

The Heights Primary school 2023

How we teach writing at 'The Heights'

Intent

At The Heights Primary school, we recognise that writing is integral to all aspects of life. We believe that all children should be able to communicate effectively through writing and we aim for them to develop a lifelong, healthy and enthusiastic approach to writing.

As identified by the Education Endowment Foundation (2021), writing is a process that is made up of a number of components, including transcription (spelling, typing, and handwriting), text generation (ideas, words, and sentence construction), and executive functions (such as attention, planning, monitoring, and reviewing). We aim for all of our pupils to become skilled at each of these components and learn to coordinate them effectively to become skilled and proficient writers.

OBJECTIVES

Within the context of writing, we believe that all children should be able to:

- Write with confidence, fluency and understanding
- Write for a variety of audiences and purposes; understanding how these determine the style of writing
- Make explicit links between texts that are being read and how these can influence and inform writing
- Have fluent and legible handwriting or communicate effectively through typed work
- Develop a rich and varied vocabulary
- Know, understand and write in a variety of genres in fiction and poetry
- Understand, use and write a range of non-fiction texts
- Write effectively across the curriculum
- Take ownership of the writing process through planning, drafting, revising and editing their own writing
- Have freedom to experiment with words and sentence structures
- Know and draw upon a range of techniques to engage the reader, making links to their knowledge of authors and different writing styles
- Understand the difference between standard and non-standard English and be able to use these accordingly
- Through reading and writing, develop their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness
- Understand and use punctuation appropriately and spell words accurately
- See the writing process being modelled by their teacher and take part regularly in composition and transcription activities with the whole class, as a member of a smaller group, or individually (guided/ shared writing).

Implementation

At The Heights Primary school, we make explicit links between our reading and writing curriculums to ensure that the key knowledge and skills required for writing are taught consistently across the school. We recognise the importance of oracy in developing language capability, including developing children's vocabulary and understanding of language.

The three main components of the writing process are each explicitly taught, revisited and further developed as children move from being novice writers to more expert writers by the end of KS2. The components of writing are taught using the Gradual release model (Pearson and Gallagher, 1983) - 'I do, we do, you do'.

EYFS

In Foundation stage, the children are immersed in language for writing. They focus on a stimulus, for example a traditional tale, and learn this off by heart. They are given opportunities to act out, play and acquire the vocabulary needed to effectively communicate the story. There are early mark making opportunities within the free play areas as well as a designated 'writing' area within each classroom. Children have guided writing time each week with their teacher. Phonics is taught daily through the government approved Twinkl scheme and children follow the Twinkl phonics handwriting. Phonics interventions are delivered according to the needs of the children at any given time. Fine motor skills are taught daily and letter formation is formally introduced after Christmas.

Year One - Six

- In Years One-Six, children are introduced to a variety of genres and text types including fiction, non-fiction and poetry from our whole school reading spine.
- The children explore these model texts, extracts or visual media through reading/watching them to identify the audience and purpose.
- Through classroom discussion, the model texts are used to identify key text and language features which are modelled on working walls within the classrooms. Teachers also interrogate the sentence structure, grammar and punctuation of texts.
- Key vocabulary is taught explicitly and displayed throughout the classrooms including word mats and vocabulary displays. Children are encouraged to use this vocabulary within their own writing.
- Children are then given the opportunity to plan their own writing linked to the model text thinking carefully about the audience and purpose for writing. We recognise that giving children a reason to write and someone to write for can support effective writing and act as a source of motivation for more reluctant writers.

We teach the five-step writing process as identified by the Education Endowment Foundation (2021, p. 30):

- Planning;
 - Drafting;
 - Editing;
 - Revising;
 - Publishing
- Teachers scaffold learning of the writing process following the 'I do, we do, you do' model. Planning will be modelled before children are asked to plan. Teachers will model each step of the writing process through 'shared writing' – this is where children can observe and be involved in the writing process collectively through the medium of the teacher. This includes drafting, editing, revising and publishing.

