

WRITING POLICY

Codsall Middle School

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Writing Policy

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Our Vision

At Codsall Middle School, our vision is to create a caring environment where pupils are happy and safe, enabling them to flourish academically and personally. *We are truly a school to be proud of!*

We aim to enable all our learners to become **responsible, reflective and resilient**.

‘Students become better readers, thinkers, and learners by processing their ideas through writing.’

The art of writing provides children with a vehicle to express who they are as people and to actively engage in daily life. Writing makes children's thinking and learning visible and permanent. It provides children with opportunities to explain and refine their ideas to others and themselves. The purpose and use of writing is wide and varied and each one has value in its own right:

- To express a person's views or feelings
- To reflect on experiences and learn from them
- As an expression of creativity
- To inspire others
- To foster connections
- For academic and career success
- To leave a legacy
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Curriculum Intent

At Codsall Middle School, we believe that English skills are vital to the development of pupils so they are prepared for their future life. Our aim is to deliver a broad and balanced writing programme using objectives from the National Curriculum 2014 which determines the skills that each year group and Key Stage must cover. The aims of teaching writing in our school are to develop pupils who:

- show high levels of achievement and exhibit very positive attitudes towards writing;
- use and understand language effectively;
- are competent, confident and independent in the use of language in their writing;
- have an awareness of different audiences and purposes for writing;
- apply their grammatical knowledge and spelling knowledge to enable them to write technically.

By the end of Year Eight, we aim for our children to have fostered a love of writing and an ability to express their thoughts and ideas clearly and creatively. We intend to develop confident writers who can also carefully critique and improve their own, and others, work.

Curriculum Implementation

At Codsall Middle School, pupils in KS2 study English for six hours a week and in KS3 four hours. Within these sessions, the skills of writing are taught explicitly. Pupils are placed into ability groups and work is differentiated within and across classes to ensure all pupils are appropriately supported and challenged.

Curriculum Design

A selection of engaging, varied and challenging texts form the basis of our English curriculum: it is the close reading and analysis of these that inspire pupils to write and provide them with the knowledge to produce texts of a similar type. Alongside the reading of these, pupils study writing for a particular purpose and will use key moments in the text to inspire their own creations and give pupils a particular purpose and audience to write for.

Throughout the four years at Codsall Middle School, pupils will have the opportunity to practise writing for a range of purposes and audiences. This can be seen in the table below:

| | Writing Focus | | |
|--------|--|---|---|
| Year 5 | Formal writing *Witness statement *News report *Speech *Letter writing | Writing to inform *Non-chronological reports *Adverts *Film reviews *News report *Magazine articles | Writing to entertain *Narrative *Setting descriptions *Character descriptions |
| Year 6 | Writing to inform *Non-chronological report *Leaflet *Holiday brochure *Biography | Writing to entertain *Narrative *Setting description *Character description *Story openings | Writing for a range of purposes (focus on Titanic text) *Newspaper report *Persuasive advert *Diary entries *Argument *Poetry |
| Year 7 | Essay writing | Essay writing Short Stories | Essay writing Longer narratives |

| | | | |
|--------|--|--|--|
| Year 8 | Essay writing Creative writing – focus on description | Essay writing Description of a dual / usurped character | Essay writing Dystopian fiction writing |
|--------|--|--|--|

Writing including Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling

In line with the national curriculum, we ensure that each year group is taught the explicit grammar, punctuation and spelling objectives required for that age group. Staff will teach relevant spellings, punctuation and grammatical terms relevant to the writing style and the identified needs of the pupils within the group. In some cases, groups will study different texts and focus on writing for a different purpose to ensure the learning is accessible for all. Teachers are able to embed skills throughout the year in writing opportunities, allowing pupils to produce writing at the expected level, with some achieving a greater depth standard. Writing is taught through a progressive build-up of skills and knowledge; each year, pupils consolidate and practise skills taught previously and then build on them, ensuring all pupils make progress in their writing over their time at the school.

Editing

To encourage our pupils to be reflective and resilient learners, it is crucial that they are able to review their writing and make corrections: this not only improves their writing skills and the quality of their work, but also enables pupils to become more confident and independent learners.

By using work books to draft writing in before editing and writing up in best books, we encourage our pupils to continually draft, edit, improve and revise before completing a piece of writing.

In years 5 and 6, pupils are provided with editing prompt sheets to aid and support them in the editing process, whereas Year 7 and 8 are provided with 'mastery checklists.' These provide less scaffolding than in KS2 but still prompt pupils to ensure they check and revise their work before completion.

The editing process is also modelled by staff, often using visualisers, or done as a group in order to demonstrate to pupils the thought process behind editing and how carefully it should be carried out.

In addition to pupils editing their own work, we often encourage and facilitate peer editing as pupils often find it easier to critique and offer up suggestions for improvement on other's work. Over time, this then enables pupils to become better editors of their own work.

Homework

At Codsall Middle School, we believe that homework is an essential part of pupils' learning. In line with National Curriculum requirements, English homework is set weekly and children are expected and encouraged to complete this punctually and to a good standard.

In KS2, weekly spellings are set for the children to practise at home and then tested on in school. In class, pupils are introduced to the spelling rule being studied that week and the associated words. Teaching spellings in this way allows pupils to develop strategies to spell unfamiliar words by applying the rules they know and ultimately enables them to correctly spell a broad range of words.

Pupils are able to use the online website EdShed to practise their weekly spellings, as well as spellings that have been set previously. This is a fun and engaging way to practise spellings and allows teachers to track the engagement of pupils and their learning at home.

