

English 'High Challenge' Curriculum

Ash Green Primary School - Writing Policy

2017-2018

Rationale

At Ash Green Primary School, we recognise that English skills underpin all elements of the school curriculum, and are an essential life-skill. Considering the fundamental importance of Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing in everyday life, we are driven by the need to develop each learner's writing ability, thus enabling them to play a full part in society. Because of this we follow a 'High Challenge English Curriculum'.

What is the 'English High Challenge' Curriculum?

In order to become fluent writers, we strongly believe that all children should be given the skills to 'craft' their writing through a learning journey which fosters our love of writing. At the centre of the High Challenge English curriculum, is the class text/novel. At the beginning of each term, class teachers will complete a medium term planning overview, which outlines the writing opportunities for that term. Within this overview, teachers acknowledge and create opportunities for children to:

- Use multi-media and visuals to aid learning
- Work towards a range of writing outcomes, based on their knowledge and understanding of the class text
- Capture ideas and learning through the use of role play and drama. This may involve: hot seating, conscience alley and freeze frames
- Respond to the text by allowing children to make predictions about: characters, plot, setting, authorial intent and vocabulary
- Practise Grammar and Spellings
- Engage in 'story talk' through story mapping, retelling missing chapters, predicting upcoming chapters and summarising key events which advance the plot

Structure of the Learning Journey:

Each planning sequence is structured following through the learning journey sequence, the length of the planning cycle depends on the needs of the children and the genre being taught. A typical planning cycle will display the following elements:

- 1) Lesson 1: Annotation of key features of genre. In lower Key Stage 2, there should be a strong focus on children commenting on purpose for writing, in upper Key Stage 2, the children should be secure in identifying features of genre; therefore less time should be spent on purpose for writing.
- 2) Lesson 2: Is usually a focus on key skills and should incorporate a focus of Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar and must relate directly to the genre being taught.
- 3) Lesson 3: Practice write - This lesson will start with the teacher modelling the intended writing outcome. The teacher will model the process of writing, which should include:
 - thinking out loud
 - editing - vocabulary, grammar, punctuation
 - reading aloud to proof read for clarity and the need for editing

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Role: English Lead

- 4) Lesson 4: Planning session - Children to be given the opportunity to plan their progress write. The plan should outline any key words/phrases, structure/layout or any other feature that they may wish to include within their extended write.
- 5) Independent/Progress write - Within this lesson, children will write an example of the genre, closely linked to the class text being studied and for which they have planned for. Children will have access to all of the learning journey that has been experienced that week. This should include: all related work in their English Skills Book and modelled examples on the Learning Wall. Children may also have access to word mats, sentence prompts, dictionaries and thesaurus, however children must choose to use these, rather than be prompted by the teacher.

Please note that it is acceptable for the class teacher to spend one or two days on the practice and independent write.

Aims of the policy

- 1) To foster an enjoyment of writing amongst pupils, and a recognition of its value through:
 - providing a stimulating curriculum and school environment which places the development of writing skills at its heart.
 - providing meaningful contexts and quality texts as the inspiration for writing.
- 2) To ensure the teaching of Writing is effectively planned, and responsive to learners' needs through assessment for learning, and:
 - Planning the teaching of Writing composition and Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPAG) in conjunction with the National Curriculum / Ash Green "I Can" statements as appropriate for the age / ability of the children.
 - Employing effective assessment procedures (both formative and summative)
- 3) To best enable the development of writing skills, through preceding writing with quality Speaking and Listening / Drama activities.
- 4) To maximise the progress of pupils through teaching writing to learning-focussed objectives, with carefully thought out success criteria.
- 5) To provide pupils with a clear model for how to meet lesson objectives and thereby become effective writers through delivering:
 - clear and regular teacher modelling of the thought processes and standards required.
 - interactive and engaging shared writing sessions
 - writing sessions targeted to the needs of groups of learners.
- 6) To enable pupils to understand how to improve their writing through timely and effective feedback and 1:1 discussions through the use of intervention marking within English Skills Books.
- 7) To be a 'Writing School' in which:
 - Pupils engage in a wide variety of opportunities to write throughout the school day and beyond.

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- The importance of writing is promoted by all adults, and quality writing is routinely celebrated.

To create a culture of continuous improvement amongst staff at Ash Green, in which:

- Teachers and TSA's engage in regular peer to peer mentoring / dialogue around best practice in the teaching of Writing.
- Teaching staff are able to access support and clear modelled examples of quality teaching from the English Lead, SLT and other experienced colleagues.

Over-arching principles for the teaching of writing at Ash Green:

- All children should have evidence of a clear learning journey within their English Skills and Progress Book.
- Teachers should engage children in the writing process through their innovative strategies to model writing.
- Differentiation occurs within lessons to ensure that all children make progress and are able to meet the objectives stated.
- Highly effective intervention marking should link tightly to assessment matrix for each year group to stretch and challenge all pupils and inform 'next steps'.
- Success criteria should be used within lessons as a tool to guide the writing process, not as an 'end' of lesson tick box to merely 'self-assess'.
- New writing terminology should be articulated to the children at the very beginning of the learning journey, to underpin understanding. Children should have a clear understanding of what they are working towards and intended writing outcomes.
- Learning objectives for each session should link tightly to assessment matrix for each year group.
- Detailed medium term high challenge plans must be completed prior to weekly planning and class teachers should make a conscious effort to study the class text/novel. As a result of this, planning will focus on chapters which allow for outstanding writing opportunities.
- A clear success criterion is provided for each and every child and for every lesson.
- The teaching of writing is underpinned by a 'Learning Wall' which is current, in use and updated daily.
- Each classroom should display clearly the class novel and writing achievements should be celebrated frequently.
- The thought processes utilised in writing should be modelled directly to the children from the class teacher.

Evidence of progress in writing:

- Evidence of progress should be obtained largely from the independent writes completed by the children after each learning journey.
- Assessment of writing should be both summative and formative and learning should build on key areas in need of development.
- Planning should be frequently evaluated and annotated to inform assessment for learning and changes to the learning journey should be adapted as required.
- Teachers should be mindful of the length of modelling provided during independent writes. This should not be evident, as this should be an opportunity for children to demonstrate their understanding and key skills from previous lessons.
- Children may choose to make use of learning wall displays, writing prompts and in UKS2, may create their own success criteria in line with their own assessment matrix.

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- In some cases, particularly in upper KS2, children may choose to monitor their progress through self-assessment and highlighting against the success criteria.
- The marking of independent writes should only make use of 'green pen'. This marking should be in detail, tightly linked to the assessment grid for each child and should provide clear next steps for all children.