



# HAZEL LEYS ACADEMY

'Be Inspired'

'Placing our pupils at the heart of everything we do'

## Writing Policy

### Rationale and Aim

At Hazel Leys Academy, we believe that writing is a key, important life-skill, and we are dedicated to ensuring that our pupils are writers from an early age and have the skills needed to be able to write for a range of meanings and purposes. It is our intent that we provide pupils with a high-quality, knowledge-rich writing curriculum, and have a holistic approach to the teaching of writing.

Our writing curriculum promotes a high standard of language, both in the written form. It is based on the National Curriculum and incorporates a **diverse** range of **high-quality, engaging literature**. We believe that exposure to high quality vocabulary is key in order to equip pupils with the a broad knowledge of the written language.

Our writing curriculum has been **developed to inspire children** to want to write for a range of purposes and include opportunities for fiction, non-fiction and disciplinary essay writing. We believe that this carefully balanced approach will give our pupils a comprehensive skillset to be successful in their higher education.



## Aims of our Writing Approach

- To become confident and independent in their writing.
- To have knowledge of a wide range of genres written, for a variety of audiences.
- To use devices to build cohesion.
- To be able to apply grammar accurately and effectively in their writing.
- To understand the sound and spelling system and to use this to spell correctly.
- To establish legible and fluent handwriting, using the Happy Handwriting programme of study.
- To be taught to plan, draft and edit their work, identifying the audience and purpose for writing.
- To be taught vocabulary in order to develop a breadth a language that enables them to communicate clearly and effectively.
- To foster the enjoyment of writing, and have a recognition of its value and uses.

### **The Teaching of Writing at Hazel Leys Academy**

At Hazel Leys, we want our pupils to become confident, enthusiastic and independent writers who can write for a variety of different purposes and styles. These skills are developed through improving speaking and listening, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, spelling and handwriting fluency.

### **Equal Opportunities**

All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

### **Training Staff**

A range of CPD is available for all staff – this includes shadowing more experienced staff, staff meetings, peer to peer support, training days and courses provided by external specialists. CPD needs are identified through monitoring and observations of reading practice. The Writing Lead is the focal point for specific courses and will bring relevant courses and possible attendees to the attention of the Senior Management Team.

### **Planning**

The school's English Lead will take overall responsibility for ensuring effective planning and consistency of approach by teachers in accordance with the National Curriculum. Medium Term Planning is carried out by individual teachers, giving an overview of lessons taught with learning objectives. Short term planning is carried out by individual teachers within guidelines set at the medium-term planning stage.

The subject leader will write an action plan annually, linking targets and actions to whole academy targets identified by OFSTED and other internal and external monitoring outcomes.

### **Monitoring, evaluation and review**

The senior leadership team alongside the English Leader will monitor teaching and learning frequently, including pupil work sampling, pupil interviews, monitoring planning and assessment folders, lesson observations and environmental walks.

## **Leading Writing**

The English Leader is responsible for ensuring that writing is one of the key focuses for all teachers. They are accountable for leading highly effective curriculum planning, weekly planning, enrichment activities, events and parental engagement which in turn will lead to improved outcomes and progress for all children. The English leader will follow a monitoring and evaluation schedule and report to senior leaders on the quality of writing (which will include handwriting, spelling, vocabulary, grammar and punctuation) across the academy and the standards of teaching and learning.

The subject leader will write an action plan annually linking targets and actions to whole academy targets identified by OFSTED and other internal and external monitoring outcomes.

## **Planning a Unit of work**

When planning a unit of work, for years 1-6 teachers plan for fiction (linked to their novel studied in the previous half term), or non-fiction (linked to prior learning studied in the wider curriculum). Teachers use the PKC purposes for writing document to drive their outcome.

During a unit of work pupils will have the opportunity to:

- Learn and use new vocabulary.
- Learn and apply grammatical techniques through the 'I do', 'we do', 'you do' approach.
- Look at modelled writing to have knowledge of best examples.
- Share write with their teacher to understand the process of writing.
- Write independently.
- Respond to live feedback.
- Plan, draft and edit their writing.

Teachers use the sentence knowledge curriculum document to select grammar objectives that are to be taught during the unit. Where possible these grammatical elements may have appeared in the studied text. Formative assessment will also support teachers to know which objectives need to be taught and re-visited. Teachers may need to choose grammatical elements out of year group in order to minimise gaps.

Teachers will provide modelled writing so that children have a clear understanding of what they are aiming to achieve. In addition, regular opportunities for teachers to model the writing process to children will equip them with the knowledge of the skills they need to apply when working interdependently.

During lessons, teachers will provide live feedback to pupils to ensure they have the opportunity to make amendments and respond to marking.

### **The structure of an individual lesson**

The structure of English lessons mirrors the organisation of foundation subjects. This is relieve the cognitive load on pupils as they understand the sequence of learning that will be presented to them.

