



A.I.M. HIGH at



Aspiration. Inspiration. Motivation.

Writing Policy

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Head teacher	Mr S Wright 
Chair of Governors	Mrs E Scorer 

Intent

In our writing curriculum, we want to instil a love of writing so that all children become confident and enthusiastic lifelong writers. We believe a high quality, effective writing curriculum should develop children's love of writing. We aim for all children to be able to internalise the language structures needed to write through 'talking the text'.

At Whitby Heath, teachers use Quality First Teaching to provide an English curriculum that will teach children to speak, read and write fluently so they can communicate their ideas effectively to others. The Talk for Writing and Pathways to Write mastery approaches enable children to write independently, through the process of moving learning from dependence towards independence. Furthermore, we teach imaginative units of work that are developed to create a whole-school plan, that is refined over the years and is well-resourced and documented, so that we can focus on adapting our teaching for children's learning. With high quality chosen texts, from a range of authors, at the heart of our English curriculum, we expose all pupils to a wealth of great literature.

We believe that rigorous, daily, carefully structured direct phonics teaching provides the foundations for learning in literacy. The Read Write Inc approach to teaching phonics enables children to apply their knowledge of phonics in their writing and spelling. We recognise the importance of grammar, punctuation and spelling being appropriately taught in a progressive model and applied in writing. We also adopt a nurturing culture where children take pride in their writing across the curriculum. We teach and model continually so they can write clearly and accurately, adapting their language and style for a range of contexts. We place a strong emphasis on presentation and handwriting. (See hyperlink for our handwriting policy) [Handwriting policy](#)

Implementation

Talk for Writing

At Whitby Heath, we use the Talk for Writing (TfW) method developed by Pie Corbett. Talk for Writing fundamentally teaches children how to be writers – not just how to write. This approach gives children opportunities to 'talk texts', based on the thinking and creative processes involved in 'being a writer'. There is a focus on oral learning of model texts and the oral development of new versions so that children internalise the language patterns that they need for writing. The explicit explorations of these processes, through supportive talk and shared thinking, enables our children to build confidence in writing and become more independent writers. Vocabulary is explicitly taught. We use a robust vocabulary instructional approach which is outlined in research by Beck, McKeown and Kucan (2005 and 2013) and Quigley (2018) to give children exposure and knowledge of tier 2 and 3 vocabulary. (See Appendix 1). Fun, engaging and purposeful prewriting activities, grammar games, drama and role play help to bring stories alive and make experiences memorable.

The methodology follows a three-tier pattern: Imitation, Innovation and Independent Application. Before this pattern begins, the children undergo an initial baseline assessment (Cold Task). Children are encouraged to draw on prior knowledge to

independently complete a written task about an interesting stimulus. This assessment piece of work enables the teacher to plan, adapt and set individual targets for the children in their class.

1. **Imitation stage:** During the imitation stage, children are engaged and interested through an exciting 'hook' to introduce the process. They internalise a 'model text', which has been adapted and pitched just above the pupils' level, by orally learning it with actions (standardised across the school), exploring it through drama, reading it for vocabulary, comprehension and writer tools and drawing a 'story map'. Short burst writing is used to practice key focuses. During the imitation stage, writing moves from shared writing, to paired writing, to independent writing, to edited work. This modelled work focusses on the main teaching strand for the unit.
2. **Innovation stage:** Once familiar with the model text, pupils are led by the teacher into creating their own version. Pupils in EYFS & KS1 change the basic story map and create a new version. Pupils at the end of Year 2 and into LKS2 use 'boxed up' planners with simple planning modelled by the teacher and orally rehearsed. This is grounded in the processes of shared writing, with a strong and systematic focus on securing the basics of handwriting, phonics/spelling and grammar in relation to what is needed for the text type being taught. Feedback is given during the lesson so that pupils can be taught how to improve their writing, make it more accurate, until they can increasingly edit in pairs or on their own.
3. **Independent application and invention (hot task):** This is the opportunity for children to draft, edit and publish their own independent versions. Underpinning this phase is the rehearsing of key spellings and grammatical patterns, that have been taught and practiced throughout the previous stages. Writing will often be staged over a number of days. The hot task clearly shows progress across the unit as writing becomes increasingly independent. Pupils in EYFS should be playing at inventing stories daily to be shared.

Pathways To Write

As children enter the latter years of our school, children move on to the Pathways to Write programme, whilst still incorporating many of the key elements of Talk for Writing. Units of work are delivered using high quality texts and children in all year groups are given varied opportunities for writing. Skills are built up through repetition within the units, and children apply these skills in the writing activities provided. Many opportunities for widening children's vocabulary are given through the Pathways to Write approach and this builds on the extensive work we do in school to provide our children with a rich and varied vocabulary.

