Writing at Much Birch – Curriculum Statement

At Much Birch our 'intent' is to make all of our pupils 'writers' and give our children skills for life in written communication. We aim to ensure a balanced mix of approaches to reading so that our pupils achieve the skills required and the confidence and positive attitude they need to succeed in the next steps in their education and in later life. We do not put ceilings on what pupils can achieve and we do not hold pre-conceptions about any pupils' ability to make progress.

Our aim at Much Birch Primary School is to develop children's ability to produce well-structured writing with appropriate detail, in which the meaning is clear and the interest of the reader is engaged.

Throughout the school, teachers are flexible in their selection of teaching models for English.

We recognise children's prior learning, build their knowledge through first hand learning experiences in order to allow the children to develop interpersonal skills and build the learning skills (our 'Key Drivers' that underpin our curriculum) of resilience and perseverance in order to become creative and critical thinkers.

CURRICULUM INTENT

Children have a naturally enquiring mind that constantly asks questions. Through the teachings of our core values of **Perseverance**, **Hope**, **Friendship** and **Humility** our intent at Much Birch is to keep them asking those questions and to channel that inquisitiveness into their writing. Through our English curriculum we foster these values to enable every child to flourish and grow, these and our drivers of resilience and perseverance support our children to be the best readers that they can be.

Our Key Curriculum Drivers through English:

Possibility - For our learners to be resilient and persevere, to challenge ourselves and each other. To know that anything is possible and we can instil that.

Diversity - High level quality texts are used as stimulus. Relevant, aspirational & diverse characters (real or fictional) will be studied. Children are enabled to understand the differences in our world in order to be more compassionate, empathise with others and to understand and fit into the world around us.

Community - We want our children to develop a sense of pride in themselves and respect for others. To know how it feels to belong and to value those around us. Writing for purpose includes writing to the community. Letters of thanks to community. Remembrance writing for local church service.

Communication - We believe that helping our children find their voice is as important as them becoming avid readers or great writers and will work to broaden vocabulary and we encourage talk in *all* areas of learning.

Cultural Capital:

Cultural capital is the accumulation of knowledge, behaviours, and skills that a child can draw upon and which demonstrates their cultural awareness, knowledge and competence; it is one of the key ingredients a pupil will draw upon to be successful in society, their career and the world of work.

Cultural capital gives power. It helps children achieve goals, become successful, and rise up the social ladder without necessarily having wealth or financial capital. Cultural capital is having assets that give children the desire to aspire and achieve social mobility whatever their starting point.

Ofsted define cultural capital as:

"As part of making the judgement about the quality of education, inspectors will consider the extent to which schools are equipping pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.

Our understanding of 'knowledge and cultural capital' is derived from the following wording in the national curriculum: 'It is the essential knowledge that pupils need to be educated citizens, introducing them to the best that has been thought

and said and helping to engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement.'

At Much Birch we think writing is one of the integral skills to give them the cultural capital to succeed in life. In life our pupils will need to be able to write lists, fill in forms, letters, signs, literature and many other things.

Approaches to Writing

In EYFS & KS1, Pie Corbett's Talk for Writing allows children to develop their story language and learn how to structure stories so that the meaning is clear.
Story maps provide children with invaluable opportunities to express their own ideas and develop their own characters and plots.
Children in all Key Stages are given daily opportunities to write in a range of contexts, for a variety of purposes, and have regular opportunities to write at length in extended independent writing sessions.
Our long term planning for English covers the range of text types set out in the National Curriculum, ensuring a breadth of coverage.
We recognise the importance of Computing/Technology in developing English skills.
Children are given lots of opportunities to stimulate or improve their writing through drama or short film clips.
Interactive technology is used in a range of ways to enhance the teaching of English; in EYFS or KS1 children may play English games on the interactive whiteboard or iPads, in KS2 they may use the internet to conduct research to support their writing or post live book reviews on Amazon knowing that they are writing for a purpose.
We encourage children to share their own work and provide opportunities for authors to come into school and inspire our students.
We also encourage children to enter competitions where they can have their work presented in a book or just enjoy writing for a different audience.
We ensure children have lots of opportunities for writing with a real-life audience such as; letters to local people or people in positions of power, internet reviews, documents for school such as school / worship councils and writing for other year group audiences.

Approaches to Speaking & Listening

Speaking and listening are fundamental to good communication for us all, and are independent of ability in reading and writing – however they are integral to good progress in these areas. We recognise the importance of being aware of skills children have already acquired in order to build on this foundation. From entry in EYFS, children are given opportunities to develop and learn new skills in formal and informal settings, both in and outside of the classroom. Children are encouraged to speak clearly and listen carefully, and both speaking and listening are stimulated in a range of ways, including;

- Listening to and responding to stories, rhymes, poems, songs and games from various cultures
- Responding to visual and aural stimuli, such as pictures, paintings, radio or film clips
- Discussing and expressing opinions
- Giving and receiving instructions or information
- Using talk partners in other curriculum areas
- Describing/recounting events
- Storytelling and reading aloud
- Drama
- Reciting lines, songs or poems learned by heart in school plays or presentations
- Imaginative play (not just in EYFS) for example, role play, use of puppets or drama
- Circle time
- Assemblies
- Debates (KS2)

We realise that a rich variety of speaking and listening opportunities arise from literature and so we have a vast array of books in each classroom including fiction and nonfiction – this in turns supports writing progress. Any child thought to require the support of a Speech & Language therapist is referred in accordance with our SEND policy.

