

Sabden Primary School



Writing Policy

September 2023

Contents

1. Curriculum statement
2. Teaching and learning
3. Assessment
4. Planning and resources
5. Organisation
6. EYFS
7. KS1 and KS2
8. Equal opportunities
9. Inclusion
10. Role of the subject leader
11. Parents

1. Curriculum statement

Intent

At Sabden Primary School, we believe that all pupils should be able to confidently communicate their knowledge, ideas and emotions through their writing. We want pupils to acquire a wide vocabulary, a solid understanding of grammar and be able to spell new words by effectively applying the spelling patterns and rules they learn throughout their time in primary school.

We want them to write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences. We believe that all pupils should be encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their writing, in part by developing a good, joined, handwriting style by the time they move to secondary school.

We believe that all good writers refine and edit their writing over time, so we want children to develop independence in being able to identify their own areas for improvement in all pieces of writing, editing their work effectively during and after the writing process. We do not put ceilings on what pupils can achieve in writing and we do not hold pre-conceptions about any pupils' ability to make progress.

We understand the importance of parents and carers in supporting their children to develop both grammar, spelling and composition skills, and so we want to encourage a home-school partnership which enables parents and carers to understand how to enhance the skills being taught in school.

Implementation

Classroom organisation:

We teach English as whole class lessons, so that all children have access to the age-related skills and knowledge contained in the National Curriculum. Within lessons, teachers and teaching assistants target support to children identified as needing additional support to enable them to achieve at an age-related level wherever possible. This may involve a greater level of scaffolding and access to additional support materials such as word banks or a greater level of modelling.

Children that secure their learning quickly are given opportunities to extend their writing in a variety of ways, including through showing greater control in their writing, a deeper understanding of the impact that their writing has on the reader and by using a higher level of vocabulary and grammar features.

Spelling:

Spelling is taught according to the rules and words contained in Appendix 1 of the English National Curriculum. Teachers use the a combination of Red Rose Phonics in EYFS and Year One and S.I.L Spelling Toolkit from Year 2 upwards to support their teaching and to provide activities that link to the spellings focus. We do not send home a weekly set of spellings to be tested, as is traditionally expected, but instead focus on a spelling rule through multiple sessions, exploring word meaning, synonyms, acronyms and derivatives of the word.

When marking writing in Key Stage One and Lower Key Stage Two, teachers identify up to four words that children have spelt incorrectly from within that child's known spelling standard and they write at the end of the piece of writing for the child to practice.

In Upper Key Stage Two, incorrect spellings are identified at the start of a line using the code (s). Children are then encouraged to independently identify these incorrect spellings in their own writing and correct them.

Where children choose to use adventurous and ambitious vocabulary, these word choices are celebrated and teachers will annotate or give verbal feedback to assist with the correct spelling if needed.

Grammar and Punctuation:

Grammar and punctuation knowledge and skills are taught within English lessons on a daily basis. Teachers plan to teach the required skills through the genres of writing that they are teaching, linking it to the genre to make it more connected with the intended writing outcome. As a school, we follow the Lancashire 'I-model' for sentence construction, and function and classification for word class.

Teachers sometimes focus on particular grammar and punctuation skills as stand-alone lessons, if they feel that the class need additional lessons to embed and develop their understanding or to consolidate skills.

English Lesson Sequence:

Each class has a yearly overview of the writing genres, both narrative, non-fiction and poetry that they will teach. These have been planned to ensure correct coverage of the key genres as well as build on skills from year to year. Units will take between two and five weeks to complete, and the outcome of each unit will be an independent extended write which will be used to assess the pupil's skills against the agreed success criteria. Children will also have opportunities throughout the unit to create short, independent writing outcomes.

Every narrative unit is linked to a carefully chosen text that acts as a stimulus for teaching the identified text, word and sentence level features that children will be expected to include in their extended writing outcome for that unit. An exemplar text is created in a modelled write, based on the stimulus text and supports pupils to identify and mimic the identified features in their own writing.

Non-fiction units are also taught through a quality text that may be based on a stimulus text or may be related to another curriculum area.

Teachers use the Lancashire English Planning to support their teaching.

Marking and Feedback:

Feedback and marking should be completed, where possible, within the lesson. All marking and feedback is given in line with our marking and feedback policy.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessments will be monitored each half term and reported each term. Teachers will use their professional judgement to determine whether a child is working within age-related expectations, above or below. They will base their judgements on the quality of the extended write that pupils produce at the end of each unit, how children have worked in daily lessons, and how they implement this across the curriculum. They will also determine to what extent pupils have

met the agreed success criteria for that genre of writing. Teacher's will refer to the TAFS in Y2 and Y6 and the Sabden Primary TAFs that have been developed for other year groups as a support for making judgements and to inform planning.