Following a systematic approach to each unit, we write a range of genres across a year with a clear focus on purpose and audience. As with Talk for Writing, we begin by engaging the children in the unit through an exciting hook. Following this, the children complete a cold task to 'showcase' their current writing skills as a baseline

assessment. We then include a range of spoken language activities including drama and presentations. Throughout the unit, there are opportunities for practising previously taught genres. The children have the opportunity to develop their use of vocabulary, as well as mastering grammar and punctuation skills. Finally, the children produce an extended, independent piece of writing.

The process follows three stages:

1. The Gateway

We begin at the Gateway with a 'hook' session to intrigue and enthuse young writers in which we use objects, people, images or role-play to stimulate questions about the chosen text. The children make predictions about the text and we establish the purpose and audience of the writing. Previous mastery skills are revisited, as well as ongoing skills.

2. The Pathway

During this phase, we introduce pupils to new writing skills from their year group curriculum. Throughout The Pathway, the children are given opportunities to practise and apply the skills they have learnt through a range of short and extended writing tasks including character descriptions, poetry, dialogue between characters, fact files or diary entries in role. As well as this, we continue to provide opportunities to recap and apply previously taught skills. Greater depth writers are challenged through a wider range of tasks e.g. changes to form, viewpoint and audience.

3. Writeaway

Finally, the children select and sequence texts independently or collaboratively. It is during this stage that the children create extended pieces of writing over time which gives them the opportunity to apply mastery skills. The children are given time for planning, writing, checking, editing, redrafting and publishing through which a fiction or non-fiction outcome will be written (covering a wide range of genres and themes over the year).

Scaffolds, Adaptations and Interventions

Task Adaptation:

- Work recorded using iPads or laptops
- Oral responses recorded where appropriate
- Mighty Writers used to support sentence structure
- Visual aids
- Provide modified resources (such as Irlens paper)
- Blanks level of questioning (Blank, Rose and Berlin ,1978)

Scaffolding:

- Modelling of work specifically for a small group of children
- Sound mats highlighting specific vocabulary for a task
- Broken down instructions for a task
- Task organiser
- Use of concrete resources (letter cards etc.)
- Additional focused explanations
- Peer support

Interventions:

Mighty Writer

At Whitby Heath Primary School, we want our children to be confident writers and make significant progress from their starting points. Mighty Writer (MW) is a mastery tool to support the writing process of imitation, innovation and invention. Mighty Writer follows the CPA approach; the MW itself is the concrete, the MW resource sheets are the pictorial and the adult's modelling/children's writing will be the abstract. The MW helps children with constructing sentences, as well as other grammar features needed for writing.

In Key Stage 1, holding a sentence can be a barrier for many children. We have found that MW allows children to visualise the writing process, due to the pictorial nature of the resource. This means they can hold the sentence in their head by using the visual cue of the MW to help them with the skills needed to write. We aim for all children to use the MW to aid their transcription and composition skills, set out in Appendix 2 in the National Curriculum English Programme of Study. We strive for MW to be used in English during the fiction and non-fiction units, as well as across different curriculum areas.

In Lower Key Stage 2, MW will be used as an intervention tool. It can also be used for children who require additional support due to barriers e.g. SEND.

Mighty Writer from Reception to Year 2

Additional MW resources that have been created for focused teaching sessions, such as a sentence strip sheet, are left out during provision time to allow children to apply taught writing skills further. Any enhanced provision that would be added to the environment each week that is Literacy, Communication and Language focused, would include elements of the MW resource. For example, if the challenge was to 'Write a simple sentence about a ...', the sentence strips, pictures, sentence starters and blanks would be taken off the mat and used to form part of the challenge.

Teachers are to use the MW as part of their teaching input during English lessons and other curriculum areas where the children will be having to use the skill of sentence composure (thinking of the sentence, holding the sentence and transcribing this), such as in Geography, History or Science. MW can also be used to support the Talk for Writing process, focusing on the storytelling element, such as support the innovation process when the children will write their own stories. It will be used for small focus pre-teach or post teach sessions to fill gaps in knowledge and allow children to practice key skills they need to succeed as writers.

