

Curriculum Q & A in Writing– updated 10.06.2022

<i>Subject Curriculum</i>	<p>Does the subject curriculum match or exceed the breadth of the National Curriculum?</p> <p>Writing has been planned in our school to match the breadth of the National Curriculum. The implementation of our English curriculum is greatly supported by carefully structured unit plans, leading pupils through component knowledge and skills to composite knowledge and skills required in writing. These unit plans have been cross-checked with the national curriculum to ensure full coverage.</p> <p>Senior leaders check weekly that the curriculum is being covered in each class through ‘Curriculum Coverage Checklists’. Senior leaders conduct book scrutinies to check curriculum coverage and quality of work. This also supports quick intervention if needed to support teachers to ensure the full school writing curriculum is being taught.</p>
	<p>Is challenge understood in terms of curriculum end points?</p> <p>Teachers are familiar with the Whole School Curriculum Map which informs teachers of what the children have learnt in the previous year group and what they will go on to learn next.</p> <p>In our school, there is a strong emphasis on the teaching of writing. The English curriculum has been developed to ensure high quality texts are used to enable children to produce good writing. The writing genre, book titles and writing outcomes are specified on the curriculum maps. These specific writing outcomes ensure that the teachers are very clear on what the children need to produce at the end of every week.</p> <p>Teachers and support staff attend Professional Development Meetings including ones led by the English leader in which staff see the abilities, skills and standard of writing expected in all year groups, including by the end of primary school (KS2).</p>
<i>Curriculum components</i>	<p>Do pupils have the prior knowledge necessary to learn new curriculum content?</p> <p>Our English (writing) curriculum has been planned to ensure sequential, layered knowledge acquisition so that children are continuously embedding the key writing knowledge and skills required to become fluent and effective writers over time.</p> <p>The whole school curriculum map for English (writing) has been carefully devised to ensure that pupils learn about and practice writing in the form of a range of genres, which are revisited and developed as the pupils progress through the curriculum. The unit plans have been written to ensure that prior knowledge is revisited at the start of each new text or writing genre.</p> <p>Our pedagogical approach is based upon Rosenshine’s Principles of Direct Instruction, which includes a daily review component at the start of every lesson. This ensures that teachers recap and activate any relevant prior knowledge before introducing the children to new content. This knowledge may be about the text that they have been using or the features of the writing genre that they are focusing on.</p>
	<p>Does curriculum planning identify small enough component steps so that all pupils can ultimately achieve ambitious end points?</p> <p>The whole school curriculum map enables teaching progression in all areas of writing ensuring that a range of text types are taught.</p>

Curriculum Q & A in Writing– updated 10.06.2022

	<p>All of the English unit plans have been carefully written to provide teachers with a clear outline of the progression of lessons – a sequence of component tasks, leading to a composite outcome. Below is an example of what a week of English teaching looks like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Monday – Reading comprehension – lessons are linked to text (i.e. immersion into the text, role play, drama, responding to a text, identifying features of a text). -Tuesday- Reading comprehension – lessons are linked to text (i.e. immersion into the text, role play, drama, responding to a text, identifying features of a text). -Wednesday- Writing - vocabulary, grammar and punctuation (see section on grammar). -Thursday- Writing composition - planning -Friday- Writing composition - writing and editing. <p>These lesson sequences are planned so that relevant prior learning is addressed at the start. This allows for children’s prior knowledge to be retrieved and brought to the front of the children’s thinking. This provides teachers with an opportunity to differentiate these component steps where needed so that all children can access the learning. This could include spending time recapping key features of a text type or revisiting vocabulary that has been taught previously.</p>
<p><i>Curriculum sequencing</i></p>	<p>Does planning consider the sequencing of content at different scales to create readiness for future learning:</p> <p>a) Within the weekly lesson sequence</p> <p>English (writing) lessons are sequenced to follow on distinctly from relevant prior learning. At the start of lessons, prior learning is reviewed with the class. Throughout the lessons, questioning and formative assessments are woven into teachers’ practice. At the end of the independent practice part of the lesson, teacher’s review what has been taught so far, helping to lead on appropriately to the learning which will take place in the next lesson. Please refer to the example week of English teaching provided above.</p> <p>b) Within the unit plan</p> <p>Lessons within an English unit plan are structured to ensure sequential, layered knowledge acquisition. An overview of each unit (unit plan) gives the teacher a clear outline of the progression of lessons. The unit plans are written effectively to ensure that as the pupils move through the curriculum, they are taught a wide range of text types, vocabulary, grammatical features and the Alan Peat ‘super sentences’.</p> <p>c) Within the year or phase?</p> <p>The sequence in which topics are taught is progressive so they are in an order which allows the relevant prior learning to be taught in previous topics that year/phase.</p> <p>The following text types are taught throughout the year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - REC: Instructions (recipes)/ Recounts (retelling stories, things they have done)/ Narrative writing and made up stories. - KS1: Narrative – retelling stories, writing in role, writing sequels to stories, descriptive writing, poetry and comics. Non-fiction- author studies, newspaper reports, report writing and instructions. -KS2: Narrative – retelling stories, writing in role, descriptive writing, writing extended versions of stories, writing prequels, poetry, diary entries, action and adventure stories. Non-fiction – persuasive texts, letters, discursive texts, reports, explanations, recounts and emails.

