


Meadowside Community Primary & Nursery School

A Member of **The Challenge Academy Trust**

Writing Policy

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Chair of Governors	Mr P Calrow

'Where Learners Grow'

Curriculum Rationale

1. Language Development

Our curriculum aims to be talk and vocabulary rich to help counter inequality, widen access to learning and improve life opportunities [1]. Therefore, Language Development is key to the curriculum at Meadowside. Research has shown a language and communication deficit for some pupils, particularly pupils from low-income households. Our school has a higher level of deprivation among our pupils (see IDACI rating) and therefore language development is key to the educational success of our pupils. If we are to achieve our mission statement, ensuring that they fully access their next steps in education and go on to engage in the wider world work and to build a better future individually, locally and for the wider world, then language development must be central. Talk can also foster empathy and understanding contributing to the development of our attitudes and values shown below.

- **Teaching of Oracy** is key to this language development. 'Great speakers are made, not born' (Gaunt and Stott) [2]. We aim to employ strategies throughout the curriculum to develop the physical, linguistic, cognitive and social and emotional aspects of learning.
- **'Dialogic teaching'** harnesses the power of talk to engage interest, stimulate thinking, advance understanding, expand ideas, and build and evaluate arguments, empowering students for lifelong learning and democratic engagement.' (Alexander) [3]
- **Vocabulary Development** "By closing the vocabulary gap for children within our classroom with their peers, we can offer them the vital academic tools for school success, alongside the capability to communicate with confidence in the world beyond the school gates" (Quigley) [1]. Vocabulary development is pivotal to our curriculum and it is planned, sequenced and explicitly taught.
- **Reading** Dickenson et al [4] suggests that "reading offers our children the opportunity to hear new vocabulary items embedded in varied grammatical sentences. Books written for children use well-formed, relatively short sentences that are rich in varied vocabulary. Furthermore, books often use the same words in diverse grammatical constructions, offering implicit lessons in how words are used. The texts of books tend to have more low-frequency words than does spoken language [5] and books encourage use of a wider range of words than would occur in everyday conversations. Senechal and her colleagues [6], consistently finds that "parent reports of shared reading were a robust predictor of children's receptive and expressive vocabulary" (page 179). "

2. Knowledge

- The teaching of **knowledge** is central to our curriculum. Throughout the curriculum, both substantive and disciplinary knowledge is specifically chosen and deliberately sequenced to ensure retention over time. The teaching of knowledge is spaced and revisited in order to have long term impact, in line with the research of Foot-Seymour and Wiseheart [7]: 'If the goal is for students to retain as much information as possible, teachers need to be aware of **cognitive strategies** like the spacing effect so they can make small changes to their teaching practice to help students become more successful.'
- The curriculum is organised to enable children to build webs of knowledge (**schemas**), with explicit links being drawn between new and existing knowledge [8].
- According to Blooms, the teaching of knowledge underpins **critical thinking** and a child's ability to go deeper in their learning [9]. When knowledge is secure and links have been made, children are encouraged to take this knowledge deeper and apply this critically in different situations. Oracy development then allows children to express their thinking and views.

[1] The Vocabulary Gap, Chris Quigley

[2] Transforming Teaching and Learning Through Talk, Amy Gaunt and Alice Stott

[3] <http://robinalexander.org.uk/dialogical-teaching> (July 2020)

[4] How Reading Books Fosters Language Development and the World (November 2011)

[5] Beginning Literacy and Language: Young Children Learning at Home and School, D.K. Dickenson and P.O. Tabors (2001)

[6] A model of the concurrent and longitudinal relations between home literacy, M Senechal in Handbook for early Literacy Research, S.B Neuman and D. K. Dickinson (2011)

[7] Judging the credibility of websites: an effectiveness trial of the spacing effect in the elementary classroom, Foot-Seymour and Wiseheart (2022).