Mighty Writer Years 1-4 Intervention/Booster Programme

For identified children, working just below the expected level, MW will be used as an intervention. These interventions will be planned by the class teacher, focusing on

next steps from their recent work. This will mean that the learning is relevant and current. The planning template follows our whole school approach to a quick review at the start of the lesson to activate prior learning, before modelling using the 'I do, We do, You do' approach to teach the targeted skill. At the bottom of the plan is a 'Names and Notes' box which is also used in our whole school feedback sheet. Teaching staff will make a note of children's progress during the intervention and identify which parts were a barrier/strength. This can then be used by the teacher to plan further feedback for that child, focusing on that specific area.

Years 5-6 Intervention/Booster: Pathways to Progress

Pathways to progress is a small group session delivered in addition to pupils' English lessons. Pathways to Progress is taught for 30 minutes, 3 times per week. It follows a simple weekly structure to allow for simple integration:

Review and Teach: Each week starts with an opportunity to revisit and review prior learning. This may be a skill that needs to be secure for pupils to build on in the 'Teach' part of the session or may be a recap of a skill taught in a previous week of the module.

Practise:

Pupils will be given activities that reinforce learning from session 1 and allow them to practise the focus skill. A limited number of activities requiring explanations will be used across the programme.

Apply:

Every 'Apply' session should start with a writing warm-up activity. The purpose of this is to support pupils with the development of gross and fine motor skills required for writing.

Higher Attainers

Opportunities to extend higher attainers in their writing has been planned for in the curriculum, as well as by class teachers. Due to having high expectations of all learners in our school, teachers always plan additional challenges for children to complete. This usually is an extra push for children, which can often be a question, designed to encourage children to think deeply and apply what has been learnt.

Grammar Hammer

From Years 2 to 6, we use Grammar Hammer to 'test' the same Grammar knowledge and skills every other week, in the same order at the same level of difficulty making gradual continual progress inevitable as the skills become embedded over time. During the alternate weeks, a specific focus is chosen by the class teacher that needs to be targeted in a post teach session which is then assessed in the subsequent 'test' to check for progress against the objective.

In addition to these approaches, we also follow the National Curriculum (2014) guidance, which ensures that a range of genres are covered, including narrative

(e.g. extended stories, stories by the same author, myths and legends, adventure stories and traditional stories), non-fiction (e.g. persuasive texts, discussion texts, information texts, recounts, instructional and explanation texts) and poetry (e.g. rhyme, nonsense rhymes, shape poems, acrostic and descriptive poetry).

Spelling is explicitly taught daily using the phonics/mastery approach. Daily sessions in EYFS and KS1 ensure that there is consistency and progression from KS1 phonics scheme and this is embedded into KS2 spelling lessons through the No-nonsense spelling scheme of work. The focus of the No-Nonsense programme is on the teaching of spelling, which embraces knowledge of spelling conventions – patterns and rules; but integral to the teaching is the opportunity to promote the learning of spellings, including statutory words, common exceptions and personal spellings.

Knowledge

Knowledge is organised using long and medium-term plans to ensure that there is time for spaced learning and ensure children are secure. Progression is planned out for writing using the National Curriculum and the Early Years Framework 2021. Our medium-term planning focusses on the teaching of the curriculum but specifically focuses on the needs of our children as identified by the class teacher, with discussion from the writing leads. Toolkits and mastery keys are used in classes to highlight the knowledge being taught and secured in each unit of work.

Skills

The application of their phonic knowledge to writing requires time to **practice and apply** disciplinary knowledge. Therefore, in reception and year 1, these are planned in three times a week to ensure that they are secure. In reception and for the start of year 1, mark making and writing are also embedded in provision with high quality stimulating activities in each class. Phonics mats are available in every lesson to support children's early writing across the curriculum. The outdoor learning environment provides multiple opportunities to consolidate learning and practice these skills.

Throughout Year 1 to Year 6, writing opportunities are planned daily both in Writing lessons but also across the curriculum.

Attitudes and values

At Whitby Heath, we praise children on the effort and determination they show linking to our Whole School Values, encouraging them to try their best and never give up, even though the task could be tricky. This approach develops the children's growth mindset and provides them with a 'can do' attitude towards Writing. Despite trying to develop the children's growth mindset, we are conscious that tasks have to be achievable, although challenging the children to complete it.

At Whitby Heath, we want children to have the resilience and self-esteem to take risks in their writing and challenge themselves further. We want to instill in them a love for writing so they see themselves as writers. Children's work is 'displayed live' using

classroom visualisers to celebrate and praise the writing process. Dojo Points are given for effort and overcoming challenge rather than for simply achieving a goal.