Curriculum Q & A in Writing– updated 10.06.2022

	<p>The same text type is revisited across year groups and key stages to build up and develop the children’s knowledge of a range of genres.</p> <p>Children are also taught Alan Peat ‘Super Sentences’. These sentences help children to use a wide variation of sentence types and punctuation in their writing.</p>
<p><i>Rigour (where relevant)</i></p>	<p>Do pupils gain disciplinary knowledge of how the subject ‘works’ and engage in disciplinary practices?</p> <p>Teachers use and insist upon children using the correct vocabulary and grammatical structures. This is modelled consistently by teachers when delivering English lessons. Discrete vocabulary, grammar and punctuation lessons are part of the weekly lesson sequence in the English unit plans. In these lessons, grammar rules are taught explicitly using the correct terminology, such as ‘fronted adverbials’ or ‘subordinating conjunctions’. The pupils then correctly use these terms themselves and have a secure understanding of what they mean.</p> <p>Developing vocabulary is a huge focus in our schools. A wide and developed vocabulary will enable the children to be effective, engaging writers. Vocabulary walls are used in the classrooms to display ‘tier 2’ words that have been taught to the children. This display allows teachers to refer back to this vocabulary and to model its meaning in a range of contexts. Pupils will in turn use this vocabulary in their spoken and written sentences.</p> <p>The reading comprehension lessons at the start of every weekly lesson sequence are planned to be linked to text, including immersion, role play, responding to the text etc. These lessons develop the pupil understanding of the text type and improve comprehension.</p> <p>When modelling writing, teachers use a ‘think aloud’ process to clearly demonstrate to the children how sentences and coherent pieces of writing should be formed. Teachers use think aloud to model ‘Fred Fingers’ for phonics, using vocabulary from the text/display, using the correct grammar and punctuation etc. In addition, the teacher will model making mistakes and how to correct these. The children are therefore shown the process of writing, which they are able to replicate when completing their independent work.</p> <p>Children are also taught that qualities such as determination is essential in writing to build stamina and complete an extended piece of writing. The children are also taught that it is ok to make mistakes, and that is how we learn.</p> <p>Do teachers confuse ‘learning through doing’ (a pedagogy) with the curriculum goal of acquiring disciplinary knowledge?</p> <p>In lessons, new knowledge is taught in small steps and modelled explicitly by teachers, this allows disciplinary knowledge to be taught prior to children practising what has been taught to them.</p>
<p><i>Memory</i></p>	<p>Do teachers identify crucial components, emphasise and repeat these and ensure they are remembered long term?</p> <p>All lessons begin with retrieval practice. Examples of this are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher asking questions about the text or the text type that activates prior knowledge e.g. ‘What was the first thing that happened in the story?’ ‘What are the features of a diary entry?’ • The teacher asking questions about vocabulary previously taught which may be used in the lesson.

