

DODDISCOMBSLEIGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

ENGLISH – WRITING



How do we inspire writers at Doddiscombsleigh Primary School?

Reading within our School Values

INTENT

As a Rights Respecting school, children's rights from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) underpin our curriculum intent in all subject areas. Article 29 states that: Every child has the right to an education.

Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment. (UNCRC)

At Doddiscombsleigh Primary School we support our children to become confident and enthusiastic writers by modelling high expectations of spoken and written language. We encourage the children to engage in meaningful talk, develop conversational skills and build their knowledge through questioning and modelling, which in turn builds their skills for writing.

We passionately believe that the children's skills as writers are closely linked to the development of children's reading skills; reading and writing go hand in hand and sit at the heart and centre of the curriculum at our school. We ensure that the school has a rigorous and sequential approach to teaching writing skills, so that by the time they leave our school at the end of Year 6, children will have developed the necessary skills to express their thoughts and ideas clearly and creatively in written language.

We promote writing as part of our English and wider curriculum, and give all children the opportunity to develop their passion for writing, encouraging pupils to learn, refine and master their spelling, grammar and punctuation skills, as well as experiment with words and vocabulary to create different effects. We believe that ensuring children can write with confidence, also enables children to demonstrate their learning across the full curriculum and ensures that, by the end of their primary education, all pupils are able to write well, and with confidence, in all subjects.

IMPLEMENTATION

At Doddiscombsleigh Primary School, to support our planning and teaching of writing skills, we follow the structure of the Babcock teaching and learning sequences. These sequences are based upon high quality, language rich texts which allows us to model high expectations of spoken and written language.

We give the children a purpose for writing by basing our teaching sequences on specific and carefully chosen texts to engage and inspire the children. The teaching and learning sequences that we create are linked, wherever possible, to our learning in other curriculum areas to create a meaningful learning experience; cross-curricular links are made to our driver subjects, such as science, history and geography, and is supported by the principles of the Learning Challenge Curriculum (LCC). Linking our English sequences to our topic learning gives the children a real purpose for writing, helps to cement the sticky knowledge from other subject areas, and enables further opportunities for children to apply their writing skills in a range of contexts. The children build a greater understanding of a topic area, which supports the ideas for their final piece of writing.

Our carefully constructed curriculum builds upon children's knowledge year on year. We assess the children's writing at the start of each unit or teaching sequence with an elicitation task. Elicitation tasks are designed to ensure that key skills for writing for that specific year group forms the foundation of the sequence, and the outcomes of the elicitation task feeds into the learning journey that follows. Teachers set children targets specifically linked to their learning journey. Whilst they have the opportunity to learn all of the skills within the teaching sequence, they will also be working on meeting their individual target in the sequence too. Children are provided with guided, target lessons and, at the end of a unit or sequence, the children's progress is assessed using an application task.

At Doddiscombsleigh Primary School, we believe that a strong focus on developing children's speaking and listening skills allows us to encourage children to engage in meaningful talk, develop conversational skills and build their knowledge

through questioning and modelling of rich texts. This in turn builds their skills for writing. The teaching and learning sequences we create are structured into three key stages: Imitate, Innovate and Invent stages. Each of the stages are an important step in teaching children a range of writing skills, as follows:

- **Imitate:** this is the familiarisation stage in which the children learn the text or sections of a text (through story mapping and the 'Talk for Writing' approach), in order to secure the language patterns, sentence structures and vocabulary into their spoken range.
- **Innovate:** this is the playful part of the sequence, in which children experiment by making adaptations to a high-quality text, adding in their own ideas, following similar grammar patterns and sentence structures.
- **Invent:** the final stage of the sequence, allows the children to create their own piece of writing modelled on the text that they are studying.

We also teach and model basic skills for grammar, sentence structure, spelling and punctuation. Spelling, grammar and punctuations is taught as a discreet focus across the school, as well as part of the teaching and learning sequences.

In Reception and Key Stage 1, the children take part in daily phonics sessions linked to our Read, Write, Inc. scheme of learning; they learn to segment words into the sounds that they have been learning. The children in Key Stage 1 are also taught common exception words, a selection of which are sent home weekly for the children to practice.

From the beginning of Year 2 and throughout Key Stage 2 until the end of Year 6, the children are taught a range of spelling rules each week following the Read, Write, Inc. 'Get Spelling' programme. In Key Stage 2, the children are also exposed to the statutory spelling lists appropriate to either Lower Key Stage 2, or Upper Key Stage 2.

We know that for our children to become good writers, they need to experience reading a wide range of texts types and genres, no matter their ability. Therefore, we encourage their love for reading, and inspire their writing, by sharing class novels every day in every class, and give them ample opportunities for reading for pleasure and experiences of a wide a range of fiction and non-fiction texts.

Teachers have the flexibility to plan to meet the needs of the children in their class and will adapt teaching and learning sequences to support this to make it accessible to all. If it is not possible to link the English sequence to a topic, teachers will select texts that are of high quality to meet the needs of the pupils for other purposes in relation to the school or class context. This could include linking to PSHE or developing specific grammar and punctuation skills that the children need to work on. Teachers also ensure they cover a range of genres, authors, and text styles to provide the children with a rich and varied English curriculum.

IMPACT

The impact of our writing curriculum is measured through careful monitoring of pupil progress and attainment throughout each school year, and for every year group.

Each sequence of learning begins with an elicitation task that enables staff to tailor teaching and learning sequences to suit the needs of the group of children, as well as identify writing targets for the children linked to the development of basic skills or the features of text being studied. These elicitation tasks have been particularly useful in enabling identification of key learning gaps which have resulted from lockdown periods due to Covid-19 restrictions. Application tasks at the end of a sequence of learning also enables teachers to monitor small steps progress within a particular area of writing. In addition, more formal termly assessments for spelling, punctuation and grammar help to inform overall assessment judgements.

At Doddiscombsleigh Primary School, ongoing Assessment for Learning (AfL) throughout the learning sequences, allows for flexibility in use of groupings. Our Progress Pathways ensures high quality differentiation and challenge within age-related expectations, whilst also enabling the children to independently challenge themselves based on confidence levels. We have worked hard to ensure that these progress pathways work within our mixed-age classes, with all children being challenged. We use a clear marking policy throughout the school to give accurate, concise and clear feedback to our pupils. Verbal feedback is encouraged and children are expected to respond to marking.

The impact of the English curriculum is further monitored by our subject leaders through the use of monitoring practices, such as pupil conferencing and book scrutiny. The findings from monitoring help to inform subject action plans in order to ensure a strong model of subject development based on current research and pedagogy. The impact of our curriculum approach will mean that all pupils will make good progress based upon their individual starting points. We want the children to leave our school being able to write clearly and accurately, but above all, with creativity and playfulness linked to their use of, and interest in, language. Pupils will have an improved vocabulary and a strong command of the written word. Most importantly, they will develop a love and passion for writing and will be well equipped for the rest of their education and the journey into their future lives.