

# HORNSEA BURTON AND SKIPSEA SCHOOLS WRITING POLICY

## Introduction

This policy document is written after consultation with the teaching staff in both schools. It is a working document, which reflects the ethos and practice within the two schools in relation to the teaching of writing. It has been written with due regard to the requirements of the 2014 National Curriculum and it will be monitored and evaluated according to changes within this document as and when they arise.

## Fundamental Principles

We believe that teaching children to understand the power of writing is an important part of our job as teachers. We believe that if we equip the children with the correct writing tools, they will be able to use them effectively within a literate world.

As teachers, we are responsible for providing children with a stimulating writing environment in which we offer encouragement and good quality modelling of writing. We aim to have clear expectations of writing and to communicate these targets to the children. We aim to have high expectations of the finished writing product and to encourage the children to maintain the same standards at all times.

We believe that a successful writing classroom should include:

- Clear expectations, targets and regular observation and assessment of progress towards the targets.
- A stimulating writing environment with
  - displayed and celebrated examples of children's own writing
  - opportunities for writing to be linked to activities across the curriculum.
- All adults (not just teachers) as role models who use writing explicitly in the classroom for a variety of purposes and demonstrate on a regular basis what they are doing.
- A wide experience of reading as the primary source of knowledge about how written language looks and sounds.
- The systematic, regular and direct teaching of phonics, spelling and grammar.
- Rich oral experience of spoken language opportunities as a preparation for writing.
- Regular shared writing and guided writing sessions in order to teach and refine the skills of text composition.

- Opportunities for supported and independent writing linked to and developed from shared writing.

It is our aim therefore, to provide these important factors within our classrooms in order to provide a supportive and stimulating writing environment.

### **Developing Writing**

In order to be an effective and successful writer, we need to

- Teach children to perceive the power of writing and equip them to use it well.
- Teach children to enjoy writing and to be competent, confident and not to hesitate in putting their ideas on paper.
- Teach children to recognise the need to adapt their writing to suit a range of audiences and purposes.
- Teach the children the most appropriate form of writing for a given task.
- Teach children to use spelling and grammar accurately and with confidence.
- Teach children a fluent and legible handwriting style in which to write.
- Give children opportunities to listen to quality English.

### **The Teaching of Writing**

We follow the [2014 National Curriculum](#) and teach the specific objectives which are the most appropriate to our children's needs.

In Foundation Stage, practitioners follow the recommendations of the National Strategies resource 'Mark Making Matters'. Within the Foundation Stage both the indoor and outdoor environment has resources to support the children's mark making, drawing and writing. It is ensured that the children have opportunity to use mark making, drawing and writing to explore and develop their own interests, by providing an environment in which creativity, originality and expressions are valued. The children are given time and space to concentrate on mark-making activities using a wide variety of resources that are challenging and interesting and can be used in a variety of ways as they express their thoughts, ideas and understanding. Practitioners involve themselves in the children's mark-making by modelling the process and reordering children's thoughts. The explicit teaching of handwriting is outlined in the handwriting policy. As part of the phonics programme the

children are taught to segment words into phonemes for spelling and writing (see reading policy).

### **Transcription**

Reading should be taught alongside spelling, so that children understand that they can read back words they have spelt. Children should be shown how to segment spoken words into individual phonemes and then how to represent the phonemes by the appropriate graphemes. In Key Stage 1, children will be spelling some words in a phonetically plausible way, even if sometimes incorrectly. Writing simple dictated sentences that include words taught gives children opportunities to apply and practise their spelling. In Lower Key Stage 2, children should be learning to spell new words correctly and have plenty of practice in spelling them. They should build on their work in Key Stage 1, continuing to be supported in understanding and applying the concepts of word structure. In Upper Key Stage 2, children should continue to be taught to understand and apply the concepts of word structure so that they can draw on their knowledge of morphology and etymology to spell correctly.

### **Composition**

At the beginning of Key Stage 1, not all children will have the spelling and handwriting skills they need to write down everything that they can compose out loud. Reading and listening to whole books, not simply extracts, helps children to increase their vocabulary and grammatical knowledge, including their knowledge of the vocabulary and grammar of Standard English. Children should understand, through being shown, the skills and processes essential to writing:

- Thinking aloud as they collect ideas.
- Drafting.
- Re-drafting to check their meaning is clear.

Drama and role-play can contribute to the quality of children's writing by providing opportunities for them to develop and order their ideas through playing roles and improvising scenes in various settings. Children should have opportunities to write for a range of real purposes and audience as part of their work across the curriculum. These purposes and audiences should underpin the decisions about the form the writing should take, such as narrative, an explanation or a description.