Curriculum Q & A in Writing– updated 10.06.2022

	<p>The information which the teacher chooses to retrieve in these lessons will be relevant to the next part of the learning which is going to take place.</p> <p>Mini plenaries are used effectively throughout lessons to address misconceptions or emphasise key teaching points.</p> <p>A discrete retrieval practice lesson is also timetabled weekly. During this session, teachers can revisit vocabulary, text features or grammatical content to ensure these are remembered long term.</p> <p>When pupils struggle, do teachers check which prior knowledge components are missing/not automatic?</p> <p>All lessons are structured to include retrieval practice, teacher modelling, guided practice (under close supervision), independent practice and a plenary. Teachers work alongside pupils throughout the lesson. The most effective way to identify an individual pupil’s misconceptions or missing prior knowledge is by seeing how they work. This may be as part of a class, group or on their own. The teacher has many assessment opportunities within a lesson to identify any pupils who are falling behind or have missing knowledge.</p> <p>If a teacher identifies the barrier to understanding or a skill/knowledge being automatic, they can work with the child to teach them. If a longer-term approach is required, they can organise for this to be put in place (for example, if a child does not know how to use full stops accurately, they may be given additional practice activities as part of an intervention).</p>
<p><i>Pedagogy</i></p>	<p><i>Do teaching decisions achieve curricular intent?</i></p> <p>Do teachers apply generic pedagogies, e.g. differentiation, feedback) without considering curricular intent?</p> <p>Teachers tailor their pedagogies depending on what is being taught and the particular children in their class, however all teachers teach and model new knowledge explicitly before children practise it.</p> <p>Teachers consider the differentiation needed in a lesson depending on the individual children that make up the class in tandem with the learning intended; as a result in some lessons there may be more levels of differentiation than in others. Teachers use differentiation thoughtfully and purposefully.</p> <p>Is ‘challenge’ misunderstood as generic activity types?</p> <p>In all classes, children have a wide range of abilities, and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. Teachers achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons, through differentiated group work, while in others we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use support staff to support some children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.</p> <p>Do activities require confident knowledge of too many ‘fragile’ components, overloading working memory?</p> <p>English (writing) is planned to be taught in a way the does not overload working memory, including of specific children who have known working memory difficulties. The weekly sequence of lessons means that the component tasks taught and completed at the start of the week are useful and supportive when completing the composite writing task. The planning lesson, in particular, is vital to</p>

Curriculum Q & A in Writing– updated 10.06.2022

	<p>ensure that the working memory is not overloaded when the children are composing an extended piece of writing.</p> <p>In addition, scaffolds are provided to all children during English lessons to aid them in accessing the learning successfully. These may include differentiated writing frames (KS1 only), word banks or sentence starters. The classroom displays, such as the vocabulary wall, are also supportive in not overloading working memory. Teachers are consistent in modelling the use of these various resources so that the children feel confident to use these themselves.</p> <p>Teachers understand how schemas work in the brain and that component knowledge must be secure for children to develop confident knowledge in maths. This understanding is incorporated into the planning and delivery of lessons for all children, and takes into consideration of specific children with SEND and working memory difficulties.</p>
<i>Assessment</i>	<p><i>Timely feedback on component learning?</i></p> <p>Is formative assessment fit for purpose, e.g. a timely check that curriculum components have been remembered, rather than, more problematically, a summative test of composites being used to identify components?</p> <p>Within lessons and between lessons in a sequence, component aspects of knowledge are checked and re-taught if necessary, so that children are able to develop secure schemas of knowledge.</p> <p>Next lessons are planned based on formative assessments made by the teacher in prior lessons so that sequential, layered knowledge acquisition is gained and lessons are informed by previous learning in the class.</p> <p>Is summative data collection disproportionate, inefficient or unsustainable for staff?</p> <p>We have two summative assessment points in the year, January and July. Here teachers assess each child against fundamental statements linked to the National Curriculum.</p> <p>This is an effective, efficient and non-arduous process for staff to complete. In January, it provides an ‘on track’ grade and in July, an end of year grade relating to meeting the expected standard for a year group or being below, working towards or working at greater depth.</p> <p>Are pupils who fall behind identified within the lesson sequence, or less helpfully, are interventions based on data from a summative assessment?</p> <p>During a lesson, the teacher will use a range of formative assessment to identify any pupils who are falling behind. Modelling is followed by guided practice which provides teachers with an opportunity to spot any pupils who need further support. The teacher/support staff may then work with a focus group to continue to model and support children with the process.</p> <p>The teacher will also circulate the classroom assessing the children’s work and identifying misconceptions. These misconceptions are addressed through mini-plenaries. Children’s work is displayed under the visualiser in order to do this.</p> <p>Furthermore, children are asked to check their own writing for the misconception and edit/improve where necessary.</p>

