

WRITING CURRICULUM DESIGN

"IF YOU WANT
TO CHANGE
THE WORLD,
PICK UP YOUR
PEN AND
WRITE"

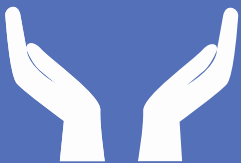
- MARTIN LUTHER



KNOWING



BECOMING



FEELING



When children write, they are given the chance to find their voice, to express themselves, and to describe and make sense of the world around them. Our writing curriculum is designed to equip pupils to write with clarity, precision, passion and integrity. We want to balance children's inherent creativity with the technical elements of recording. Thus, pupils can explore and play with words, structures and styles as they learn to organise their thoughts and realise their voice. They put themselves in another's shoes, both in terms of characterisation, and as authors - newspaper reporters, diarists, storytellers, script-writers etc. Almost all our extended writing arises from and is inspired by quality texts that children are introduced to through their reading - it is therefore purposeful and offers an opportunity to mirror the authorial styles and ideas of others. Through our planning process (writing rectangles), children influence and contribute their ideas towards an end point, which is stewarded by teachers to ensure coverage of all core elements. Ultimately, writing is a way for each individual to leave their mark on history and contribute to the world - and we want to empower our pupils to do exactly that.

Essentially, the knowledge underpinning writing sits within two overarching domains: transcription and composition. In the early years and key stage one, huge focus is placed on the technical aspects of basic transcription: the motor skills of letter formation, the process of encoding (spelling) by applying phonics, and basic grammatical terms and structures. As pupils move through school, more complex grammatical forms and punctuation are introduced as pupils learn to combine and construct sentences in a variety of ways. Part of this involves acquiring the knowledge to edit effectively to ensure accuracy. The aim is to make transcription as automatic as possible, thus reducing cognitive load and allowing a focus on the second domain of composition. Fundamental knowledge underpinning composition is: the development of a wide range of vocabulary (a process which begins in Early Years); encountering and applying literary features; and writing for different purposes. Vocabulary is both explicitly taught and drawn extensively from the quality texts which inspire pupils' writing, giving children the chance to revisit and apply new words, consolidating these in their long term memory. As children encounter different genres and forms in their reading, knowledge of the features of these is unpacked and explained, so that they can make informed choices about their authorial style and approach - shaping their descriptive, narrative, instructional, persuasive, or poetic writing appropriately.

Becoming a great writer is infinitely more than putting pen to paper to record a sentence. Whilst these basics are the starting point, and our youngest children need to be supported with these, the longer term goal is for pupils to find their voice, to step into another's shoes, and to compose for a range of audiences. There is a daily expectation that writing is a vehicle to evidence learning in a range of subjects and we use a variety of tools to support those who are struggling (e.g. scaffolds, word-mats, digital platforms etc.). The use of journals supports note-taking and drafting, and whole-class marking provides specific, reflective feedback to help all to improve and edit their work. In becoming writers, children showcase and apply the knowledge they have acquired - building on the links made with reading. We explicitly make children aware of the 'process approach' of becoming a writer: reading, vocabulary development, practising skills discretely, drafting, planning, composing, editing and re-drafting. At every step of the way, pupils are given the chance to embed their learning as they express, shape and craft their ideas with the aim of becoming experts in this process.

Composing and writing can be a hugely emotive process - from the frustration of physically struggling with letter formation or writers' block, to the joy of communicating your vision effectively or delighting an audience. The process of editing offers children a chance to reflect on their strengths and areas for improvement - something we know some pupils struggle with and require support to achieve. Writing also allows pupils to develop personal preferences - some love the creativity of narrative, others the logical precision of instructional texts. Children are able to explore different contexts and empathise with characters through their writing. The motivation to write is increased through planning purposeful writing outcomes, which are shared and celebrated regularly. Pupils thus build confidence in their accomplishments: from the earliest recording of single words or phrases, through to producing extended narratives - we want every child to experience delight and pride in their writing.

INSPIRING EXCELLENCE

"We care, we respect, we do our best"