- Teachers work with smaller groups of children to support the application of their new knowledge and skills during 'guided writing'. Here the support is targeted to meet specific needs and the teacher works more intensely with these pupils.
- Children are given time and opportunities to publish their work for the intended audience. They are also provided with opportunities to read their work aloud or perform it where appropriate.
- All children complete a piece of extended independent writing once a half term where they are given a prompt or stimulus for writing and are given time to write independently in a style of writing that has been recently taught. The children are encouraged to plan, draft, write, edit and assess their work in these sessions. They have access to dictionaries, thesauruses and word banks.
- Spelling is taught in weekly discrete lessons. In Key Stage One, this follows the Twinkl spelling scheme and in Key Stage Two, this follows the 'No nonsense scheme'. Spelling is also linked to the text/genre being studied and integrated into writing units.
- Grammar and punctuation is taught within the writing units, in accordance with the National Curriculum. These may be as stand-alone lessons or embedded within the interrogation stage of looking at a text as well as the drafting, writing and editing stages. Grammar, spelling and punctuation objectives are covered daily in a 'metacognition' starter activity at the beginning of each lesson to revisit previous learning and ensure it passes to the child's long term memory.
- Handwriting is taught using a 'continuous cursive' scheme. In Key Stage One, the children follow the Twinkl handwriting scheme. This is continued in Lower Key Stage Two. In Upper Key Stage 2 there are weekly handwriting lessons. There are additional interventions for children who require targeted support.
- Transcription skills are vital to support composition. Children are given opportunities to develop transcriptional skills through regular spelling and handwriting guided sessions across the week. Dictation is used to support those children where transcription skills are proving to be barriers to success.

For children working within the lowest 20% of classes including those with SEND, provision includes:

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| - Phonics intervention | - writing slopes |
| - Fine motor/handwriting intervention | - pencil grips |
| - Pre-teaching of vocabulary and oral rehearsal | - foot stools |
| - Visual prompts and key word mats | - sound buttons |
| - Guided writing sessions | - computers to write |
| - Pupil conferencing | |
| - Electronic spell checkers | |
| - Adjustments to spelling programmes | |
| - Targeted adult support | |
| - EAL resources to support immersion in the English language | |
| - Colourful semantics | |
| - Task planners | |

Impact

Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. Writing is assessed both formatively, daily, and summatively, through grammar assessments and independent writing pieces at The Heights. Formative assessment includes whiteboard work, work completed across

the curriculum as well as in writing lessons and supported/teacher led work. This informs the teacher of progress within lessons as well as informing planning and curriculum content and any additional interventions needed.

EYFS

The children's writing is assessed against the Early Learning Goals as detailed in the EYFS profile assessment for children.

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed;
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters;
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

Year Two and Year Six

The children's independent writing is assessed at the end of Year Two and Year Six against the statutory 'Teacher assessment frameworks for the end of Key Stage One/Key Stage Two'. Standardisation and internal moderation of children's writing is carried out throughout the year. Teachers also attend external moderation sessions with other local primary schools, managed by Brighter Futures for Children. In Years Two and Six, the children also complete a grammar, punctuation and spelling test as part of the statutory assessments.

Years One, Three, Four and Five

The children's writing is assessed against the teacher assessment frameworks for writing provided by Herts Grid for Learning. These dovetail with the statutory teacher assessment frameworks used in Years Two and Six and ensure a consistent and robust approach to assessment. A breadth of genres and writing styles is assessed. Internal standardisation and moderation of children's writing is carried out throughout the year and opportunities are provided for external moderation sessions with other local primary schools, managed by Brighter Futures for Children. This ensures consistency in standards across schools within our area. Children also complete regular grammar, punctuation and spelling assessments. In Year One, the children complete the statutory phonics screening in June each year.

Marking and feedback

Feedback is an essential part of teaching writing. Through formative assessment, work is regularly reviewed by the teacher and TA. This can be through observations, conferencing (where verbal feedback is given) or through written feedback. Peer and self-assessment also form an integral part of our formative assessment routines.

Reference list:

- Education Endowment Foundation. (2021). *Improving Literacy in KS2 guidance report*
<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks2>
- P. David Pearson & Margaret C. Gallagher. (1983). *The instruction of reading comprehension*.
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