

Writing Curriculum Intention

Writing is an integral part of our curriculum. At Medeshamstede Academy, our writing, grammar, punctuation and spelling curriculum is based upon the National Curriculum programmes of study and English lessons take place every day across the academy. Pre-formal learners will progress along their developmental pathway through the prime area of communication and language to specific areas of phonics, reading and writing. To inform their plans, teachers use Connecting Steps: B Squared progression statements which breakdown the programmes of study for writing from the National Curriculum into smaller, achievable objectives aligned to pupil's stage of development, cognition and learning. Careful consideration is given to the sequence of the curriculum and ways in which sessions build towards a piece of writing which showcases pupils' acquired knowledge, skills and understanding.

Teachers pay careful attention to the learner pathways and we tailor the curriculum to meet the needs and interests of our pupils, choosing texts to derive the writing curriculum upon which inspire and motivate pupils to learn. In turn, this establishes pupil enjoyment and engagement in the subject.

Our theme-based curriculum is based around the four Cornerstones Curriculum which centres on the belief that children learn better when their interests and fascinations are allowed to flourish. Children are encouraged to explore subjects in a variety of ways and using an integrated approach and four-part pedagogy to:

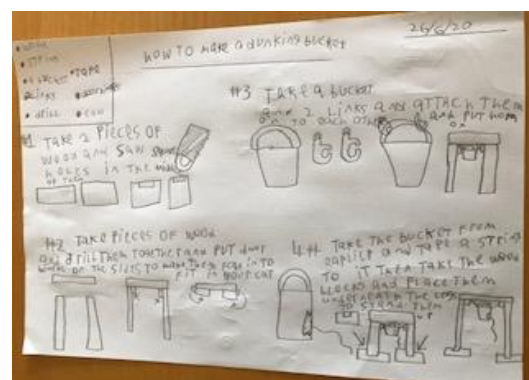
- Engage
- Develop
- Innovate
- Express

This underpins a communication-centred curriculum and a range of writing for real and different purposes. We intend that pupils learn how to understand the relationships between words, word meaning, implied meaning and figurative language, whilst ensuring that children are supported in their spelling, grammar and punctuation strategies. We intend that pupils will be taught to consciously plan sentence compositions in speaking and transfer these into writing to become writers who are able to use correct Standard English, knowing when and how to experiment with tone and structure. This prepares pupils for functional and/or GCSE English syllabuses as formal stage learners in key stage 4.

Classroom displays reflect the termly imaginative learning theme to create a consistent visual tool which supports pupils' in becoming self-assured, independent linguists. Visual support through word and vocabulary mats ensures key terminology and vocabulary remain consistent for all pupils to access every day.

Implementation

Our English curriculum is derived around a sequence of high-quality key texts linked to the four Cornerstones termly imaginative learning project. We use each book to create opportunities to develop reading fluency and comprehension with a focus on key reading



strategies and skills; develop grammar and punctuation knowledge and understanding to use and apply across the wider curriculum; explore the writing structure and features of different genres, identify the purpose and audience; plan and write an initial piece of writing with a clear context and purpose before evaluating the effectiveness of writing by editing and redrafting.

Pre-formal and semi-formal learners are taught sentence composition through the language and communication approach of **Colourful semantics** (a UK research-based approach created by Alison Bryan). This approach is aimed at teaching the components of a sentence to develop understanding of grammar. It is rooted in the meaning of words (semantics). Colourful semantics reassembles sentences by cutting them up into their thematic roles and then colour codes them. It teaches learners to:

- Understand information and produce sentences
- Communicate their own ideas effectively
- Develop competent use of simple and complex sentence structure
- Develop a concept of narrative (e.g. what makes up a 'story')
- Produce, read and write grammatically correct sentences (through modelling)

Some pupils may find the physical process of writing challenging due to difficulties associated with fine motor skills, core stability (muscle tone) and/or sensory praxis (knowing how to begin the writing sequence). Targeted occupational therapy supports such needs and helps pupils build stamina for writing. The Academy also uses word processing programs to overcome this barrier and support pupils to write longer pieces. Access arrangements for exams/tests may include a scribe for pupils with fine motor skill difficulties.

Curriculum Impact

We measure the effectiveness and impact of our English Writing, Grammar and Spelling curriculum in a variety of different ways. Where appropriate, we use national and summative testing to assess pupils' outcomes for Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling as part of the Statutory Assessment Tests (SATs for Year 6 pupils). Teachers use formative assessment and summative assessments for formal learners to enable pupils' progress and attainment in the subject matter to be evaluated. Additionally, pupils complete writing projects on a half termly basis, where written work is assessed to inform teachers of next steps and pupil's successes. The impact of the curriculum can be seen through pupils' work books, pupil profiles, Records of Achievement and class displays. All pupils have a long-term outcome for writing as part of their school report for their Annual review.

Through lesson and pupils' book monitoring, it is evident that pupils are being well supported to acquire the necessary skills and subject knowledge in order to develop as confident writers. Writing monitored in books demonstrates that the curriculum is taught at a stage-appropriate standard across each phase, with additional opportunities planned for pupils to demonstrate their ability to work at a higher standard. Learning visits demonstrate that learning is being broken down into smaller steps and modelling supports pupils in the writing process – ensuring that the subject as a whole is regularly being reviewed to ensure learning is being embedded into pupils' long term memory.

The impact of our writing curriculum including grammar, spelling and punctuation curriculum can also be measured through the acquisition of pupil voice and talking to the children about their own learning. Pupil voice indicates that the children are enjoying their learning and can talk about the subject and curriculum opportunities.