Curriculum Q & A in Writing– updated 10.06.2022

<i>Culture</i>	<p><i>A climate of high expectations where pupils' love of the subject can flourish</i></p>
	<p>How do teachers get the best from pupils? Across the school, a culture of high expectations is fostered. This is therefore the same in writing lessons. Teachers insist on children being focused and engaged in learning, producing a good amount of work in lessons and working hard.</p> <p>Teachers model this constantly in all lessons. Teachers' expectations of how children work, their presentation and work produced is made clear to children in lessons and is celebrated when achieved using positive praise and the school's reward systems.</p>
	<p>How do teachers enrich the curriculum subject? Teachers enrich writing in our school through the use of high-quality and carefully chosen texts. Each unit plan is centred around a text to engage the children and inspire the content of their writing. The authors of these texts are considered to ensure the children are exposed to both male and female writers, as well as those from different backgrounds. The characters and settings in these texts have also been thought about to ensure that the children in our schools can access and relate to their experiences.</p>
	<p>Are there mechanisms for taking action when pupils display low effort, for example in written work and homework? The school's behaviour policy is clear and understood by children, and is used as needed to maintain a culture of high expectations. Teachers are well-practised in seeking support from senior leaders if needed if an occurrence persists where a child is displaying low effort. Teachers also make effective use of the SENCO if a child's learning or behaviour and attitude is of concern.</p> <p>The school aims to maintain good communication with parents/carers. If a child's work or effort is of concern, parents will be invited to discuss this with teachers and next steps will be identified, actioned and monitored.</p>
<i>Systems</i>	<p><i>Subject processes and staff support</i></p> <p>What do the strengths or weaknesses already identified indicate about effective functioning to deliver a quality subject curriculum? Subject knowledge in writing is imperative for effective teaching and learning, particularly in relation to grammar, punctuation and vocabulary. The unit plans provide teachers with information about the grammatical areas that they are required to teach. Teachers are further signposted to high-quality resources that they can also refer to when delivering these grammar lessons.</p> <p>The school is rigorous in identifying the children who need additional support and plans are actioned in a timely manner and then monitored to ensure children are catching up. Furthermore, children with SEND are supported so that they can achieve well in our ambitious curriculum.</p> <p>A culture of high-expectations is fostered across year groups and there is consistency in class of what is expected from the children in lessons and in their work.</p> <p>As an inner-city London school, staff turnover is recognised as a reality as teachers move out of the capital. The high quality and well-structured English unit plans</p>

Curriculum Q & A in Writing– updated 10.06.2022

	<p>enable new teachers to feel supported in teaching writing effectively and are useful when inducting teachers to our pedagogical approach.</p> <p>Probe systems for staff support and subject CPD, curriculum construction and to ensure consistent quality of subject education.</p> <p>When new teachers are recruited, subject leaders lead coaching meetings to induct staff as to the effective teaching of writing and monitor and support the new staff member. Where appropriate guided observations are organised for new staff to observe best practice alongside a senior leader.</p> <p>CPD is led by leaders from across the partnership of schools and is designed to be useful and impactful for teachers.</p> <p>Teachers’ workload is well-considered when planning the English (writing) curriculum. The curriculum is written by some of the most experienced teachers and leaders in our school partnership and informs teachers of how they should teach writing genres and grammar so that the curriculum is covered in the breadth and depth expected. All teachers work from these English unit plans to ensure progression and coverage. These unit plans are then adapted and resourced as appropriate to meet the needs of individual classes.</p> <p>The English marking policy is effective and not onerous on staff, children who make errors are asked to revisit some of their errors in ‘Fix it Time’ (year 2 up). All teachers are coached by senior leaders in professional development days (termly) which includes a writing lesson visit (annually). Book scrutinies by the subject leader and senior leadership are frequent and allow for coaching teachers and monitoring curriculum coverage to be checked and support made available to teachers if needed.</p>
<i>Policy</i>	<p>Impact of whole school-wide policies on subject delivery?</p> <p>How whole-school timetabling, marking, assessment, CPD policies and priorities etc affect the quality of subject education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timetabling – This is done by a senior leader and ensures English is taught every day. • Marking – Marking policy in English is effective and not onerous on staff. Children who make errors are asked to revisit some of their errors in ‘Fix it Time’ (year 2 up). • Assessment – Formative assessment is continuous within and between lessons. There are two summative assessment points each year, January and July. These are based on National Curriculum fundamental statements needed to be learnt in each year group and are not onerous on staff, but are effective. • CPD policies – This is planned according to the needs of the subject in the school at the time in order to be purposeful and impactful.