3. Skills

- **Cognitive and Meta cognitive strategies** are used by staff in delivering the curriculum, as we believe that the children need to know how best they learn in order to improve learner agency. Therefore, ideas such as cognitive load, working memory etc. are taught throughout the curriculum so that they can develop this understanding.
- While the teaching of disciplinary knowledge is key to progress in subjects, children require the opportunity to turn this knowledge to **practice and apply** skills. Our Curriculum planning ensures that these opportunities are embedded into the curriculum.

4. Attitudes and Values

Personal

- Developing **growth mindset** [10]. Rather than simply praising success, we praise effort and persistence. We believe the best thing to do is to teach children to love challenges, be intrigued by mistakes, enjoy effort and keep on learning. For children who find work easy we make sure they encounter more difficult tasks. Our children recognise that effort, persistence and good teaching are what help them improve.
- Developing **intrinsic motivation** and **self-efficacy** [11]. Throughout the curriculum we aim for the children to see themselves as readers, writers, mathematicians, artists, musicians etc. We want their motivation for them to work in this way to be down to their understanding of themselves and the potential they have.
- We recognise the responsibility we have for the **physical development** and the **well-being** of our pupils. Our approach to our curriculum aims to build self-esteem, a respect for self and others, kindness and resilience, with staff modelling across the curriculum how to deal with challenge and adversity. We also have a role to ensure that pupils learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support. British Values permeate through the curriculum.
- Both the teaching of oracy and knowledge underpin the children's ability in **critical thinking** [9].

Local, Societal and Global

- As an Inclusion Quality Mark flagship school, **inclusivity** is key to our culture as a school. Within the curriculum, we aim to celebrate difference and **diversity**.
- **Sustainability** is one of the key themes that is going to prepare our children for life in the future. Key questions about sustainability form central parts of our curriculum.
- The **Rights Respecting** agenda plays a key role in school life at Meadowside and provides a strong ethos to foster purposeful learning attitudes and positive relationships. This initiative underpins the school's aims to provide a values-led curriculum. The children learn about their own responsibilities, through learning about their own rights and the rights of others, as set out by the United Nations Convention Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

5. Developing a love of reading

At Meadowside CP & Nursery Primary School we strive to ensure that all children become successful, fluent readers and we aim to do this by the end of Key Stage One. We believe this is achievable through a combination of strong, high quality, discrete phonics [12] alongside promoting a strong culture of 'Reading for Pleasure'. A 'Reading for Pleasure' culture, encouraging pupils to develop a love of books and literature that will not only support their learning across the curriculum, but also enrich their lives.

[8] Making Kids Cleverer, David Didau

[9] Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, BS Blooms (1965)

[10] Mindset, How you can Fulfil Your Potential, Dr Carol S Dweck (2006)

Intent

- To ensure that children internalise the language structures needed to write through 'talking the text', as well as close reading.
- Children develop the ability to write creatively and powerfully.
- To ensure that teaching of writing is well-resourced and documented to release teachers from planning and preparation so that they can focus on adapting their teaching for children's learning.
- To provide an English curriculum that will teach children to speak, read and write fluently so they can communicate their ideas effectively to others.
- To move from learning from dependence towards independence in writing.
- The Talk for Writing approach enables children to read and write independently for a variety of audiences and purposes within different subjects.
- To ensure that classes 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 to release teachers from planning and preparation so that they can focus on adapting their teaching for children's learning.
- To apply their knowledge of phonics in writing and spelling.
- To ensure that grammar, punctuation and spelling is appropriately taught in a progressive model and applied in writing.

Implementation

At Meadowside, we adopt the The Talk for Writing (T4W) method developed by Pie Corbett, enabling children to imitate orally the language they need for a particular topic, before reading and analysing it, and then writing their own version. T4W is a process that uses spoken activities to develop writing skills. First expanding and developing pupils' oral language skills and then scaffolding and modelling the teaching of sentence, paragraph and text construction create quality writing.

1. Initial baseline assessment: Cold Task An interesting stimulus is provided to see what children can do independently prior to starting a unit of work. No teaching is given but children are encouraged to draw on prior knowledge. Assessment of this piece enables the teacher to plan what to teach the whole class and different groups. Teachers can then adapt the model text and set individual targets.

