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APPROVAL BY	STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Writing Policy

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline how writing is taught at Alfred Street Junior School (ASJS) so that all pupils can develop into independent, confident writers.

2. Aims

As stated in the English National Curriculum (2014) [1] it is important that children develop the ability to:

- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in, and for, a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- rehearse sentence and language patterns that they can then draw upon and adapt in their own writing, not only in English, but across the curriculum
- be curious about vocabulary and the meaning of unfamiliar words which will help the children to broaden their own vocabulary and word use
- take ownership of their own ideas in writing and revisit their own writing and that of other writers critically as part as the editing process
- Write confidently in both fiction and non-fiction genres, and apply this skill in all areas of the curriculum

Having researched appropriate schemes to support the teaching of writing, the school has adopted Talk for Writing (T4W) [2] as an effective model for developing and supporting progression in writing. Talk for Writing (as outlined on their website):

“...is powerful because it is based on the principles of how people learn. The movement from imitation to innovation to independent application can be adapted to suit the needs of learners of any stage.”

3. Planning

Units have been set out in a long-term plan and key concepts have been mapped out for each year group.

At the beginning of each unit, a Chapter title page will be stuck into the children’s books outlining the genre/text being used. This will have a place for children to add vocabulary they discover/learn during the unit.

Each unit of work follows a clear structure of imitation and innovation as well as including ‘Cold Writes’ and ‘Hot Writes’.

3.1. Cold Writes

A ‘Cold Write’ is completed at the beginning of each unit - but after the toolkit for the genre has been developed as a class - and informs planning depending on what skills the children need to develop in order to achieve and improve with the genre studied. Alongside a writing prompt the children are provided with a copy of the toolkit. This is used as the assessment tool for teachers to establish individual/group targets that need addressing/teaching. These are stuck into the children’s English books and targets are clearly identified on the toolkit or underneath/alongside the Cold Write if other non-genre specific targets are needed.

3.2. Imitation Phase

The main focus of the imitation stage is for children to become familiar with model texts, which enable the children to explore text features, sentence structure, language patterns and how a specific text-type is composed. Model texts are planned into each unit to provide children with quality examples of the genre. If year groups wish to write their own model text, this will be shared with the English lead beforehand.

The imitation stage may consist of the following activities:

- Storytelling
- Creative hooks
- Developing whole class or individual story/text maps
- ‘Read as a reader’ activities which include vocabulary work and comprehension activities
- Drama
- Read as a writer’ activities during which the structure of the text is explored using the boxing up technique and a Writer’s Toolkit is completed as a task with a pre-agreed focus
- The teaching of grammar, punctuation and spelling conventions where appropriate to the model text
- Short burst writing to practise key skills or sections of a text e.g. writing an introduction.

3.3. Innovation Phase

Children use their in-depth understanding of the model text to write their own version. The following could be included:

- Planning using the boxing up grid completed during the innovation stage
- Writing completed over a series of lessons
- Shared writing completed during a series of lessons is informed by previous learning and writing to enable misconceptions to be addressed quickly
- Frequent opportunities for pupils to revisit their writing and edit at the point of writing

3.4. Hot Write

The ‘Hot Write’ is completed at the end of each unit of writing. The task should be different from the one used for the Cold Write, but the toolkit used for assessment should be the same for comparison. This provides a valuable assessment opportunity and shows the progress children have made over the course of a unit. Targets set in the Cold Write should be revisited and checked to see if they have been met.

3.5. Editing

After the Hot Write has been completed it is essential that the children go through the editing process to ensure that their work is the best quality it can be. This is a discrete skill which needs to be taught and practised regularly, using COPS and ARMS techniques (see Appendix 1) to support children with this. Editing stations should also be used to give structure to the sessions. In order for this part of Talk for Writing to be effective a lesson will need to be designated to this purpose.

Peer and self-assessment strategies should be used.

3.6. Final Drafts/Masterpieces

Where appropriate, at least three times a year, children should have the opportunity to produce a final draft or a masterpiece. This should be completed in their Masterpiece Book. Special paper might be considered for this purpose.

4. Classrooms

In each classroom there should be an English Working Wall/Washing Line where key aspects of the learning journey are displayed. This should include:

- Boxed-up plans

- Toolkits
- Aspects of the model text
- Shared writing
- Modelled writing
- Key vocabulary

The Talk for Writing journey is clearly displayed to enable children to consistently refer to previous learning. Furthermore, a Magpie display will also be available in every classroom to enable children to collect vocabulary they come across in model texts, in the class novel or in another area of the curriculum. Definitions should be included with the word and where possible a sentence given to provide context. Vocabulary should also be added to the unit title page by the children.

A word of the week will be displayed in every classroom and discussions held about its meaning and how it can be correctly used within a sentence.

5. Spelling, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, handwriting

Spelling, vocabulary, grammar and punctuation should be taught where possible as part of the Talk for Writing teaching sequence to provide an appropriate context.

In addition, skills sessions should have specific, dedicated teaching time to these elements to ensure that misconceptions are addressed and new concepts are taught.

Assessments – hot/cold writes and PiXL [3] - should be used to determine areas that need to be focussed upon whilst ensuring that concepts related to the particular year group are taught. These have been planned out – see separate planning.

Handwriting [4] is a key part of the writing process and is developed throughout the school. In order to reach the Expected Standard in writing children must be able to “maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed.” With this in mind, we teach and develop our children’s ability to join their letters using Kinetic Letters, which builds on what is taught at Tennyson Road Infant School. We recognise that when writing at speed and when editing, that children’s work may not look as it should and opportunities are provided for children to complete a ‘Masterpiece’ (their final draft) for their Masterpiece books. This can be handwritten or sometimes word-processed.