- Prior Learning: This is mapped to previous SPAG knowledge that is applicable to the current writing.
- Vocabulary: 4-6 words or phrases explicitly taught and orally rehearsed.
- Teach: This may include reading a text, teaching sentences explicitly, planning writing, modelling writing, shared writing.
- Talk Task: An opportunity for paired reading or discussion to support oral rehearsal for the independent task.
- Independent Task: Apply the teaching.
- Plenary: Clarification of misconceptions that feeds into your adaptive teaching for the next session.

### **Approach to the teaching of grammar and punctuation**

Teachers refer to the school's sentence knowledge curriculum document when planning the teaching of grammar and punctuation. Adaptive teaching is used to revisit objectives as necessary. Grammar is taught discretely during English lessons, and teachers explicitly model its application. We follow the approach of I do, we do, you do. This enables teachers to explicitly model new grammar first before the children apply the taught grammar independently through a range of contexts.

### **Approach to the teaching vocabulary**

Teachers support children to use the FANTASTICS to categorise vocabulary. These are tools used to build effective description into their writing.

In the Early Years pupils are immersed in language. The development of vocabulary is explicitly taught through stories, non-fiction texts and rhymes. Pupils are encouraged to orally retell familiar texts. During learning, key vocabulary for the specific knowledge needed is selected and taught to enable children to be able to articulate themselves clearly.

In Years 1-6 teachers choose 4-5 words to share at the beginning of each lesson, which are on the vocabulary slide and where appropriate working walls. This ensures children are exposed to carefully planned, aspirational and functional vocabulary in all lessons. In addition, children's reading lessons will support the development of vocabulary as their unit of writing is planned from the core text studied in reading.

In KS2, teachers also select a word of the week that will support the children in their learning, this word may be geographical vocabulary the children will require or a word from another area of the curriculum. Children spend 20 minutes each week learning the selected word following the 'Vocabulary Ninja' approach.

### **Approach to the teaching of spelling**

Pupils on the Little Wandle phonics programme learn to spell using the sounds they

are learning to read. This ensures, that pupils from early on understand how phonemes are represented by graphemes. Pupils learn how to combine graphemes to form words which lays the firm foundations needed for future writing.

Teachers in Years 1-6 follow the Spelling Shed scheme to teach spellings. This scheme incorporates a variety of well-known methods to learn spellings and spelling rules. Where possible, pupils are taught the spellings in their year group, in order to ensure gaps in learning are minimal. At least thirty minutes per week is allocated to the teaching of spelling. Where pupils, are finding spelling difficult teachers will identify gaps in spelling and provide pupils with additional time to practise and apply these spelling rules.

### **Approach to the teaching of Handwriting**

Children in the Early Years are encouraged to develop their fine and gross motor skills through various activities such as, play doh, threading, skipping. In addition to this pupils take part in drawing club which supports their developing pencil control. They learn how to hold a pencil and form their letters in their daily Little Wandle phonics lesson. They are also provided with additional opportunities to practise and apply their learning throughout the school day.

Teachers follow the Collins Happy Handwriting scheme from years 1-6 to teach handwriting. At least thirty minutes per week is allocated to the teaching of handwriting.

Children who find handwriting difficult are provided with opportunities to engage in physical activities that will strengthen their fine motor. Where appropriate the SENCO will support teachers with this and in necessary involve outside agencies.

### **Assessment**

Marking will be carried out regularly and in accordance with the school's marking policy.

In the short term, teachers will carry out continuous formative assessment of children's progress in all aspects of the Literacy Curriculum. Some work will be marked in depth (see marking policy), and will provide children with an understanding of what they have done well, and what steps they need to take next. Teachers use of regular oral feedback and live marking. Children are given the chance to respond to feedback in the following lesson to enhance their learning and understanding of how to improve. AFL techniques used in lessons include self and peer evaluation against the success criteria, talk and re-drafting.

To track progress in Writing from years 1 to 6, we use PIXL, the Interim Framework for Years 2 and 6 and GAT ARE assessments. These enable continuity as a child progresses through the school - and show clearly what a child has achieved - as well as diagnostic information which informs planning. It assists with grouping of children, creating next steps and identifying under achievement.

Summative assessment takes place at the end of each writing unit. Pupils plan, write and edit a piece of independent writing where they apply their teaching.

### **Inclusion/ Intervention**

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in Writing, according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils

are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment. Gifted children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

SEND children - The Inclusion Leader will liaise with the English Leader and Class Teachers to ensure that the individual needs of pupils with special needs are met and that appropriate targets are set and are regularly reviewed. Good practice in teaching reading will ensure that teachers as well as teaching assistants, support reading development for all children. Pupils with a defined special educational need are supported in their reading work, monitored by the class teacher and Inclusion Leader

Any Individual Education Plans (IEPs) will be linked, where appropriate, to the suitable Year and Term objectives from the National Curriculum. Teachers will be mindful of the literacy needs of the children and differentiate questions and activities to allow all children access. (Please also refer to the SEN policy).

Teachers will be mindful of the extra needs of all children and will use adaptive teaching strategies to enable all pupils to make progress.

### **Monitoring, evaluation and review**

The senior leadership team will monitor teaching and learning frequently, include pupil work sampling, pupil interviews, monitoring planning and assessment folders, lesson observations and environmental walks.