters.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, handwriting is taught at least twice a week. During these sessions, teachers should model the formation of letters and letter joins for the children to practise. From Year 2 onwards a joined script is modelled. Our aim is that pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 are writing in pen in a neat, fluent style. By Year 6, children should be experienced in using pens for handwriting and should be developing their own style.

Workbooks in school support pupils with their letter formation. Books in EYFS and KS1 include handwriting lines so that pupils can form letters correctly and teachers can address any issues. Once pupils enter KS2 handwriting lines will only be used for those pupils who still require the scaffold.

Teachers ensure that writing in the classroom and in pupils' books mirrors the agreed style and provides a model for the children to aspire to.

Vocabulary

At Bishop Bridgeman, we understand that the size of a child's vocabulary is a strong predictor of future academic success. Because of this, we put great emphasis on the development of vocabulary in English lessons and across the curriculum.

Teachers do this in two ways: first, through the explicit teaching of new words which are identified on our curriculum at the start of each unit and monitored to ensure children are given a rich breadth of vocabulary. The second way we achieve this is by exposing our children to a rich language environment with opportunities to hear and confidently experiment with new words. Teachers build this environment by consistently modelling the use of ambitious vocabulary themselves and by providing pupils with a wide range of high quality, challenging texts.

Cross Curricular Links

Writing has obvious links to many subjects in school and teachers aim to make the most of those links to create exciting and purposeful writing opportunities. School trips and visitors are an integral part of our creative curriculum and often foster inspiration to write. Children practise and develop their writing skills in other subjects such as science, history or geography and use knowledge from other subjects to inform and inspire writing in English lessons.

The Learning Environment

Bishop Bridgeman is an attractive and stimulating place where displays reflect current and recent learning. Classrooms have clear areas related to topics which are changed, added to and updated as topics progress. Class working walls include examples of high quality texts, examples of shared or modelled writing, Pie Corbett style text maps and useful vocabulary.

Each class has a vocabulary display, which children are encouraged to use and update as new vocabulary is introduced throughout the year. Examples of age related and greater depth standards of writing are also displayed and deconstructed, allowing pupils to see how these standards have been obtained.

Each class has a 'Wordy Wednesday' display, in which a new, ambitious piece of vocabulary is introduced and used in context each week, engaging pupils in language.

Assessment and Monitoring

In the Foundation Stage, the child and the teacher read written work together. The teacher may rewrite the child's attempts underneath as a form of translation. In Key Stages 1 and 2, wherever possible marking takes place with the child so that it is interactive and feedback is immediate. Work is marked against the success criteria following the school marking policy and children are always given the opportunity to review their work and respond to feedback.

From Year 1, children's independent writing is assessed using the 'interim teacher assessment frameworks' (ITAFs) and exemplification material from the STA (Standards and Testing Agency). Teachers use this to update the assessment system (Insight), monitor progress and identify next steps. Children who are identified as not making expected progress will be highlighted for support via an appropriate intervention.

The English subject leaders and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will ensure rigorous assessment and monitoring takes place through regular book scrutiny and moderation of assessed work. They will also ensure that appropriate training opportunities are provided for staff, to meet identified needs.

Long term memory

Knowledge empowers and nourishes children, it belongs to the many, not the few. A knowledge rich curriculum has the power to address issues of social disadvantage and leaders at Bishop Bridgeman have high ambitions so that all pupils can take full advantage of opportunities, responsibilities and experiences in later life.

Learning can be defined as alteration in long term memory, with this being the case leaders have implemented strategies taken from cognitive science to enhance and support pupils in the transfer of new knowledge into their long-term memory.

Teaching staff have drawn on research focussing on cognitive load theory. Teachers understand that pupils' working memory is limited and that new content should be introduced to pupils in small and manageable steps to avoid overloading the working memory.

Research from Oliver Caviglioli has also been considered and leaders utilise strategies of dual coding to support pupils in integrating new knowledge into long term memory. By providing simple images to pupils when new content is introduced, they can use both visual and auditory strategies to process the information, forming a greater link with long term memory. Spaced retrieval is also a strategy employed by teachers to enhance pupils' retrieval and in turn secure knowledge into long term memory. Lessons typically begin with a daily retrieval opportunity and additional retrieval sessions are planned over the year.

Learning is a long-term process and teachers utilise strategies to support pupils in being successful and confident learners. The agreed strategies across school are:

- New content in small, manageable steps
- Images to support new learning
- Spaced retrieval

Marking and Feedback

Leaders at Bishop Bridgeman have implemented a marking and feedback policy that enables teachers to give precise and accurate feedback to support learning. In Key Stages 1 and 2, wherever possible marking takes place with the child so that it is interactive and feedback is immediate. Work is marked against the success criteria (WILF), following the school marking policy and children are always given the opportunity to review their work and respond to feedback. The success criteria (WILF) is highlighted so that children can see what they have achieved and their next steps. By having a greater focus on verbal feedback, pupils are engaged in their learning and are clear on their own achievements.

IMPACT

The teaching of writing at Bishop Bridgeman is progressive and sequenced to meet the needs of our pupils. We ensure that our children develop detailed knowledge and skills across the curriculum and as a result achieve well. Pupils at Bishop Bridgeman achieve well in comparison with national standards and are ready for the next stage of their education. Children have an understanding that writing has a real purpose and are able to communicate their thoughts, ideas and emotions with confidence and fluency to others in a range of genres.

Prepared by: Mrs V. Smith and Mrs S. Rimmer

Reviewed: January 2024

Next review date: January 2025