

Writing curriculum statement.

“You can make anything by writing” CS Lewis.

Intent

At Boston West Academy, the aim of our writing curriculum is to equip pupils with the necessary skills and vocabulary to communicate effectively through a wide variety of written media, not only through their educational experiences but beyond this, into their adult lives. It is our intent that pupils will go on to fully utilise the medium of writing to entertain, persuade, inform and advise, developing an appreciation of the power and influence of the written word. We want our pupils to use language confidently and expressively, taking pride in their written work, using editing and refining skills as they reflect upon their compositions.

Implementation

The writing curriculum (Y1-Y6) at Boston West Academy is taught through the Literacy Tree scheme of learning which underpinned by the National Curriculum. Our foundation stage pupils utilise the Pie Corbett’s talk for writing approach, underpinned by the EYFS framework.

Developing independent writing skills:

Upon entering school, pupils are introduced to the written word and are encouraged to use writing as a means to communicate. Pupils are taught grapheme-phoneme correspondence and are taught how to represent these through writing. Initially, pupils are taught to form letters in print form using the mnemonics from the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds programme. Once pupils begin to join their handwriting, they follow the Teach Handwriting scheme and are taught a progression of skills to allow them to develop a fluent, joined handwriting style.

Spelling:

Throughout foundation stage and year one, pupils are explicitly taught the skills of phonological awareness, segmenting and sight recognition, following the progression of Little Wandle Letters and Sounds (link to phonics section). In year 2, our pupils are taught spelling through ‘The Bridge to Spelling’ from Little Wandle Letters and Sounds until Christmas. This consolidates their phonics knowledge ready for them to move to the school wide spelling through phonics approach from January onwards. From year three, spelling is taught through the use of phonics for spelling, an approach which focuses on explicitly teaching the different grapheme correspondences for phonemes. In addition to this, work is planned to investigate the morphology of spelling, identifying the meaning and purpose of affixes and teaching pupils how to apply these accurately. Pupils will also be taught about homophones and how to select the correct form of a word. In independent work, pupils are taught how to use grapheme mats and grids to help them to spell accurately. Proof-reading for spelling is encouraged at an age-appropriate level and age-appropriate resources are used to support this.

Vocabulary:

One of the key factors of effective written communication is the ability to understand and use a varied and advanced vocabulary which is why, at Boston West Academy, vocabulary is one of our key drivers. In foundation stage and year 1, key vocabulary is identified and explicitly taught throughout the English teaching sequence. From year 2 upwards, pupils are explicitly taught five words each week, taken from their reading text, in order to increase their language repertoire.

Grammar and punctuation:

Grammar and punctuation are taught as part of the writing sequence, linked tightly to the genres being studied, so that pupils are able to see these as integral elements of writing rather than isolated skills. Pupils will be explicitly taught grammar knowledge and will practise and apply this during their writing lessons, following modelling and scaffolding by staff. Finally, independent writing is used to show how pupils can apply this new knowledge in their own work.

The writing sequence:

In foundation stage the Talk for Writing approach, developed by Pie Corbett, is used. Pupils internalise the language structures needed to write through 'talking the text'. The approach moves from dependence towards independence, with the teacher using shared and guided teaching to develop the ability in children to write creatively and powerfully.

From year 1 upwards, the writing sequence follows the Literacy Tree progression. Pupils explore the text and have explicit grammar instruction throughout the writing sequence. Throughout the writing sequence there are opportunities for 'short burst' writes where pupils can see writing modelled effectively and practise the skills they have learnt by writing for a purpose. Towards the end of the writing sequence pupils have the opportunity to plan their own writing, based on the genre they have been studying. Pupils then complete a piece of independent writing utilising the skills taught throughout the sequence. Throughout this learning process, pupils are given instant verbal feedback alongside focused and actionable feedback on their work to allow them to develop their writing skills further.

Assessment:

The progress of pupils in writing is monitored carefully throughout the school through a range of both formative and summative assessments. These include:

- Assessment for learning in writing lessons
- NTS assessments in grammar, punctuation and spelling from year three to year six
- Internal and external moderation of writing
- National statutory assessments

Impact:

- Pupils will enjoy writing across a range of genres.
- Pupils will confidently communicate their thoughts and ideas through writing, using a varied and advanced vocabulary.
- The percentage of pupils working at age related expectation will be at, or above, national averages.
- The percentage of pupils working at greater depth will be at, or above, national averages.
- There will be no significant differences in the progress of different groups of pupils.