Developing a love of Writing

At Whitby Heath, we want our children to see themselves as writers, to see the teachers around them as writers and develop a love of writing, which will encourage them to become life-long writers. Authors and illustrators are invited into school to engage with the children and complete writing workshops. Exciting hooks are used throughout the school to engage all children in writing, as well as immersive experiences such as drama. The long-term plan for writing is evaluated yearly to ensure that reading spine books are chosen to specifically engage the children. In EYFS, the writing process and examples of children's work, is celebrated regularly through writing workshops and performances.

Assessment

Formative assessment is integral to our teaching and learning at Whitby Heath. We utilise live marking and feedback, so children's misconceptions are addressed immediately. We have an ethos of celebration, where we celebrate children's achievements and learn from our mistakes together, using the visualiser. Feedback can be given to children on a whole class basis, individual verbal feedback or further feedback, if there are still misunderstandings or misconceptions, that need to be further addressed on a whole class, group or individual basis.

Children in EYFS are assessed orally at the end of each term according to specific, progressive assessment statements. KS1 and KS2 are assessed at the end of each half term in a final piece of writing which focuses on the specific National Curriculum expectations; and that of teacher judgement in order to make an overall judgement. From this children are then identified as Working Towards (WTS) Expected (EXS) or Greater Depth (GDS).

Staff meet together to rank the children's work (using a comparative judgement approach) and then to evaluate which children are working at, just below, below or working at greater depth. Specific strategies to discuss how to move learning forward are discussed. Assessment of Writing Year 1-6 by the Literacy Company is used to inform discussions with specific children moderated against these sheets.

Further assessment opportunities may be presented to support teacher judgements throughout the unit of study including, SODA activities Quizzes and retrieval tasks.

SEND and Inclusion

At Whitby Heath, we have high expectations of our children and their learning. However, we acknowledge that some children need additional support, to help them retain and access the learning. Therefore, tasks are suitably adapted and scaffolded to help them overcome any barriers to learning, to make progress. Teachers use their knowledge of their children, to make these adaptations, that are catered to their specific needs.

As cited in our SEND policy, we use a wave process when supporting children's needs. Quality First Teaching is the key to inclusive teaching to ensure all children are able to access the curriculum. Examples of this can be:

- Breaking learning up into more manageable chunks
- Planning for error and any misconceptions
- Using manipulatives or images
- Modelling, such as using the I do, We do, You do model
- Scaffolding

During Wave 2, extra measures are put in place to ensure that children can access the curriculum. This can include:

- In class support for groups of pupils from Additional Teacher or Teaching Assistant
- Planned, purposeful periods of withdrawal to work with a TA using a support programme
- Additional in class activities/ resources as required
- Increased use of technology (computer programmes)
- Peer support/buddy systems
- Differentiated homework and support advice for parents/carers

Some children have strategies that are individual to them, that have been discussed with the class teacher, parents, SENCo and other professionals, to further help them access the curriculum and ensure that knowledge is transferred into their long term memory.

CPD for staff

CPD is planned for staff throughout the year and opportunities for this, in regards to writing, is mapped out by the SLT team, in line with the whole school development plan. The subject leads also source credible, evidence informed CPD. The strategic subject lead also lends their experience to aid the subject lead with making decisions impacting the subject, as well as the monitoring of the subject. Furthermore, CPD through the means of staff meetings allows for teachers to join to share what is working well, as well as introducing new pedagogy backed with evidence that has been proven to improve pupil outcomes and therefore learning. Staff are encouraged to complete their own research to well equip themselves with the subject matter, to ensure that high quality lessons are delivered. The subject lead will help teachers if they require any further support in terms of Pedagogical Content Knowledge as well as Pedagogy in geography.

Monitoring of Writing

The monitoring cycle for subjects is mapped out by the SLT team. This can be in the form of our bespoke 'SPOTLIGHTS' approach which includes a Pupil Book Study process, following by Learning Walks – identifying areas for staff development through coaching. All monitoring undertaken is purposeful and developmental, with the aim of improving and developing the writing curriculum across the school. This is undertaken with the Strategic Subject lead, with a clear focus that will be explored.

