

Writing Intention

At Mary Dean's we strive to create an environment that will promote writing. Children are able to write about topics linked to what they are learning across the curriculum using rich texts to model and inspire their own writing. The children are taught a range of genres to prepare them for later life such as writing a letter to persuade the Government to take climate change seriously, or writing a story to demonstrate the feelings of a character. These units help us to reinforce our school visions and values, to have empathy and respect and strong moral standards. For each genre taught the writing sequence phases are used, consisting of a cold write – teach lesson – practise lesson – warm write – teach lesson – practise lesson – hot write – edit and improve. Grammar is taught throughout the cycle in context and also discretely and applied to the writing.

This cycle embeds the principles of AFL and is a way that shows clear progress throughout a unit of work.

Implementation

- A purpose and audience for each piece of writing is decided from the outset through targeted success criteria.
- Success criteria is used to support children with genres and expectations of SPAG
- Writing is displayed all over the school on writing displays.
- We provide stimulating first hand experiences called 'hooks' e.g. trips/activities/artefacts/current affairs
- Writing is taught as a sequenced activity following the cycle (immersion, imitation, innovation, invention).
- Teachers provide regular helpful feedback to children's work including follow ups or verbal feedback.
- Time is planned into lessons for children to respond to marking and feedback.
- Writing is linked to class topics where applicable to promote engagement, improve vocabulary and topic knowledge.
- We ensure progression in complexity of tasks each year.
- We build stamina for writing by providing weekly opportunities to write for extended periods;
- Some pieces will be 'published' i.e. re-drafted in best handwriting and displayed on classroom walls;
- Self/Peer marking and editing is encouraged as an additional way for children to respond to writing.
- The cycle will be displayed on the classroom walls with examples of work that the children can refer to on the working wall.

Spelling

Understanding how to spell correctly is important in supporting children to organise their thinking around language. Knowing how to apply spelling rules and recognising key words is empowering for children.

Spelling plays a significant part of standardised assessment and is taught throughout the school.

- Reception and year one are taught new spellings through the Little Wandle SSP programme.
- We use the 2014 National Curriculum as a guideline as to which spellings and spelling rules should be taught in which year group.
- We link handwriting to common spelling patterns in the Early Years.
- Children learn to spell explicitly in spelling lessons.
- Children are actively encouraged and taught to proof-read their writing for spelling errors.
- Children learn spellings and are tested in a weekly spelling test.
- Children who need additional support for phonics or spelling are supported accordingly through catch up phonics sessions

Handwriting

We place value on children taking pride and care over their work and handwriting is a key part of this. In the early years there is a big emphasis upon fine motor skills and we use a range of resources to practise these basic skills. This moves into correct letter formation with a focus on both upper and lower case letters.

- In Foundation, letter formation is taught within the Little Wandle Phonics scheme. Each letter has a handwriting phrase to help the children remember the formation.
- From summer term in Y1 through to Y6, we use the 'Nelson' cursive Handwriting scheme as the basis for our teaching, which links handwriting to common spelling patterns and teaches handwriting joins.
- We take the view that handwriting should be taught little and often – at least 3 X 10 minutes each week.
- We use cursive script and encourage children to join their writing as soon as they are forming their letters correctly in Year 2
- Extra handwriting groups occur in classes throughout the school where the class team feel that additional handwriting support is needed.
- We have high expectations for handwriting and ensure that staff and pupils adhere to the policy.

*see separate handwriting policy

Grammar

An understanding of how to use grammar correctly, use relevant meta-language and identifying word classes and sentence types is taught both in the context of a piece of writing and explicitly in whole class work. Linked to the National Curriculum guidelines for year groups, grammar is taught and planned to fit in with relevant genres of writing.

- We start with the basics of sentence construction including full stops and capital letters;
- Children begin to identify word classes early on (noun, verb, adjective, adverb);
- We follow the 2014 National Curriculum as guidance as to what is taught in each year group and from this, have devised a specific structure for our school detailing expectations year by year.

Inclusion

We aim for all children to participate in mainstream lessons. Work is differentiated and extra support is in place for children with SEND. who have individual targets on an IEP or a 'classroom support plan' for children who need extra support but are not SEND.

Provision maps are written by each teacher to ensure extra support and interventions are timetabled.

Impact

Writing assessment is ongoing throughout every lesson and cross curricular themes to help teachers with their planning, lesson activities, targeted pupil support and enable appropriate challenge to all children. Pupils are given detailed feedback and next steps to respond to in order to personalise learning and provide the children with opportunities to edit and improve their own writing. A tracker based on the assessment framework is used to inform teachers and leaders of the skills and knowledge the pupils have achieved or need to improve further. School improvement leaders closely monitor all pupil's books and hold individual termly meetings with all teachers to assess every individual child's learning needs and progress. In addition, pupil voice is used to enable leaders to assess the impact of writing across the curriculum considering the views of the children.