



Writing

Writing Curriculum Rationale

At Our Lady of Lourdes, we are all writers! We value writing as a crucial life skill. We want our children to love writing, leaving us as enthusiastic, confident writers who understand that writing is both essential to thinking and learning and enjoyable in its own right. We want them to see how writing can enrich the world and help them achieve their dreams. We want our children to grow up knowing that they can be authors, journalists, poets and reporters. We want them to embody our Catholic core values. We all live by our school motto of:

“I can do great things with God’s love” – this is both spiritually and academically.

The writing curriculum enables our pupils to develop their writing knowledge and understanding. We want all our pupils to remember their writing lessons in our school, to enjoy these experiences, recall them with fondness in years to come and embrace the challenges and opportunities with which they are presented. Children should see writing as “breathing out” the inspiration from the wonderful stories that their teachers have modelled and shared.

Curriculum Intent

The English writing curriculum promotes a love and thirst for learning and curiosity about the nature of writing and its necessity to everyday life. It is ambitious and empowers our pupils to become independent and resilient.

We want to equip our pupils with ambition beyond the minimum statutory requirements of the English writing National Curriculum and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life in the “real world.” The curriculum is planned with the intention to address social disadvantage and ensure that all pupils - including those with SEND – have an opportunity to engage with a challenging curriculum and achieve success. Any gaps in pupils’ knowledge are quickly identified and addressed to ensure that pupils are supported to meet the intended end points of the writing curriculum.

Our English writing curriculum enables pupils to build on their knowledge and skills in different areas of writing with the skills of transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing) at the core.

We believe it is essential that pupils are taught how to plan, draft, revise evaluate and publish their writing. This ensures they can write confidently to support learning across the entire curriculum ensuring consistent standards.

We enable our children to learn to communicate meaning in narrative and non-fiction texts, spelling and punctuating accurately and for a range of purposes.

Our Lady of Lourdes's writing curriculum begins in EYFS. This strong foundation in Writing is based on the Early Years Framework: Literacy, Physical development and Expressive Arts and Design educational programmes. Pupils develop their fine motor/gross skills so they can use a range of tools competently including pencils for writing whilst simultaneously developing their core strength to achieve a good posture when sitting at tables. They learn to spell words by identifying the sounds and then writing them. They engage in conversations and learn new vocabulary. They use print and letter knowledge in their early writing. The National Curriculum provides the skill and knowledge foundations that we then build upon to provide a purposeful progression. This ensures that the National Curriculum end points are met.

Transcription

The ability to write down ideas fluently depends upon effective transcription; that is, on spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words. Phonics is at the heart of this. We start daily phonics teaching in Nursery/Reception and follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression (a systematic and synthetic phonics programme), which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school.

We also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum. We have a strong focus on language development for our children because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects. Mark making is the first step in a child's journey to writing and important for their development in handwriting, creativity and coordination. Mark making opportunities are carefully planned and provided through the use of a range of materials. Children then learn to write letters, simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others and themselves.

Composition

We teach pupils that effective composition involves articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. We strongly believe that writing for an audience and a clear "writing for real" purpose is essential. This requires pupils to have an awareness of the audience and of vocabulary and grammar. Writing also depends on fluent, legible and speedy handwriting.

Our writing curriculum holds high quality texts at its core. We actively promote reading at Our Lady of Lourdes as a means to nourish writing, increase pupils' motivation and feed the imagination. If reading is breathing in then writing is breathing out. We seek to ensure that our pupils are able to confidently approach writing tasks inspired by their own experiences and the knowledge gained from texts studied and enjoyed – both fiction and non-fiction. We strive to offer enrichment activities, extra-curricular clubs, off site visits, on site visitors and trips to enrich the writing curriculum and provide all children with new experiences to support the application of the writing curriculum.

Curriculum Implementation

We develop our teaching staff to ensure that they are fully equipped with expert subject knowledge in order to support the delivery of the writing curriculum. Teaching is highly effective for all pupils. Teachers present the curriculum content clearly through carefully planned activities based on high quality texts, which break down the knowledge, concepts and skills for each lesson in each year group to make learning accessible for all pupils.

The curriculum is delivered to support pupils to develop the key concepts and knowledge of the writing curriculum. Each lesson builds upon what has been previously taught from one year to the next.

The writing curriculum is monitored and adapted to build upon the learning opportunities and assessment end points for each year group and ensures progression and repetition in terms of embedding key learning, knowledge and skills.

Pupils take inspiration from authors to support their understanding and determination to succeed as a writer. Our Reading Spine supports this. In addition, all classes study subject unit specific vocabulary and this develops year on year.

The teaching of the English writing curriculum is planned and delivered to support pupils to transfer key knowledge into their long-term memory and therefore improve the progress they make. Essential vocabulary is identified within each lesson.

Whilst delivering the curriculum, teachers are constantly checking to ensure that pupils are acquiring the necessary knowledge and identifying and addressing misunderstandings. Assessment is used as a tool to support pupil learning and next steps.

Curriculum Impact

Assessment informs learning to ensure that all pupils including disadvantaged groups and those with SEND achieve highly and acquire the knowledge, skills and concepts they need to succeed in life. Staff use assessment information to inform their short-term planning and address misconceptions. This helps us provide the best possible support for all of our pupils. Essential knowledge, skills and concepts in writing are progressive and build year on year.

Our writing curriculum leads to pupils' successful learning. This is evidenced in the outcomes within books and display work produced and end of Key Stage results. Pupils are well prepared for the next steps and stages of their learning due to the progressive and well-sequenced curriculum. As a result, pupils make excellent progress they know more and remember more as they move through the writing curriculum at Our Lady of Lourdes RCPS.