KS2 pupils are also set an additional task each week and these can vary based on the topic being studied in class and the needs of the group. Often, pupils are set SPaG tasks set on the website spag.com and the tasks are chosen to consolidate and assess recent learning that has taken place within the classroom. Alternatively, writing or research tasks might be set in order for pupils to broaden their knowledge on a topic, apply writing skills or allow them more creativity and freedom in what they wish to produce.

In KS3, studying new vocabulary is a priority in order to prepare pupils for the content taught at KS4. Weekly homework tasks often involve studying vocabulary linked to the topic and researching the definitions of these words which pupils can then use within their own writing. Alternatively, writing or research tasks might be set in order for pupils to broaden their knowledge on a topic, apply writing skills or allow them more creativity and freedom in what they wish to produce.

Handwriting

We intend for pupils to develop a flexible, fluent and legible handwriting style as it is vital that children are able to write with ease, speed and legibility. Handwriting should become an automatic process, which frees pupils to focus on the content of their writing. In order for this to occur, it is important that all adults model the correct formation at all times, when marking, teaching and for display.

Handwriting in all subject areas, exercises and work will be regularly monitored. The vast majority of pupils will be able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils may need more support. Children who find handwriting difficult will be targeted for daily handwriting intervention and activities to develop gross motor skills and fine motor skills.

Presentation – Work books and Best Books

See Presentation Policy

Feedback

See Feedback Policy

Writing Across the Curriculum

Writing at length in subject areas other than English forces pupils to think more deeply about the subject matter being studied as well as providing pupils with an authentic context for their writing. It is also important for teachers of the English department to work closely alongside other colleagues to ensure high standards of literacy are promoted and maintained across the school. Pupils in each year group also take part in a writing competition that links to their learning in order to give our students a real sense of purpose and ambition.

Progress Paths

Learning Journeys are used to develop pupil awareness of the 'bigger picture' and show the sequence of learning. From these, pupils gain a sense of ownership over their learning, to help them to become independent learners in relation to their goals, progress and next steps. They are always aware of what they've learnt and where to next, which helps them to make connections throughout the blocks of learning.

Learning Pit

In every classroom, there is a learning pit display where pupils can independently access a variety of writing resources and support to improve their work. Alongside this, pupils can access the 'Pit Stop' which contains tools to support learning for all pupils.

Additional Support

Interventions and Remote Tutoring

Class teachers are responsible for matching their teaching to the individual needs of the children, through differentiated and scaffolded support, thereby providing appropriate intervention at a classroom level.

Small group interventions run for a duration of 6-8 weeks by teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils are selected based on their assessment data and/or teacher recommendations. Groups of pupils are then formed based on a common need; this could be to re-visit specific SPaG areas, develop certain writing skills, work on handwriting and spellings or to provide pupils with further challenge.

Curriculum Impact

At Codsall Middle School, we expect that by the end of Y8 our children are:

- Confident, fluent speakers who are able to use a wide range of adventurous and ambitious vocabulary in the correct context. They will be able to give well-structured descriptions, explanations, presentations and narratives for different purposes, including expressing feelings. They will maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments with confidence. They will be able to consider and evaluate different viewpoints, adding their own interpretations and building on the contributions of others. Being able to verbalise and discuss their ideas allows pupils to practise verbally before committing pen to paper.
- Able to write accurately, fluently, effectively and at length. This will include non-fiction texts, stories and other imaginative writing.
- Careful and critical editors who are able - and willing - to evaluate their own, and the work of others, to correct and enhance it.

The expectation is that the majority of pupils will move through the programmes of study at broadly the same pace. We aim for each child to be confident in each yearly writing objective and be able to apply the skills independently within their own pieces of written work.

Feedback and Assessment

As described in the Feedback Policy, a quick and effective method that is used both live and post-lesson feedback is the use of pink and green highlighters. Teaching staff use green highlighter to identify areas of the written piece that are very good and use pink highlighter to draw attention to any errors that have been made. In response, pupils are encouraged to use purple pen to correct these and seek support from the learning pit, peers and staff to do this.

Certain symbols, set out in the marking code, are also used to address errors and misconceptions. These symbols are placed on the line where the mistake has been made and pupils must seek to find the mistake before correcting it.

Assessment Strategies

Pupils complete standardised GL tests at the end of each academic year to provide a standardised age score. This test assesses both reading and spelling, punctuation and grammar. The results of this test allow us to place pupils into the right ability groups and staff use the results to adapt the schemes of work accordingly to suit the needs of the group.

Every year group studies three different writing topics per year. At the start of these topics, pupils complete a pre-test where they are asked to write a piece before being explicitly taught any of the key features or techniques for that text type. Pupils are given a rubric

(success criteria) and are marked against it. Rubrics contain writing criteria from different year groups, set out by the National Curriculum, and are differentiated for different groups as well as within groups. From these pre-assessments, pupils can see their starting points and staff use these to identify areas of need within writing for certain pupils, groups or the whole class. Staff then plan and deliver a series of lessons, ensuring they use the results of the pre-assessment to inform their planning. Pupils record their pre-assessment scores on their progress paths and identify a suitable writing goal so they are able to clearly see their starting points for their learning and what they need to work on to progress forwards on their writing journey.

At the end of the topic, pupils will then complete a post-assessment and this will be marked against the same rubric as in their pre-assessment. Pupils and staff can see the progress that has been made throughout the topic as well as next steps for the following writing topic.

Progress Paths

As per the staff handbook, pupils receive feedback from their pre and post assessment and record this on their progress paths. They can use these to independently track their progress, *'How am I doing? Where am I going? Where to next'*.

Subject Monitoring

We regularly monitor the quality and impact of our writing curriculum through targeted learning walks, book scrutinies, moderation and pupil conferencing.

Head of English – Mr M De Wit