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## Writing Policy

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## **WRITING POLICY**

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## 1. SUBJECT STATEMENT

### Intent

Writing is absolutely central to teaching and learning in GT. Our children are provided with every opportunity as well as all of the necessary means to produce high-quality writing for a range of purposes. They are able to structure a variety of cohesive texts which, as they advance through the different year groups, display an increasingly high level of complexity and sophistication. In short, the teaching of the subject area is implemented and co-ordinated in such a way as to develop writers who are as fluent as they are satisfied at having produced outcomes of the highest standard.

We expect our children to:

- Develop a fluent, confident and effective voice expressed through a range of text types
- Develop an enjoyment of the English language through being able to write for a given purpose in a structured, organised as well as imaginative way
- Develop the discipline of systematically planning, drafting, amending, improving and evaluating each writing project
- Make explicit and informed connections between oracy and literacy and, through being better able to articulate this connection, improve self esteem
- Consolidate growing understanding gained from reading various text types through the written response to them
- Consolidate growing lexical and grammatical recognition skills through the application of them in writing
- Learn the principles of grammar and punctuation in a way that is as structural as it is organic
- Take advantage of the multiple opportunities the school provides for non-classroom-based writing
- Draw lasting satisfaction from having their writing published and displayed in the school's various dedicated platforms

This policy supports our whole school priority to: *focus on improving attainment and enjoyment of Writing (and Reading) across the school and ensure they have a high profile.*

### Implementation

At George Tomlinson, the teaching of English proceeds on the basis of encouraging each child's written voice to develop in an organic and stimulating way. Each phase of learning entails a clearly delineated progression of the necessary skills to be acquired, in tandem with a teaching environment which encourages greater written fluency – an approach which provides the opportunity to organise clear thinking on the page as much as it does increasingly meaningful personal expression. Throughout the school day children engage in an enriching variety of activities designed to develop, consolidate and extend their literacy skills. These include:

- daily phonics sessions in EYFS and KS1
- handwriting sessions to develop fluent, legible and speedy writing
- grammar taught as an integral and complimentary component of the writing process itself
- spelling taught on a building block basis, graduating from phonemes and graphemes to root words, prefix, suffix, word families, etymology etc
- the correlation between visual, verbal and textual communication continually reinforced
- regular rehearsal of the themes touched on in a given writing project through planned discussions, debates and drama activities

- a high-quality set text which is both analysed in detail in reading lessons and used as the basis for written responses in English lessons
- encouragement of independence and empowerment by means of a gradual and strategic removal of scaffolding in favour of more open-ended planning, structuring formats (worksheet-free lessons in which students compile their own individual grammar, punctuation and vocabulary toolkits)
- Stamina in writing built through daily time allotted to proof-reading and amending, as well as further planned stages of re-writing and improving before concluding publishing phase
- detailed self-evaluation exercises are used as an opportunity to both consolidate learning and celebrate good progress

## **Impact**

As the highly sophisticated synthesis of a range of communication skills – reading, speaking and listening, logical processing, knowledge acquisition, analytical thinking etc – the early acquisition of good skills in writing is decisive in all subsequent stages of education. As such it is absolutely fundamental to a child’s intellectual, interpersonal, emotional, cultural and spiritual development. The strategic and conscientious fostering of this development by means of carefully planned English projects – in tandem with a healthy range of less formalised writing opportunities – is the ethos which the school adheres to. In this way, children are able to draw the various strands of their learning together in a way that is as organic as it is endlessly stimulating. The aim is always that pupils leave our school as confident and formidable communicators in both the spoken and the written word.

## **2. TEACHING AND LEARNING**

**\*Phonics see reading policy**

**\*EYFS – See EYFS writing policy and year 1**

### **Year 2**

Supplemented by a range of relevant visual stimulus – treating pictures as texts, identifying parts of speech through ‘colourful semantics’ etc – this year group will follow the progression as laid out in the recommended writing flowchart (see Appendix 1). That is, following a discussion of text type, audience and purpose (see Appendix 2), they will examine a high-quality set text in detail, discussing its structure and grammatical content before, by means of an appropriate planning framework, applying those principles to their own innovated piece of writing. Drama and oracy strategies are used to support the exploration of texts and creative writing. In terms of laying down the foundation stones of solid sense and cohesion at sentence level, year 2 will focus on the secure ordering of Subject Verb Object in simple sentences and in joining main clauses together with connectives to make compound sentences (see Appendix 3).

### **Year 3-5**

By the time pupils enter year 3, they will be following the progression as laid out in the recommended writing flowchart (see Appendix 1), except in a way that builds outwards in terms of structural and grammatical complexity while at the same time allowing for a strategic and graduated withdrawal of scaffolding. The point of entry into the increasing levels of ambition, cohesion and complexity expected at this stage will be the more thorough analysis of set high-quality texts, from a variety of writing genres, in terms of things like their tone, purpose, (see Appendix 2) structure and grammatical content. Solid sense and cohesion at sentence level needs now to be augmented with a

demonstration of the firm control of additional clauses in the form of complex sentences (see Appendix 3). A clear progression in terms of cohesion within and across paragraphs needs to be demonstrated through the assured and consistent use of topic sentences and the increasingly confident control of cohesive devices such as connectives, pronouns, temporal markers etc. The full range of punctuation needs to be taught as a structural component of each piece of writing. Daily time needs to be allotted to proof-reading/amending. To develop and consolidate stamina, sufficient re-drafting and improving time needs to be included in each writing project. Carefully planned evaluation activities should be a regular feature of the writing process.

