

# Woodside Church of England Primary School



## A Guide for Parents Writing

## **Introduction**

At Woodside Primary School we believe the ability to write is one of the fundamental skills children will need for lifelong learning. We aim for children to enjoy writing and to understand the purpose of writing, as well as have a good knowledge of the basics of grammar, handwriting, punctuation and sentence construction. Children will have the opportunity to develop their understanding of a range of different writing. They will spend time learning what makes a good piece of writing, and will use this to edit and improve their own writing.

Teachers will allow plenty of opportunities for pupils to develop their ideas in a range of ways, understanding that if a pupil can 'talk it' then they will have a better chance of 'writing it'. We place a high focus on training children to identify the development needs in their own writing, with support and guidance from the teacher. This enables them to be more reflective learners and develops lifelong skills.

## **Starting to Teach Writing**

From the time the children enter Woodside Primary, they are encouraged to write, as a means of recording, their thoughts and ideas. This will include emergent writing, which may not be recognisable or legible to an adult, but allows the child the chance to practise and start to develop the skills of writing. Teachers will help children to sound out words using their knowledge of letters and sounds, and allow them to make plausible attempts at words. Teachers may correct key words or sounds that have been focused on in class. During the early stages of writing, children will be encouraged to have a go at writing and will not be criticised

for not forming letters correctly, incorrect spellings or lack of punctuation. If we want children to engage in writing we cannot criticise their first attempts.

We will plan to guide them through our teaching, and develop letter formation and spelling knowledge as the children progress through the school. Teachers will continually demonstrate how to write for different purposes and will discuss correct letter formation with children. Children may be encouraged to write labels for work they have completed or write instructions for someone else of how to make an object. We will continually praise children when they write, especially if they choose to do so independently.

Children will be encouraged to write in a range of areas of the classroom and in different ways. They might write individually, in small groups, or contribute to a whole class piece of writing. Children will be encouraged to write on large scale pieces of paper, using paint, water or even within sand. There will also be opportunities for children to write in the role play areas; maybe writing a list of items, or recording an observation.

If you want to know more about how your child is doing in writing then ask the teacher!

## **Developing Knowledge and Understanding of a Range of Writing**

As the children progress through the school from Year 1 to Year 6, the teachers will follow the National Guidance for Literacy Teaching. This will give the children a range of opportunities to engage and develop their understanding of a range of different types of writing. Although the main focus is on writing, children may not write every day. They will have opportunities to capture ideas, plan and experiment with different writing across a week. This might include drama, film clips, ICT and working in small groups, for example.

Teachers will support the pupils in identifying 'Steps to Success' in a piece of writing. This allows children to see what they should include in their writing to make it good and allows them to reflect on their own writing as to how they can make it better. Children will focus on a range of areas to improve their writing, including the structure, content and a focus on the secretarial skills of spelling, grammar and punctuation. Many of the children confidently use the VCOP (Vocabulary, Connective, Openers and Punctuation) focus to help them identify improvements for their writing. Children may concentrate on one or more of the areas of VCOP to focus in on the secretarial skills of their writing.

Teachers will use pupils' written and class work to identify particular needs for learning. Teachers will then plan individual, group or whole class focused teaching as necessary. If they find there is an area that requires discrete teaching, then opportunities for this will be planned.

## **Types of writing and features**

- Fiction/narrative (Stories)
- Myths and legends
- Poetry
- Recount
- Report
- Instructions
- Explanation
- Persuasive
- Discussion
- Dialogue

## **Handwriting**

Even in this technological, computer-literate age, good handwriting remains fundamental to our children's educational achievement. Children take part in handwriting sessions from Reception to year 6. All teachers encourage a fluent joined style.

## **Spelling and Phonics**

Children from Reception to Year 2 take part in a daily phonics session. Teachers follow National Guidance and use 'Letters and sounds' to support this teaching. The teaching of phonics is also being integrated into the work in KS2 for those children who need it. Phonics is the foundation of reading and, along with a range of other strategies, assists children with their spellings. Schemes called 'Searchlights

for spelling' and support for spelling are used across KS2. Weekly spelling lists are sent home for children to practice and learn and they are then tested in school.

## **Supporting Your Child at Home**

Children need to want to write in order to become successful writers. Give them a purpose for their writing; ask them to help you with the shopping list or allow them time to write about something that interests them. Most of all make it fun! Special paper and pens can really encourage them!

It is important for children to see you writing. May be write something together! Make a poster or write a recount of a trip you have been on for friends!

Children need to experience lots of different types of writing to enable them to write for different purposes! So share a range of texts with them when reading to give them experience of different structures, styles and language.

Talk to your child's class teacher or look at the termly curriculum summaries to find out what your children are focusing on.

*If you have any further queries, do not hesitate to come in and ask!*