Impact

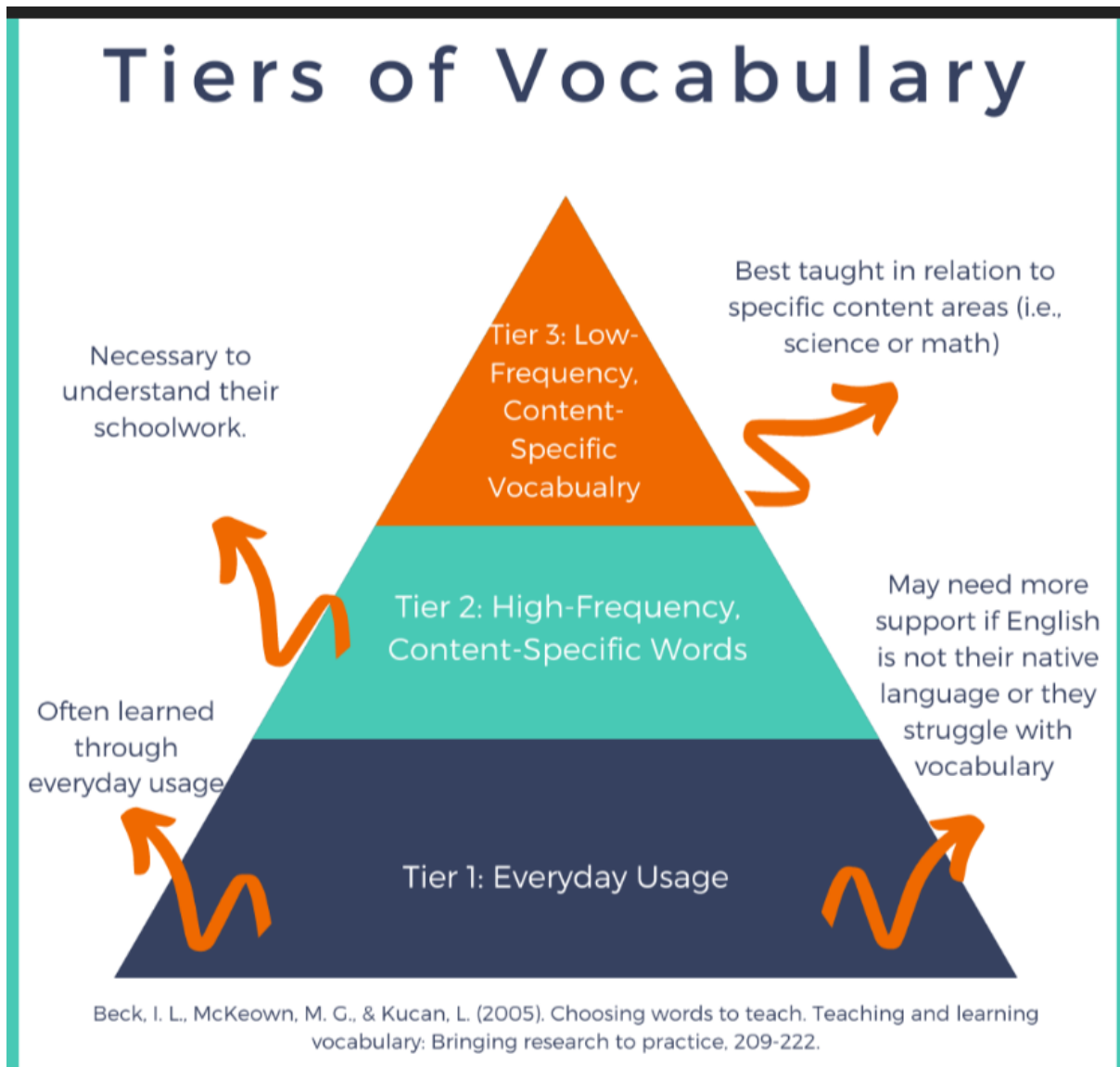
At Whitby Heath, we aim high to ensure that we create a supportive and collaborative environment for writing through our curriculum.

Our curriculum ethos is that children produce high-quality, extended writing each **half term based** on the focus text. There are opportunities for writing to be planned, drafted, redrafted, and then published as a celebration of children's achievements.

We measure the impact of our curriculum through the following methods:

- Children will make at least good progress from their last point of statutory progress or from their starting point in Reception.
- Improve the % of children achieving at or close to ARE in each cohort in comparison to their starting points and increase 'Greater Depth' at the end of each key stage.
- Summative assessment of pupil's writing and discussions about their learning
- Conducting Pupil Book Studies with pupils about their learning
- Internal termly moderation led by writing leads; facilitating developmental dialogue between staff to improve standards.
- Annual reporting of standards across the curriculum within the Headteachers report to the Governors.

Appendix 1:



References

- Beck, McKeown and Kucan (2013) *Bringing Words To Life* Guilford Publications
- Blank, M., Rose, S. A. & Berlin, L. J. (1978) *The Language of Learning: The Preschool Years*. Orlando: Grune & Stratton, Inc.
- Quigley, C (2018) *Closing the Vocabulary Gap* Routledge; 1st edition