## **Year 6**

During the early part of their time in year 6, pupils are carefully and thoroughly prepared for that later phase when they need to display a substantial degree of independence and self sufficiency in terms of producing texts of a quality that meets all of the expectations as laid out in the end of Key Stage 2 writing expectations. Scaffolding is reduced to a minimum while more of a premium is placed on the quality of the exemplar texts; the thoroughness of the analysis of those same texts; the explicit modelling and consequent creation of sophisticated written responses; the development of writing stamina and good judgement through self and peer assessment and regular proof-reading and re-drafting. With the full range of this curriculum level's grammar and punctuation expectations taught as an integral part of the writing process, students progressively build their work towards more structurally secure outcomes that are as versatile and lively as they are fluent.

## **Resources**

### **Parental Support**

At George Tomlinson Primary School we know that children make their greatest progress in writing when home and school work in partnership. At the 'Meet the Teacher' at the beginning of the year writing standards and expectations are explained for the relevant year group. Regular meetings throughout the year also keep parents informed (see Assessment Policy).

We encourage parents to:

- support children with learning their weekly spellings
- practicing their handwriting
- for children with dyslexia diagnosis to practice touch typing using [bbc bitesize](#)
- encourage children to write for a range of purposes, including shopping lists, stories, letters, postcards, poems, diaries etc.
- Year 1 – 3 send home a class mascot with special book for children to write in each week and share with the class.

### **Writing for both enrichment and pleasure**

George Tomlinson seeks to provide its pupils with a broad range of opportunities to enhance their powers of personal expression in the form of writing. Already having built up a school community of across-the-board avid readers, children are encouraged through a raft of initiatives – including the year 3 and 4/year 5 and 6 books clubs; in-class book clubs; the Classic Book Olympics; the *Booklookers* school reading magazine and regular book review homework assignments – to produce written responses to their reading. In this way, pupils come to more clearly understand that good writers are first of all good readers, that the interdependence between the two activities is an ongoing, as much as all-round improving process. In the particular case of *Booklookers* magazine, not

only is an editorial staff drawn from years 4,5 and 6 able to devote extra dedicated time to honing \*their writing skills but, in the form of the regular writing competitions the magazine runs, all children are given the opportunity to be celebrated and rewarded for their efforts.

as often as is possible, children are encouraged to enter outside writing competitions. Besides this, each child has been given a 'free writing' book in which they can express themselves in whichever way and however often they choose.

Our Early Years team ensures that all classes make links with the local library. We share our favourite books, and we use our book corners to promote favourite texts. We foster links with authors and illustrators in our community, and create opportunities for the children to meet them for extra encouragement in developing their own writing and reading skills.

The school ensures the PTFA is involved in fund raising throughout the year for the library, the book shed and other book resources.

### **3. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

All children have equal opportunities to reach their full potential across the English writing curriculum, regardless of their race, gender, cultural background, attainment or of any physical or sensory disability.

### **4. INCLUSION**

#### **English as an additional language (EAL)**

Children who are new to English are assessed and support is put in place to help them with their language acquisition and phonic skills. Where children are identified as needing additional support to meet age-related expectations, the school offers a range of intervention support strategies, including:

- additional 1:1 reading with an adult or volunteer
- small group or 1:1 phonic sessions
- colourful semantics
- precision teaching
- action words

There are also sessions and workshops which children and their families can attend that will support with reading at home:

- English as second language course
- Speech and Language workshops
- Cognition and learning workshops (working memory)

Dual language books are available to take home and books from other cultures are celebrated and studied through the curriculum and during events in book week. In the classroom flipchart planning includes pictorial representations and google translate can be used. Teachers use strategies such as giving EAL learners thinking time to process, using gestures, scaffolded talk and differentiated questioning to support EAL learners (see EAL Policy).

## **SEND**

Some children experience learning differences which affects their progress in writing. Class teachers inform the SENDCo and Inclusion Manager if they are concerned that a child may have underlying learning difficulties. The child is observed and assessed, sometimes by outside agencies and support is put in place (see SEND Policy). See above for the list of interventions the school offers.

## **5. ASSESSMENT**

Ongoing formative assessment is done through marking and feedback (written and verbal - see marking and feedback policy). Pupils' work is marked against the learning intention and their targets. Targets are set at the beginning of each writing unit in collaboration with each pupil.

All teachers assess independent writing and update Target Tracker formative statements throughout the year and summative steps are updated three times a year to track progress towards end of year expectations. (See Assessment Policy)

Year 2 and Year 6 assess against the Teacher Assessment Framework for English Writing (which are stuck in pupils' books).

## **6. THE ROLE OF THE SUBJECT LEADER**

The role of the subject leader in English is to coordinate the teaching of writing and reading across all phases of the school. This is in order to secure a high-quality writing provision for every child, inclusive of the most streamlined and bespoke use of planning, the most effective delivery and proactive assessment methods leading to an overall optimal level of achievement.

Some key duties that the English subject leader should undertake over the course of the year include:

- Monitoring of progress in children's writing books
- Monitoring of the efficacy of teachers' short, mid and long-term planning
- Learning walks and other lesson observations where necessary
- Planning and organising a stimulating variety of writing enrichment opportunities and competitions
- Helping to identify, facilitate and deliver the professional development needs of staff
- Liaising with SLT to help implement school improvement priorities
- Liaising with the school SENDCO to best support children writing difficulties
- Organising, maintaining and cataloguing resources
- Keeping abreast of new initiatives in the teaching of writing