



## **English writing**

### **Intent**

At the Gem Federation, we are inclusive and believe that our writing curriculum should prepare all children for the next stage of learning, whether this be to a new year group, a new key stage or when they transition into secondary school. Our curriculum is constructed to be ambitious and designed to give all learners, no matter the individual need, ability or background, the knowledge and skills they require to succeed in life; it is coherently planned and sequenced in order to fulfil this aim.

We have high expectations of all children and intend for them to leave Year 6 as confident, fluent, independent writers who not only understand the purpose and importance of writing within the wider society but that they positively engage in the process; taking pride and personal responsibility for their part in this.

We intend for our children to be able to communicate effectively through their writing across a range of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, genres and themes, including being able to write for different levels of formality, purpose and audience - this applies to all writing opportunities, including when writing across the wider curriculum where the children are expected to apply the written and spoken language skills they have acquired from the English curriculum. We intend to immerse the children in a range of quality texts and media; exposing them to a wealth of rich vocabulary and grammatical structures that enable them to be creative and risk-takers, while maintaining a critical and reflective approach.

We intend for our curriculum to be reflective of the school community and wider world; enabling our children to not only see themselves but to develop culturally, emotionally, socially and spiritually.

### **Implementation**

At the Gem Federation, our writing curriculum follows the National Curriculum and EYFS Framework. It is designed to be inclusive of all; enabling all children to excel at every stage of learning and with a preparedness for success in life. Knowledge and skills are taught progressively and sequentially, with high-expectations consistently applied to maximise learning outcomes for all children. To fulfil our intentions, we implement a range of actions and strategies:

- Quality, engaging and diverse texts that cover a range of themes, contexts and structures are used as a starting point for writing;
- Over the course of study, planning is coherent and sequenced in order that core skills and knowledge become embedded. Teaching is designed to help learners integrate new knowledge into larger concepts;
- Lessons are taught with a focus on spelling, punctuation and grammar, ensuring that children can apply their knowledge and skills for different writing styles, audiences and purposes, and that they are critical, reflective and creative writers. The structures for writing are embedded within the lessons through the chosen quality text;
- The ability to self-edit, adapt and improve is embedded in the writing process with the children having the licence to take personal responsibility for the quality of their writing, as well as make independent choices while remaining within the structures of the intended learning outcomes. The school has a clear

marking policy with children responding to teacher marking and feedback at the start of lessons, as well as an expectation of editing and up-levering ideas within each piece of written work;

- Continuous assessment is deployed throughout a lesson with staff systematically checking learners' understanding, identifying misconceptions accurately and providing clear, direct feedback. Staff respond and adapt lessons, as necessary. Teachers assess children's independent written pieces of work in English and across the wider curriculum;
- Senior leaders continually review and scrutinise the quality and consistency of provision within the federation through learning walks, lesson observations, book scrutinies, analysis of data and pupil voice. Senior leaders are reflective and proactive in approach, making any necessary adaptations to provision in order to ensure the highest standards of education;
- Staff are provided with continuous professional development as identified in the *School Improvement Plan* and in response to senior leader reviews and scrutinies. This is to ensure that staff have good subject knowledge and are well-informed of school policies and procedures, as quality first teaching is essential in enabling all learners to thrive;
- Writing is celebrated in weekly assemblies, on the school newsletter and through displays of published work;
- Children's vocabulary is developed through the *Word of the Week*;
- Learning environments are designed to ensure that learners can focus on learning. The resources and materials used by staff reflect the ambitious intentions of the federation for the course of study and for future learning;
- Working Walls are used to show the writing process for a unit of work. Magpie Charts display quality vocabulary that can be selected by the children in their writing;
- Workshops and Celebration Days inform parents/carers of the National Curriculum expectations, offer ideas and support in relation to working with their child/ren at home, and provide a showcase for the importance of writing.

### Handwriting

Our approach to high-quality handwriting provision is as follows:

- Fine motor and gross motor skills are a crucial part of children's development. Fine motor and gross motor activities are planned throughout the Early Years and year 1, in order for children to practise and master the skills needed for everyday activities;
- As the children move to Reception, letter formation is taught daily alongside phonics, where the children will practice forming letters using rhymes to embed the correct formation;
- Gross motor, fine motor and *Write Dance* interventions are put in place for those children who may need additional practice of these skills;
- In years 1 and 2, handwriting must be taught and practised daily in an explicitly modelled lesson. In years 3, these lessons are taught several times a week alongside spellings. In years 4, 5 and 6, lessons are also taught through spellings but the frequency is dependent on the need;
- In KS2, children need to record their handwriting in their English book alongside their daily written English work;
- Children who write in a legible printed style, with their letters formed correctly, will then be taught to join their letters (Using the font, Letter join No Lead 4 as an example);
- Children who attain a neat, legible joined handwriting style are awarded with a Pen Licence and are given a handwriting pen;
- Handwriting should be consistent throughout all lessons, including across the curriculum. Pen Licences are taken away from a child if a neat joined style is not maintained. The lines in a child's English workbook reflect the child's handwriting ability;

- The Gem Federation uses the Letter-join handwriting scheme. Children have access to Letter-join Home Edition to enable them to practise their handwriting at home.

### **Impact**

At the Gem Federation, we believe that children should develop detailed knowledge and skills in writing in order that they are fully prepared for the next stage of learning. By the time they leave us, they should be able to produce written work in all areas of the curriculum that is of a consistently high standard and for a range of formalities, purposes and audiences. They should develop a love of writing and be encouraged to be accurate, while having authority to be reflective, critical risk-takers.

The impact of the English curriculum is measured through a variety of assessment opportunities. During lessons, assessment strategies include written and verbal feedback, targeted and supplementary questioning, and peer and self-editing in-line with the school's marking policy; teachers adapt their planning as a result of their continuous Assessment for Learning. Writing is assessed several times within an English unit of work through independent writes, as well as half-termly in the wider curriculum, with targets being set for individual learners. Assessment data is submitted on a termly basis and analysis completed in relation to attainment and progression. Teachers' performance management targets aim to provide consistently high standards of teaching and learning, with an additional focus on children who are working below the expected standard.

Senior leaders and subject leaders undertake a continuous monitoring approach through learning walks, book scrutinies, moderation, lesson observations, pupil progress meetings, as well as through children and teacher feedback; a proactive and reflective approach to continuous improvement is adopted to ensure that we are ambitious and set high expectations for all children's outcomes.