Wherever possible, children are given access to dictionaries and thesauri, both book versions and online versions, to encourage them to be independent and accurate spellers.

6. Assessment

Writing is assessed against key objectives for each year group. These cover the following skills:

- transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- composition and effect
- structure and organisation
- grammar, sentence structure and vocabulary
- drafting, editing and proof-reading

These have been derived from the Focus schemes used at ASJS (as part of cluster arrangements). A copy of these is included in the front of every child's English book. Each pupil should be assessed at least 6 times during the course of the year against these objectives - forming a portfolio of work from both fiction and non-fiction genres.

Three times a year at the end of a big term the Insight [5] assessment system will be updated for each child, against the Northamptonshire Council expectations for their year group, with an overall grade of: below, working towards, expected or greater depth.

7. Writing Across the Curriculum

The skills children develop in English are linked to, and applied in, every area of the curriculum. The Children's skills in writing enable them to communicate and express themselves in all aspects of their work in school. It is expected that pupils' written work in other areas of the curriculum is of a similar standard to that produced in their English books. Where a particular genre is revisited within another area of the curriculum the same success criteria should be used and resources produced as part of the working wall (e.g. boxed-up plans) should be displayed and discussed to ensure that the high standard is reproduced. English Link stickers should be added to show that a skill in English is being revisited.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

8.1. English Lead

The English Lead is responsible for ensuring a high standard of teaching and learning in writing throughout the school by:

- Monitoring and evaluating the teaching and learning of writing through different means such as book scrutiny, lesson observations and learning walks, pupil voice and staff voice activities
- Developing relevant policies
- Discussing the development of T4W across the school with SLT, teaching staff, Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs) and Teaching Assistants (TAs)
- Providing regular and relevant training for all staff
- Purchasing and organising resources to support the planning and delivery of T4W
- Providing model texts to be taught from and/or monitoring model texts written by members of staff
- Supporting the planning of units of work and updating in accordance with the school's evolving needs.
- Carrying out internal moderation

8.2. Teachers

Teachers are responsible for ensuring a high standard of teaching and learning in writing in their classroom by:

- Planning lessons which follow the agreed T4W structure
- Regularly updating the English Working Wall and/or Washing Line
- Using model texts to unpick key learning
- Setting targets from the Cold Write and reassessing from the Hot Write
- Modelling the writing process
- Providing opportunities for children to revisit their work as a result of teacher, peer and self-evaluation – editing stage

- Updating key objective checklists – at least 6 times a year.
- Ensuring that Insight is updated – three times a year.

8.3. Other Adults

It is important that all members of staff working with the children in English lessons recognise that they have an important role in the teaching of writing by:

- Understanding the importance of model texts in children learning expectations for their own writing
- Modelling writing during guided writing/Support sessions
- Aiding children in revisiting and improving their writing

9. Inclusion and Special Educational Needs

It is important that, where possible, all children are taught within their own classroom as they can draw on the ideas of others and benefit from quality first teaching. In order for children to be successful in writing, the following adaptations and support might be considered:

- Modification of texts for specific pupils
- Setting individual targets based on current abilities
- Use of flashcards (including the use of dual language flashcards)
- Dual language texts
- Modelling of language uses and features by adults
- Use of visual and written materials in different formats
- Use of technology e.g. iPads to enable children to find spellings or dictate ideas
- Use of scaffolds and prompts
- Use of differentiated word banks and word mats to meet individual need
- Peer support if appropriate
- Provision of specific differentiated work/tasks.
- Provision of other targeted resources e.g. Language dictionaries for EAL pupils

Further information can be found in the school Inclusion Policy [6].

10. References

- [1] gov.uk, “National curriculum,” 2014. [Online]. Available: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum>. [Accessed 4 May 2020].
- [2] “Talk for Writing,” talk4writing, 2020. [Online]. Available: <https://www.talk4writing.co.uk/>. [Accessed 4 May 2020].
- [3] PiXL, “PiXL partners in excellence,” 2017. [Online]. Available: <https://www.pixl.org.uk/>. [Accessed 3 May 2020].
- [4] Alfred Street Junior School, “Handwriting Policy,” 2020.
- [5] Insighttracking, “Insight,” [Online]. Available: <https://www.insighttracking.com/>. [Accessed 14 June 2020].

[6] Alfred Street Junior School, "Inclusion Policy including SEND," 2020.

[7] Alfred Street Junior School, "Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy," 2020.

[8] Alfred Street Junior School, "Equality Policy," 2018.

11. Safeguarding

Safeguarding our children is our priority – see Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy [7].
All concerns must be reported to our Designated Safeguarding leads:

ASJS: Mrs K O'Connor, Mr C Butler, Mrs S Smith, Mrs W Watts, Mrs A Love

Appendix 1. COPS & ARMS Editing Tools

REVISE

EDIT

Add

- Details
- Transitions
- Interesting words
- Evidence
- Description

C

apitalization

- Beginning of a sentence
- Proper nouns
- I
- Titles

Remove

- Words and sentences that do not make sense
- Extra information

O

Order

- Does this make sense?
- Topic sentence, detail sentences with transition words, concluding sentence

M

ove

- Words and sentences for a better order

P

unctuation

- At the end of every sentence
- Quotes for dialogue
- Commas in a list

Substitute

- Boring words for interesting words
- New words for overused words

S

pelling

- Read each word starting at the end
- Use your resources to check