

English Writing: Intent, Implementation and Impact



INTENT

At The Holme, we believe that all pupils should be guided to confidently communicate their knowledge, ideas and emotions through their writing. Children should feel excited, engaged and driven by the opportunities they are given to write.

We want pupils to acquire a wide vocabulary, a solid understanding of grammar and be able to spell new words by effectively applying the spelling patterns and rules they learn throughout their time in primary school. This will be achieved through a love of reading, and in turn writing, where children feel ownership, and pride in their work. Holme children will write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.

We believe that all pupils should be courageous writers, pushing themselves to write with enthusiasm and wisdom about subjects they feel passionately about.

Children are encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their writing, in part by developing a fluid, joined handwriting style. We believe that all good writers refine and edit their writing over time, so we want children to develop independence in being able to identify their own areas for improvement, editing their work effectively during and after the writing process. We do not put ceilings on what pupils can achieve in writing and we do not hold pre-conceptions about any pupils' ability to make progress.

We understand the importance of parents and carers in supporting their children to develop both grammar, spelling and composition skills, and so we want to encourage a home-school partnership which enables parents and carers to understand how to enhance the skills being taught in school.

IMPLEMENTATION

We teach Writing as whole class lessons, so that all children have access to the age-related skills and knowledge contained in the National Curriculum. Within lessons, teachers and teaching assistants target support to enable all to make progress. This may involve a greater level of scaffolding and/or access to additional support materials such as word banks, a greater level of modelling, or pre-teaching. Children who demonstrate higher ability in that learning are given opportunities to extend and deepen their writing experience in a variety of ways, including through showing greater control, a deeper understanding of the impact that their writing has on the reader and by using a higher level of vocabulary and grammar features.

Children are always encouraged to seek ways to improve their own writing, through resilient editing; using ideas from peers and modelled work; using dictionaries and thesauruses.

Spellings:

Spellings are taught according to the rules and words contained in Appendix 1 of the English National Curriculum. Teachers use the Read Write Inc Scheme (used in Reading) to support their teaching and to provide activities that link to weekly spellings in Ks1. Across the school spellings are taught based on the No Nonsense Spellings scheme.

When marking work, teachers identify key words that children have spelt incorrectly from within that child's known ability and they either give them the correct spelling to practice; indicate the word is misspelt and needs checking; or ask a child to self-check an area of text for errors (depending on the teachers' knowledge of their children's spelling understanding.)

Children in KS2 are given word banks in spelling booklets, with the National Curriculum's statutory word lists. These banks are added to independently by the children as they come across irregular or unusual spellings during lessons. We believe that children need to learn spelling patterns and how and when to apply them- which is a deeper level of understanding than learning to spell individual words.

Handwriting

In EYFS we recognise the range of gross and fine motor skills that lead to successful development of writing. Mark-making is encouraged from the beginning in many ways, but actual handwriting activities are explored in a variety of ways alongside an adult. All teachers teach handwriting using the same non-lead in formation and 'patter' as introduced in EYFS. Naturally cursive script is introduced in Y2, modelled in teacher writing and practised daily. Some children will start to join some naturally joining letters by the end of KS1, and the teaching of naturally joining cursive will continue throughout Year 3. Handwriting is developed in line with the Read, Write Inc scheme, so that children can easily transfer their learning in reading into their spelling and writing.

Throughout KS2, children are taught to write in naturally joining cursive script, with necessary adjustments made for children struggling with correct formation (extra handwriting practice, 1:1 or small group tuition), particularly where children join from other schools with incorrect formation or grip. Children in Y5 and Y6 are encouraged to develop and adapt their own style of cursive script, including whether or not to join certain letters. Children in Y5 and Y6 are encouraged to write in pen.

Grammar and Punctuation:

Grammar and punctuation knowledge and skills are taught through English lessons as much as possible, though are occasionally taught discretely, if teachers feel it is needed to embed and develop understanding or to consolidate skills.

Teachers plan to teach the required skills through the genres of writing that they are teaching, linking it to the genre and topic texts to make it more connected with the intended writing outcome.

In KS2, the children learn how to answer more formal grammar and punctuation questions, often in guided sessions or in pairs or small groups. In upper key stage two, the children complete short practice tests in non-test conditions, to learn test technique and remove the fear of 'testing'.

Topic Texts and Hooks:

Every class topic is linked to a fiction or non-fiction text, sometimes a range of texts both modern and traditional and picture books if these will enhance the children's learning journey. These texts are discussed and updated annually and teachers use them to map out where best to teach the core skills for each year group, building on prior learning and thinking about their individual group's strengths and weaknesses.

Each topic will begin with a 'hook' designed to engage and inspire and excite the children. This 'hook' will feed through the whole topic, providing meaning and purpose to the tasks the children are asked to do. At the Holme we believe that children will develop a love and value for writing if it is developed from an exciting start, and often real-life experience and that the writing is relevant and meaningful.

Marking and Feedback:

Teachers look for opportunities to give immediate, verbal, feedback to children wherever possible, responding to opportunities to deepen or correct children's understanding. These opportunities are often turned into whole class mini-plenaries, often aided by the use of a class visualiser. Children are encouraged to read and celebrate their writing with each other, and encouraged to give peer feedback – where they help each other develop their writing ideas.

When giving written feedback, teachers use 'Tickled Pink' to signal words or passages which effectively demonstrate appropriate learning and meet the success criteria, and 'Green for Growth' to indicate areas of improvement or next steps. In cases where several children need the same next step, teachers may address the issue in small groups or with the whole class, instead of writing in individual books.

Summative Assessment:

Summative assessments will be entered into Arbor termly. Teachers will use their professional judgement to determine whether a child is working within age-related expectations, above or below. They will base their judgements on the quality of the extended writes that pupils produce, as well as shorter, independent pieces of work.

Regular informal moderation of children's written work takes place. In house (between Year groups at the Holme and within the GST and the Bordon cluster. Y2 and Y6 attend Hampshire Standardisation sessions and teachers take part in school and cluster moderation. This ensures teachers are secure in their professional judgements, and can therefore adapt learning to ensure the best possible outcome for each child.

INTENDED IMPACT

- Pupils will feel encouraged, supported and celebrated for their achievements in writing
- Pupils will display an enthusiasm and excitement for writing across a range of genres
- Pupils are confident, independent writers who demonstrate ownership over their own learning and show wisdom and courage in their application
- Pupils of all abilities will be able to succeed in all English lessons because work will be appropriately scaffolded and deepened
- Pupils will have a wide vocabulary that they use within their writing and that they are constantly extending
- Pupils will have a good knowledge of how to adapt their writing based on the purpose and audience
- Pupils will leave primary school being able to effectively apply spelling rules and patterns
- Parents and carers will have a good understanding of how they can support spelling, grammar and composition at home, and contribute regularly to homework
- The % of pupils working at ARE within each year group will be at least in line with national averages.
- The % of pupils working at Greater Depth within each year group will be at least in line with national averages
- There will be no significant gaps in the progress of different groups of pupils (e.g. disadvantaged vs non-disadvantaged)