2. The imitation stage: This stage begins with a 'hook' to engage the children and give them a sense of enjoyment, audience and purpose. A model text which is pitched above the pupils' level, is learnt through a 'text map' and actions (standardised across the school) to strengthen memory. This model text contains the structures and language patterns the children will need when writing for themselves. Activities such as drama are used to deepen understanding. The model text and other quality texts are read for vocabulary, comprehension, language patterns and writing techniques (toolkits). Underpinning this phase is the rehearsing of key spellings and grammatical patterns. 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.

3. The 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 in KS2 use 'boxed up' planners with simple planning modelled by the teacher and orally rehearsed. Shared and guided writing modelled by the teacher is used to enable pupils to write their own version step by step concentrating on bringing all the elements together, writing effectively and accurately. 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.

4. Independent application and invention (hot task) This is the opportunity for pupils to independently apply what they have been taught and practiced throughout the previous stages. Pupils are provided with a rich stimulus to make their writing purposeful. Writing will often be staged over a number of days. Non-fiction writing allows pupils to apply what they have learnt across the wider curriculum. The hot task clearly shows progress across the unit as writing becomes increasingly independent. Pupils in EYFS should be playing at making up and acting out stories daily. With guidance from a teacher they should making up class stories to be later shared and acted out. Pupils in KS1 will make a few simple changes to the original model text. Pupils in KS2 will be adding, embellishing and altering the original structure using writing toolkits and drawing on the model text and their wider reading so their writing becomes more independent and at a high level.

In addition to the Talk 4 Writing approach, 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). Each half term includes a fiction, non-fiction as per our long-term plan. A poetry unit is planned termly

Spelling is explicitly taught daily using the phonics/mastery approach. Daily sessions ensure that there is consistency and progression from KS1 phonics scheme and this is embedded into KS2 spelling lessons.

1. Language Development

Language development is central to the teaching of writing, the ability to internalise the language structures needed to write.

- **Teaching of Oracy** is key to our children developing in their writing which is why it is a main driver of our curriculum. Opportunities are planned throughout the curriculum to ensure that our children develop their oracy skills. (See Oracy Policy). Within Talk 4 Writing, children are encouraged to learn the structures of a story and are taught to develop their sentence structures through sentence stems.
- **'Dialogic teaching'** is used in English lessons to develop ideas. Paired work is central to everything we do, particularly in our model for the imitation phase of the writing.
- **Vocabulary Development** Vocabulary is explicitly taught within the imitation phase of Talk 4 Writing. This is also enhanced through our bespoke approach to teaching vocabulary is called 'Word Warriors'. Daily exposure & teaching of tier 2 and 3 vocabulary has been adapted using a 7-step approach SEEC model (Select, Explain, Explore, Consolidate) from Alex Quigley's work on closing the vocabulary gap [13]. During our daily spelling sessions, etymology is used to teach the true meaning of a word, giving the children the skills needed to independently make predictions of the meaning of words.
- **Reading** is key to the development of writing. Books are chosen to support the teaching of the different story types and are ambitious and progressive. These are outlined in our Long-Term Plan (Available on the School Website)

2. Knowledge

We ensure that the teaching of knowledge is generative and sticky. Knowledge is organized using long and medium-term plans ensure that there is time for spaced learning and ensure that it is secure before building upon this. Progression is planned out for writing using the National Curriculum and the Early Years Framework 2021. Our early years team have broken this framework down into smaller steps for each of provisions whilst break downs of the national curriculum from The Literacy Company are used for KS1 and 2. Our medium-term planning focusses on the teaching of the whole curriculum but specifically focused on the needs of our children as identified by the class teacher with discussion from the writing need. This informs our medium-term planning. Medium term planning is submitted to the subject lead at the start of each unit to be quality assured and so that

they can provide support in the teaching of writing. Toolkits are used in classes to highlight the knowledge being taught and secured in each unit of work.

