English Policy:

Literature at the core of teaching in the Primary School

Curriculum Intent

The Writing Framework (2025) states that:

"Proficiency in writing is a key skill throughout school and life. Being able to express ideas clearly and write fluently creates opportunities."

"The national curriculum requires pupils in key stage 2 to write for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences. However, it does not specify the text types that should be taught. Purpose and audience should underpin decisions about the form any writing should take, such as a narrative, an explanation or a description."

We believe the exposure of well-chosen, high-quality children's literature within the primary school setting is vital as a rich context for learning; not only within English as a subject but to support building a reading culture throughout the school and to develop a literacy rich environment. We use high-quality books that offer opportunities for empathy and can aid philosophical enquiry, as a means of developing spoken language through debate, drama and discussion using the issues raised through, and within, the text.

Our Intent

Our vision is for excellence in literacy through an ambitious English Curriculum that places books at its core. The driver of our English Curriculum is high-quality texts which foster a love of reading and writing, inspiring children and igniting creativity. By placing books at the core, teachers use the text as the context for the requirements of the National Curriculum. The National Curriculum (2014) states that:

"This guidance is not intended to constrain or restrict teachers' creativity, simply to provide the structure on which they can construct exciting lessons."

This would suggest that a context for learning is vital – and this is where our chosen approach supports teachers with ensuring that objectives for reading and writing, including those for grammar, have purpose.

Writing opportunities are meaningful; whether short or long, and the audience is clear. Children have real reasons to write, whether to explain, persuade, inform or instruct and, where possible, this can be embedded within text or linked to a curriculum area. Writing in role using a range of genres is key to our approach, as is writing a critique of the text and making comparisons – all writing skills that support children in preparation for their time in secondary school. This sits comfortably alongside the following statement from the English National Curriculum:

"The National Curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences."

Teaching and learning cannot be a 'one size fits all' approach and so our text led English Curriculum has been shaped to enable all children, regardless of background ability or additional needs, to flourish through adaptation and flexibility within robust pedagogy.

Our Curriculum is language rich and creative, enabling children to become primary literate as well as to develop a love of reading and writing, with the ability to question others and develop an informed personal point of view. Literacy Tree is a text-rich, spiral curriculum that builds in a layered approach.

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Implementation

Writing:

A whole-school approach to the teaching of writing through Literacy Tree Writing Roots ensures rigour and consistency where children are appropriately challenged and supported to build core and lasting literacy skills.

Teachers regularly attend high-quality training to support with the delivery of Writing Roots and to enable them to creatively adapt Writing Roots to the needs of children in their care. Subject Leaders also attend regular training to remain informed of current national policies and research, as well as certain in the school's chosen approach of Literacy Tree.

Writing opportunities are based on high-quality texts, which have been carefully chosen to enable children to engage critically and creatively with the curriculum and with the world around them. Higher level vocabulary contained within these texts broadens children's literacy skills and is woven throughout our Writing Roots. Opportunities for exploring vocabulary through drama, oracy and short-written outcomes are thoughtfully interwoven within the context of the texts.

Children are encouraged to revise and edit their writing as part of the writing process, and revising and editing are integral parts of the Literacy Tree curriculum. Teachers model skills, such as planning, drafting, writing, revising and editing, using physical resources (flip-charts, pens, sentences strips) and make use of working walls within the classroom as a live and active teaching tool. Writing is shared and celebrated with real purpose, enabling children to see themselves as writers! Writing books show progress, care and creativity.

Resourcing and coverage:
Through use of Literacy Tree we have mapped the coverage of the entire English Programme of Study for KS1 and KS2, as well as meeting the needs of the statutory (March 2017) Early Years Framework. In many cases objectives are covered more than once and children have opportunities to apply these several times over the course of a year, as well as to consolidate prior knowledge from previous years. We believe strongly that children should be secure in applying the skills of curriculum 2014 within their writing and their reading and that this approach is fully comprehensive. Our key skills and objectives are outlined in our 'Skills and Purpose' plans as well as genres covered. Where needed, planning sequences are adapted, personalised and differentiated by the school to ensure all access arrangements can be made to support children with the requirements and to build on prior learning.

Please see our separate Handwriting Policy outlining our approaches for the teaching of handwriting.

Impact

- Children develop a love of reading and writing, seeing themselves as writers.
- The % of children working at ARE within each year group will be at least in line with national averages.
- The % of children working at Greater Depth within each year group will be at least in line with national averages.
- Pupil Premium children will make good progress from their starting points and the gap between them and others is narrowed through a love of literacy.
- Children develop and use literacy skills in subjects across the curriculum.
- Every child writes well and fluently, with the ability to communicate meaning effectively for a range of purposes and to a range of audiences.
- Children speak confidently to a range of audiences and for a variety of purposes, and they listen effectively.
- Children leave us with a broader cultural capital and a deeper understanding of the world around them, and the ability to develop informed points of view.

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