INTENDED IMPACT

- Pupils will enjoy writing across a range of genres
- Pupils of all abilities will be able to succeed in all English lessons because work will be appropriately scaffolded.
- Pupils will have a wide vocabulary that they use within their writing
- Pupils will have a good knowledge of how to adapt their writing based on the context and audience
- Pupils will leave primary school being able to effectively apply spelling rules and patterns they have been taught
- Parents and carers will have a good understanding of how they can support spelling, grammar and composition at home, and contribute regularly to homework
- The % of pupils working at ARE within each year group will be in line or above with national averages.
- The % of pupils working at Greater Depth within each year group will be in line or above national average.
- There will be no significant gaps in the progress of different groups of pupils (e.g. disadvantaged vs non-disadvantaged)

2) Teaching and learning

Our writing provision follows the 2014 National Curriculum and is taught through daily English lessons as well as a varied enrichment programme. Lessons run for approximately 1 hour, 5 days a week to ensure continuity and rigour in teaching and learning of knowledge and skills.

We recognise that spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. Teachers ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in their knowledge of spoken language and listening skills. They are assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others and teachers ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy any misconceptions.

Building on this foundation, we teach writing using a range of strategies which include:

- Group Discussion – Children discuss and interrogate new ideas in a small group or whole class setting. They listen to and value each other's ideas whilst taking on board feedback so as to improve their own explanations.

- Partner Talk – Children work in partners to discuss their ideas. They are able to explain their ideas about texts they have read and prepare their ideas before they write.
- Questioning – Teachers use a range of questioning strategies to establish children’s current understanding and develop their learning. Higher level questioning is used to elicit a deeper understanding.
- Modelled Writing – Teachers model writing and editing to demonstrate the high expectations they have. They verbally ‘think aloud’ in order to make the writing process explicit and provide a rich and varied vocabulary for the children to utilise in their own work.
- Shared Writing – Teachers use the ideas from the children to create shared pieces of writing. This enables the children to see the writing process in action as well as having pride and ownership over the finished piece.
- Comparing, Analysing and Evaluating – Children review written texts, speech and drama and compare, analyse and evaluate them. They establish the strengths and weaknesses of different examples and incorporate these ideas into their own work.

All English lessons have clear learning focus so that the children understand the expectations of the task and how they can achieve their best in the lesson. The learning focus is consistently referred to during teacher modelling and used effectively for self and peer assessment at the end of a task. The learning focus is clearly referred to when feedback from the teacher is given, either verbally or in writing. The focus of learning can be altered for different ability groups in the same lesson where appropriate.

English activities are effectively differentiated so that all children can achieve the learning focus and feel empowered by their own accomplishment. Nevertheless, all children are given the chance to reach the same high level in every lesson. Effective differentiation is in place so that all children have the opportunity to meet every learning intention through having vocabulary word banks, writing frames and sentence starters, mixed ability groupings and adult support. Teachers also ensure that children are taught and know how to demonstrate greater depth in their outcomes of writing, and this is reinforced through the learning focus which children refer to throughout their work and assess against on completion.

Extended writing opportunities take place across the curriculum and occur half termly. This provides children with the opportunity to demonstrate their writing knowledge and skills, showing depth and mastery and allows them to write about a familiar topic independently.

Subject boards are used throughout the school to support writing and discussion. We recognise the important role these have in the teaching and learning of writing. Each class has a dedicated subject board that shows the learning journey they are taking in English sessions- these will include vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation relevant to the unit of work, as well as working modelled documents and exemplar texts.

Approaches to Speaking and Listening

Speaking, listening, group discussions, interactions, and drama are essential components of the entire curriculum. According to the National Curriculum (2013), pupils should be taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently in Standard English, as spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing skills. At Sabden Primary School, we believe that children need to be able to express themselves orally in an appropriate manner, as it is a vital skill for their

lifelong journey. It is fundamental for the children's development across the whole curriculum and permeates all areas of the primary curriculum. We believe that spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing.

Children need to be immersed in the quality and variety of language by adults; this is vital if children are to develop their vocabulary, grammar, and understanding for reading and writing. We will ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills.

At Sabden Primary School, children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life. Ways in which we support this include:

Activities which are planned to encourage full and active participation by all children, irrespective of ability.

Children with specific speech and language and auditory problems will be identified, and specialist help will be sought, where appropriate.

School Plays

Class assemblies

Participation in school services

Events within the community

School Council

Talk partners

"Show and Tell" sessions

Reading Buddies

Drama / role-play activities

PSHE and circle time

3. Assessment

Children are assessed formatively through thorough questioning and marking to ensure that teachers understand where children are currently in their learning and what their next steps need to be. This helps to ensure that maximum progress is made throughout literacy teaching across the school.

In addition to this, regularly timetabled summative assessment opportunities are planned into the academic year to ensure that the progress in knowledge and skills that each child makes is accurately measured. Summative assessment opportunities are used to support teachers in their assessment judgements and should not replace teacher judgement based on experience of the child in everyday lessons.

Writing Assessment

As well as ongoing formative assessment teachers from Reception to Year 6 assess the writing of every child half termly. A piece of writing from each child will be assessed according to the criteria for the age expectation at six points throughout the year by the class teacher, considering achievement from the previous term. Teachers also consider work completed throughout the term. Writing is moderated across the school termly, using the TAF and Sabden TAF.