[13] Closing the Vocabulary Gap, Alex Quigley

3. Skills

The application of their phonic knowledge to writing requires time to **practice and apply** the disciplinary knowledge. Therefore, in reception and year 1, these are planned in three times a week to ensure that they are secure. In Nursery, 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. Phonics mats are readily available in all areas. 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 Talk for Writing lessons but also across the curriculum.

4. Attitudes and values

We know that it is key for our children to develop the writing efficacy to see themselves as writers. Encouragement for them to develop their writing efficacy is crucial. Additional opportunities are planned throughout the curriculum that ensure that for those children who don't see themselves as writers are targeted. We ensure that in all writing sessions we strive to develop their growth mindset with challenging activities for all groups with effort and resilience praised and rewarded. Dojo Points are given for effort and overcoming challenge rather than for simply achieving a goal.

5. Developing a love of Reading

Having secure understanding of writing is crucial in the children being able to be creative and find the joy that comes from writing process. Hooks are used throughout the school that engage all children but specifically focus on the needs of our classes. The long-term plan for writing is evaluated yearly to ensure that books are chosen the specifically engage the key groups that need to develop this love in these classes. We are keen to ensure that all children are encouraged and enjoy our phonics sessions.

Opportunities to write and to celebrate writing are also key to our teaching of writing. Opportunities for our more able writers to work with authors are planned into our year and opportunities for children to have their work published presented and celebrated. (Higher Writers Project with BCA)

SEND and Inclusion

High quality first teaching is key to meeting the needs of pupils with SEND and our approach ensures that this is consistent across our school. The Talk 4 Writing approach ensures that all children have the modelling and scaffolding that they need. However, it is clear that some of our children do require additional support in some areas. This is provided in the following ways:

Task Adaptation

- Work recorded using iPads or laptops
- Oral responses recorded where appropriate
- Colourful semantics/ Mighty Writers used to support structure
- Clicker 6 used to write using a word bank

Scaffolding

As part of our quality first teaching of SEND, scaffold is one of the key teaching strategies. However, our children with SEND do need additional scaffolding both in phonics lessons and also within provision and other lessons where they are applying these phonic strategies. Examples of support are as such:

- Modeling 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.

Additional strategies for pupils will be highlighted as a part of the SEND strategy meetings and in consultation with other professionals. These form part of a child's pupil passport and support teachers in removing barriers for learning.

Termly assessments show us which knowledge is the key for other knowledge later on within the Writing curriculum. Support and CPD is given to staff to ensure they have a good understanding of what learning is key to move on. These children are discussed regularly with the SENCo. Additional, specific interventions may also be used for writing are Mighty Writers, Colourful Semantics, Precision teaching, additional phonics sessions focused on application.

Where children are working significantly below age related levels, children's progress is assessed using bSquared.

Designated Provision

The approach used in Development Centre and the Designated Provision is consistent with our whole school policy. Topics are delivered in a three-year cycle for EYFS and KS1 and in a four-year cycle for Key Stage 2. Coverage of all of the different story types are planned using this method however, children will access these at different parts of their learning journey, however, specific texts are chosen to engage children at their developmental level.

Although the curriculum has a cyclical approach to text types covered, as outlined in our overview above, elements of the curriculum are taught to individuals and groups within the Designated Provision in line with their learning using the whole progression documents. Ensuring that children have access to the full curriculum

Where possible, these objectives will be delivered through whole class teaching and differentiated to cover elements of the curriculum across appropriate year groups. Where this is not appropriate, however, split inputs will be used to introduce new learning to children in 1:1 or small group sessions that will lead to independent learning.

Interventions

Mighty Writers is used across school as an intervention for children who are working below age related expectations. This fits well with our Talk 4 Writing approach and gives our children the modelling and scaffolding to succeed. 20-minute sessions are planned for groups of up to three children up to three times per week. These run for 10 weeks. Progression is then evaluated by moderating a piece of writing using the Literacy company assessments.

Assessment


Formative assessment is an integral part of daily lessons and is first and foremost the essence of helping making our pupils make instant progress in their writing. This is done through a mixture of high-level questioning, discussion, Oracy activities and written work.

