

An Overview of the Writing Curriculum at St Michael's



The Lord says, 'For I know the plans I have for you Plans to give you hope and a future.'
Jeremiah 29 verse 11

We aim to develop pupils' abilities within an integrated programme of Speaking & Listening, Reading and Writing. As many children have limited language skills on entry to St Michael's, children will be given opportunities to develop their use, knowledge and understanding of spoken and written English within a broad and balanced curriculum, with opportunities to consolidate and reinforce taught English skills. The English curriculum is enriched by using cross-curricular links to inspire writing. Regular self-assessment and peer-assessment opportunities help to develop positive relationships as children learn to give constructive criticism as well as working together collaboratively.

We aim for all children to write with confidence, fluency and understanding, using a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct.

We aim for all children to write for a range of purposes and audiences, and to be able to write in a variety of styles and forms which are appropriate to the situation, with an understanding of grammar and punctuation.

We aim for all children to develop a broad vocabulary, and the knowledge to use language accurately and with understanding within their writing, with awareness of their audience and the purpose of their writing.

We have used the characteristics and needs of our school community, alongside national curriculum guidelines and national assessment frameworks, to develop the knowledge content and a progression of learning for writing. A progression of genres gives a framework of opportunities to develop the range of writing skills required by the end of Key Stage 2.

Learning in writing is progressive and is delivered as whole class lessons on a daily basis. To support a broad and balanced curriculum, a variety of stimuli are used as prompts for writing, which may include topic-based and discrete content. These stimuli might include video clips, the class reading book, trips and other prompts. Writing also forms an important part of learning within other curriculum areas: in Science, RE, History and Geography in particular.

The design of the learning ensures that we deliver the acquisition of skills and knowledge in a way that shows clear progression from year to year. Lessons are enhanced by making the most of memorable experiences and wider opportunities as prompts for writing, which inspire children of all abilities and develop cultural capital.

Writing across a broad range of genres – both fiction and non-fiction – takes place in every year group. In writing, each unit builds towards a piece of independent extended writing, based on a fortnightly cycle. Daily lessons, based



on a prompt, are used to build up ideas and skills towards the piece of writing. Children have the opportunity to use speaking and listening to share ideas linked to their stimulus. After using a WAGOLL (What a good one looks like) or model text, children are introduced to the skills and features that they need to use in their own writing. Teachers then deliver a series of skills lesson (which incorporate vocabulary, grammar and punctuation) so that children can practise the skills before writing independently. Once all the skills have been taught, children have the opportunity use them in their extended writing. Work is self-assessed or peer-assessed against the differentiated success criteria for the lesson which are taken from each year group's writing checklist. Children then have the opportunity to edit and improve their work – learning to respond to constructive criticism – developing the content of their writing as well as improving spelling and punctuation. Spelling is taught in separate lessons using the RWInc phonics and spelling programmes as well as weekly spelling tests based on the patterns and words for each year group.

Formative assessment is carried out using writing success criteria checklists. Each year group has ARE sheets which help to inform teachers on the required skills that they need to teach. Writing is teacher-assessed at the end of each term, taking into account the skills and genres taught up to that point.

This model of implementation is underpinned by strong pastoral provision for pupils and their families and the distinctly Christian ethos of the school.

We measure the impact of our writing curriculum through assessment for learning opportunities, book scrutiny, pupil voice feedback, data analysis and learning observations. Through these forms of continuous and robust assessment, the particular talents, gifts, interest and curiosity of individuals are identified and nurtured to ensure personal motivations and ambitions are encouraged and fostered. We will know that writing is successful when

- children enjoy writing across a range of genres
- children of all abilities succeed in all English lessons
- children have a wide vocabulary in verbal and written form
- children are able to demonstrate these skills across a broad range of subjects.

As a result, our pupils are confident, articulate and enthused by their learning, and are keen to share the knowledge they have acquired.

Pupils' good behaviour is a result of their positive engagement in the curriculum on offer. Pupils attain well, make outstanding progress from their starting points and aspire to be the best they can be. At St Michael's, we will know that English is successful because the percentage of pupils working at the expected standard is at least in line with national averages, with a good percentage of children working at greater depth. We will continue to work to reduce the gaps in the progress of different pupils so that all children have made excellent progress. We know we have succeeded when pupils leave year 6 fully prepared for the next stage of their learning journey.