Implementation

An Overview of what Writing looks like in our school:

- Daily English sessions in EYFS that focus in the sounds being learnt in phonics, letter formation and the use of books to develop a love of the written word.

- Key Stage One and two follow the Talk for Writing Program when appropriate.
- KS1 have daily phonics sessions that follow the RWI program of study.
- KS2 use the Twinkl Spell-it and Spelling shed scheme of work and in handwriting from year 2 – 6
- We use a school-wide handwriting scheme.
- Teachers use a range of both fiction and non-fiction material to stimulate writing. These may have been chosen for cross curricular purposes, may be used as a certain genre of writing may be the focus or may be recommended by other professionals.

Deeper into EYFS

In EYFS, children have daily phonics lessons to develop skills like blending and segmenting in preparation for early reading and writing. A wide range of exciting learning activities provide children with opportunities to develop their communication, language and literacy skills on a daily basis with a focus on child initiated activities. As well as a Writing Area, which provides children with a range of materials with which to experiment and practice mark marking/letter formation (and eventually to practice taught skills), other learning areas are enhanced to provide children with the opportunity to read and write in a range of contexts. A range of resources in the outdoor area provide valuable opportunities to engage children in writing for pleasure. Adult led activities in EYFS are usually linked to stories, poems or nursery rhymes or to cross curricular topics. From when they start school, children learn that writing can have a range of purposes and they begin to explore the features of different types of writing.

Deeper into Key Stage 1 (Year 1 & Year 2)

In Key Stage 1, phonics lessons are continued and are taught in groups according to individual ability, with an increased focus on spelling and spelling rules. In English lessons, children explore a variety of themes. They study fiction and non-fiction and begin to compare characteristic features of writing. Children learn how to apply these features in their own writing and begin to write at length.

In Key Stage 1, children will write for a range of purposes, including (but not limited to):
• Stories • Diaries • Newspaper reports • Instructions – recipes, 'how to' guides • Explanation texts • Poems • Letters & postcards • Labels, lists and captions • Recounts • Non chronological reports

Children in Key Stage 1 have English lessons daily with discrete teaching of grammar, spelling and handwriting. Writing skills are developed across the curriculum and children are given lots of opportunities for cross curricular writing. This may be linked to Topic (for example: Great Fire of London, Great Explorers) or other curriculum areas such as R.E and science.

Deeper into Key Stage 2 (Years 3 – 6)

In Key Stage 2, children have daily English lessons in which they focus on a range of text types throughout the year. These may be linked to Topic themes or to a book or poem.

During Key Stage 2, children can expect to tackle a range of writing tasks, including (but not limited to):

• Stories (including a variety of genres such as myths & legends, adventure, mystery & suspense) • Letters • Play scripts • Biographies • Recounts • Instructions • Glossaries • Explanations • Debates • Poems

Children will also learn to write in a range of styles, including;

• Writing persuasively • Writing narrative • Writing in a journalistic style • Writing formally/informally
• Writing arguments

Punctuation & Grammar is taught discretely in daily sessions and spelling is taught in stand-alone sessions following the Twinkl Spell-it scheme of work which follows the National Curriculum spelling patterns / word lists for years 3&4 and years 5&6. Handwriting is taught either as part of the spelling session or stand alone.

In Key Stage 2, children continue to have a range of opportunities for cross curricular writing and English skills are developed across the curriculum so children can apply what they know in a variety of contexts.

Cross-Curricular Opportunities

Teachers plan carefully for children to practice and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through

English lessons to other areas of the curriculum. Because of this, children from EYFS to Year 6 are provided with outstanding opportunities for cross curricular writing. Each class has a new Topic either termly or every half term, usually focusing on History, Geography or Science. We believe that providing these cross curricular opportunities helps children to develop a love of writing, as well as instilling in them that all writing has a purpose.

Impact

What you might typically see:

- Happy and engaged learners
- Orally rehearsal of different tales through actions
- Modelled and children's text on the walls/washing lines.
- Success Criteria to support writing
- Rehearsal of written skills linked to the year group
- Paired/collaborative work
- Use of technology to support writing
- Use of Drama to support writing
- Engagement and perseverance
- Self-motivated children who are proud of the work they have completed.
- Children talking about, sharing and reflecting on their learning

We know how well our pupils are doing through:

- Marking and feedback
- Moderation of writing in-house and within federation and within our county
- Pupil progress meetings
- TA feedback
- Teacher assessment/ targets

The impact of the teaching is:

- We produce confident children who can talk about their writing
- Children are able to demonstrate and transfer their writing skills across the curriculum within other foundation subjects
- Children have a greater understanding of the different types of genres of writing
- Children who are enjoying their learning in English
- Children who leave Much Birch at age related expectation in their writing or above
- Good or better progress in NFER assessments and end of key stage national assessments.