We use live marking and feedback to enable teachers to target next steps for pupils effectively. Opportunities for children to review and improve their learning are embedded into each lesson. Visualisers are used in every class to share work and feedback given celebrating the positives but also how we move learning forward. Children are given the opportunity to evaluate their own work, and that of their peers. During and on completion of a piece of work, the teacher responds, identifying areas for development. Children's work is valued, celebrated and displayed around the class and school.













Summative assessments are completed termly to moderate the progress in the children's writing. 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.

Tracking of key groups allows for a better structure to learning and allows the Curriculum coordinator to further adapt the long-term planning where needed.

Appendix 1



QUALITY FIRST TEACHING @ MEADOWSIDE

MODELLING OF TASK - PREPARED AND LIVE  <p>Students need cognitive support to help them learn how to solve problems. Modelling, worked examples and teacher thinking out loud help clarify the specific steps involved.</p> <p>Ref: Rosenshine's Fourth Principle</p>	REVIEW OF PREVIOUS LEARNING  <p>Daily review is an important component of instruction. It helps strengthen the connections of the material learned. Automatic recall frees working memory for problems solving and creativity.</p> <p>Rosenshine's First Principle</p>	CHUNKING - NEW MATERIAL BROKEN INTO SMALL STEPS  <p>Our working memory is small, only handling a few bits of information at once. We try to avoid its overload – presenting new material in small steps and proceed only when ready.</p> <p>Ref: Rosenshine's Second Principle</p>	INDEPENDENT PRACTICE  <p>Independent Practice produces 'overlearning' – a necessary process for new material to be recalled automatically. This ensures no overloading of the student's working memories.</p> <p>Ref: Rosenshine's Ninth Principle</p>
ORACY STRATEGIES - TAUGHT VOCABULARY, ELABORATION, SENTENCE STEMS  <p>At Meadowside we strive to ensure that our children can communicate effectively. Therefore the teaching of oracy strategies needs to be explicit and reinforced in everything we do.</p> <p>Ref: Voice 21</p>	SCAFFOLDING - TEMPORARY SUPPORT TO ASSIST LEARNING  <p>Scaffolds are temporary support to assist learning. They can include modelling, teacher thinking out loud, cue cards and checklists. Scaffolds are part of cognitive apprenticeship.</p> <p>Ref: Rosenshine's Eighth Principle</p>	RETRIEVAL PRACTICE - INCLUDING SPACED RETRIEVAL  <p>The effort involved in recalling recently-learned material embeds it in the long-term memory. And the more this happens, the easier it is to connect new material to such prior knowledge.</p> <p>Ref: Kate Jones Retrieval Practice</p>	HIGHER LEVEL QUESTIONING  <p>Questions allow a teacher to determine how well material has been learned. Higher level questioning also allows the teacher to assess the depth of that learning and to move the learning forward.</p> <p>Ref: Bloom's Taxonomy</p>
TASK ADAPTATION - REMOVING BARRIERS TO LEARNING  <p>We believe that it is crucial to remove whatever barriers stop our children accessing the key learning of a lesson. Therefore tasks are adapted to ensure everyone has access to the learning.</p> <p>Ref: SEND Gateway: Adaptive Teaching for Inclusion</p>	DIRECT INSTRUCTION  <p>Research shows Direct Instruction is key to developing confidence of learners. Skills are introduced gradually, reinforced, and continually assessed.</p> <p>Ref: ResearchED Guide to Explicit Teaching and Direct Instruction</p>	MEADOWSIDE MINDSET - GROWTH MINDSET AND SELF EFFICACY  <p>For children to succeed they need to have confidence in themselves as learners. A growth mindset will support the children in persisting to overcoming whatever gets in their way.</p> <p>Ref: Changing Mindsets and Bandura</p>	(PEDAGOGICAL) CONTENT KNOWLEDGE  <p>The most effective teachers have deep knowledge of the subjects they teach. Teachers need to be confident not just in the subject knowledge but the best strategies to impart this knowledge</p> <p>Ref: What Makes Great Teaching (Robert Coe)</p>