4. Planning and Resources

Sabden Primary School follows a Lancashire sequence of learning. This includes

- Creating interest
- Reading and analysis
- Gathering content
- Planning and writing
- Presentation

From EYFS to Year 6, English units are planned to include fiction, non-fiction and poetry that link to the class text or wider curriculum area of study. These help to ensure that coverage of the National Curriculum is secure and that year group expectations are met. It also allows fluency between the gathering of knowledge in wider curriculum lessons that can be applied to writing and writing skills that can be applied to wider curriculum lessons.

5. Organisation

English lessons take place 5 times per week from EYFS to Year 6. In Y1 – 6 these lessons focus on developing the knowledge and skills needed for developing writing in a particular genre. E.g. instruction writing or suspense story writing. Where possible English lessons will have a cross-curricular approach and support work done in other areas of the curriculum when topics allow close links.

Discrete English knowledge and skills are woven through these lessons to make sure that children are able to develop mastery of the National Curriculum objectives. These range from word level knowledge such as using expanded noun phrases to sentence level skills where children are able to demonstrate their knowledge of increasingly complex sentence structures.

6. EYFS

In Nursery and Reception, English lessons take place daily and are based on a core text, which changes on a weekly basis. The core text is selected to fit with the wider topic in EYFS, for example Handa's Surprise might be used to add depth to a topic on Journeys.

In Nursery and Reception, this text is explored further through focus activities led by an adult. In Nursery, activities are recorded in their learning journey books. In Reception, literacy focus activities are differentiated and children complete around 3 pieces, recording these in their English book.

Across EYFS, literacy knowledge and skills are also developed through the continuous provision of the environment. The classroom has resources available to be selected by the children to support their emergent writing skills. These vary from phonics sounds cards to mini-books. The writing tables have activities based around the skills being taught that week to further enable children to embed learning.

7. KS1 and KS2

From Year 1-6 English lessons take place daily and are taught to the whole class by the class teacher. They are effectively differentiated to ensure that every child can be successful in their achievement of the learning focus, with high expectations for all learners. The learning focus for the lesson is shared with the children prior to independent work and these also indicate how greater depth can be achieved and demonstrated. These lessons cover knowledge and skills in writing, spelling and grammar and discussion.

8. Equal Opportunities

All children have equal opportunities to reach their full potential across the English curriculum, regardless of their race, gender, cultural background, and ability, or of any physical or sensory disability.

9. Inclusion

Children with English as an additional language:

It is vital that children who have English as an additional language have English modelled accurately by all staff at school. Collaborative work with peers (where English is their first language) is essential and EAL children should be provided with consistent opportunities for this verbal interaction. Each classroom should have on display key words associated with current topics being studied. All teachers include a range of strategies to support children with EAL which includes: teacher and peer modelling and consistent use of visual support, repetition and recasting of language features, word banks and scaffolded speaking and listening activities.

Teachers work collaboratively to best meet the needs of individuals within their classes. Children who are new to English are assessed and support is put in place by the staff team and head teacher to help them make rapid progress.

In addition, class teachers use support staff to provide targeted support and the use of home language support and peer-buddying is encouraged.

There are many groups and projects which EAL children and their families may be involved with:

- Speech and Language groups
- English as an Additional Language homework club
- Recommended English Language lessons for parents
- Drop-in translation, information and skills sharing sessions for families

Special Educational Needs

Some children experience learning difficulties, which affect their progress in writing. Class teachers inform the SENDCO/head teacher if they are concerned that a child may have underlying learning difficulties. Some children then receive SEN support. This may include:

- Volunteer readers
- Reading buddies
- Language groups
- Social skills groups
- Booster classes
- Bounce back phonics

Gifted and talented

Children who achieve highly in writing will be supported and given opportunities to deepen their knowledge and skills through writing groups and differentiation. The learning focus for the lesson also indicates how greater depth has been taught within the context of the lesson and how this can

be demonstrated by the child in outcomes of work. They will also have opportunities to work with outside agencies when appropriate, for instance working with an editor on the school newspaper.

10. Role of the Subject Leader

The role of the subject leader in English is to coordinate the teaching of reading, writing and communication across all phases of the school. This is in order to secure high quality literacy provision for every child, including outstanding English teaching and learning, effective use of resources and the highest standards of achievement for all.

Some key duties that the English subject leader should undertake over the course of the year include:

- Monitoring of writing, reading, handwriting and spelling across classes
- Learning walks and other lesson observations where necessary
- Planning and organising English enrichment opportunities and competitions
- Helping identify and facilitate the professional development needs of staff
- Liaising with SLT to help implement school improvement priorities
- Liaising with the school SENDCO to best support children with English difficulties
- Organising, maintaining and cataloguing resources
- Keeping up to date with new initiatives in English teaching

11. Parents

We recognise how crucial the home/school link is for supporting children to have the highest standards of achievement in English. At the start of each academic the English standards of the year group are explained through the home learning pack, as well as further meetings throughout the year to support parents to understand new initiatives where required.

Homework is also part of the school's successful home/school link. Children may also be given the opportunity to complete writing related competition entries at home or other activities which support their writing development. In line with the school's homework policy, additional writing opportunities may be sent home in that relate to wider curriculum areas of study.

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