## **Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation**

The school follows the spelling and grammar requirements detailed in the September 2014 National Curriculum. In Key Stage 1, children should be taught to recognise sentence boundaries in spoken sentences and to use the vocabulary listed in English Appendix 2 (2014 National Curriculum) when their writing is discussed. They should begin to use some of the distinctive features of Standard English in their writing. The terms for discussing language should be embedded for children in the course of discussing their writing with them. In Lower Key Stage 2, children should be explicitly taught the terminology and concepts set out in English Appendix 2, and be able to apply them correctly to examples of real language, such as their own writing or books that they have read. In Upper Key Stage 2, children should add to their knowledge of linguistic terms, including those to describe grammar, so that they can discuss their writing and reading.

## **Planning Writing**

Through our medium-term plans, we give clear guidance on the objectives and teaching strategies for each unit of work. Our medium-term planning is directly linked to the 2014 National Curriculum expectations from the guidance documents. Each teacher is responsible for assessing the children in their class and teaching the objectives relevant to their needs. It is important that teachers plan over a block of work, not weekly, to ensure the development of the reading and writing process. Teachers are encouraged to manipulate the order of units to take advantage of cross curricular links. By using the links, children are able to broaden and enhance their command of English by having different contexts in which to develop their writing.

## **Shared Writing**

Shared writing can be observed in all classrooms at the appropriate times. We believe that shared writing enables us as teachers to work with the whole class, to model, explore and discuss the choices writers make at the point of writing. It is also invaluable for making links between reading and writing by investigating how an author has used language to achieve a particular effect. During shared writing we also scaffold aspects of writing - e.g. spelling and concentrate children's attention on how to tackle more difficult words. Shared writing is invaluable for allowing the opportunity to teach different aspects of the

writing process. In all Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 classrooms, teachers model how to plan, draft, edit and proof-read writing.

We believe that shared writing should be as interactive and as fun as possible. Therefore, we tend to use one or a combination of the following teaching techniques:

- Teacher Demonstration - we demonstrate how to write a text or a particular feature of that text.
- Teacher Scribing- the children offer their contributions building upon the teacher's demonstration.
- Supported Composition- Children use white boards or books to write in pairs or individually a limited amount of the text to ensure understanding.
- By using an appropriate combination of these techniques, it ensures that the children are fully engaged in the Teaching of the Writing process.

### **Guided Writing**

It is our aim to devote guided writing time to each group in the class when appropriate. Guided writing will mainly cover the following teaching points:

- To support children in planning and drafting their own work.
- To revise and edit work in progress
- To provide differentiated support for particular groups.

### **Independent Writing**

It is our aim to make the flow from shared writing to independent writing as smooth as possible. By engaging in shared writing first, every child in the class has been 'warmed up' and is ready to work. There should be no occasions where children are given books or paper and asked to write without any shared reading or writing to support them. (The exception to this may be if the writing is part of SATS revision or is to be used as an assessment).

Independent writing tasks can take many forms but must flow from shared writing and take the child on to the next step of becoming an independent writer.

In the 'independent' part of the lesson, children will also have opportunities to work in pairs and groups on the writing process. We believe this is an important way of sharing ideas and improving the quality of what the children produce.

## **Marking and Assessment of Writing**

Within an **English** lesson, it is important that we use good quality texts when doing shared reading so that children are introduced to well-established and respected authors. In the shared writing aspect of the **English** lesson, teachers ensure that they model good, well-crafted forms of writing for the children to learn from. Throughout these sessions, the teachers are constantly assessing the children's reactions to the texts and giving feedback on children's responses and questions. Within guided writing sessions, teachers give relevant feedback to the children when it is needed rather than writing comments in their books after the session. This is also an informal assessment of how the children are coping with the writing task. The plenary also provides an opportunity for assessment when we share and reflect on the writing achieved.

Each teacher is responsible for assessing writing by using the APP criteria. This will be an ongoing assessment which will result in an overall 'Teacher Assessment at the end of the year. In addition to this, children will be given timed writing assessments each term which will support the teacher's assessment judgments when deciding what a child is capable of doing independently.

As a result of these writing assessments, children will be given writing targets. These targets are constantly reviewed to ensure that the child is working on his/her target.

## **The Use of Computers**

We are fully committed to developing the use of computers in English lessons, particularly in the teaching of writing. The use of the interactive whiteboard and multimedia resources are a valuable tool in stimulating interest in writing. Having computers available for children to use can enhance the writing process at all stages. The Internet is also used for research purposes where appropriate.

As a staff, we are dedicated to keeping up to date with the latest changes and advancements. **The English and Computing subject leaders** will ensure that staff are given training on the teaching of **English** using computers where appropriate.

## **Other Important Writing Material**

Each teacher is responsible for ensuring that the 3 key features (**Transcription, Composition and Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation**) are taught within **English** lessons.

**'Letters and Sounds' and 'Support for Spelling'** is the basis of the spelling strategy used throughout the school.

This policy was written September 2014 and will be reviewed annually.