



**Astrea Academy Trust**

**Greengate Lane Academy**

**English Policy**

**Writing**

Name of school	Greengate Lane Academy
Date of policy	September 2022
Member of staff responsible	Rebekah Peet
Link Governor	Simon Merrywest (Curriculum)
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### **English Rationale:**

At Greengate Lane, we believe in immersing our children in a literary world, creating strong levels of engagement to provide meaningful and authentic contexts for learning. We follow the award-winning Literacy Tree Curriculum which is a complete, book-based approach where we teach through a text to ensure a consistent, cohesive pedagogy is used across our school. Our children become critical readers and acquire an authorial style as they encounter a wide-range of significant authors and a variety of fiction, non-fiction and poetry.

The study of English develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including the communication of their views, ideas and feelings. Children are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as non-fiction and a range of multi-media. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins; ensuring they are at the heart of the learning experience.

Through a text-led approach, our pupils are exposed to a range of texts from a variety of cultures. They are taught the processes and skills for writing through the study and analysis of texts. In this way, they become immersed in the book and are able to create independent pieces from modelled ideas.

Our pupils are encouraged to work independently, in pairs and in small groups to assist their learning. They are given opportunities to explore and express their ideas and opinions and develop into resilient pupils who are open about their own editing and re-drafting processes.

Books are at the very heart of our English curriculum to help to instil in our pupils a love of reading. We believe that this helps to develop pupils in all areas of English. Our learning environments are inspiring and motivating, to enable pupils remain keen and interested.

### **The Teach Through a Text approach:**

The Teach through a Text pedagogy is the backbone to every planning sequence and each aspect is reinforced through the other components. This pedagogy approach is consistent through school.

- Thematic link - Links are made through themes and conventions within significant literature.
- Engaging starting point - Dramatic conventions provide resonance & create a hook with the book.
- Embedded comprehension - Reading comprehension explicitly embedded through prediction and inference.
- Embedded grammar - Explicit grammar skills for writing taught in context to be applied purposefully.
- Purpose & audience - Distinct shorter & longer writing opportunities rather than genre-led.
- Literary language - Literary language explicitly taught and applied in writing.
- Spelling & vocabulary - Explicit spelling skills are explored and linked to vocabulary acquisition.

### **How is the teaching of writing organised in this school?**

After children have finished the RWInc programme, writing is taught using Literacy Tree. Daily, hour-long Literacy Tree lessons happen in every class. Each half term, at least one unit is covered by each class. Unit planning and resources are available to teachers via the Literacy Tree website. Teachers adapt and personalise the planning in response to the needs of pupils and daily lesson evaluations. Every classroom has an English planning file which contains long term plans, annotated unit plans and lesson evaluations as well as assessment and intervention details for the subject. The units are all structured in a similar way focusing on:

- Immersion – Hook for writing, vocabulary, purpose, audience, discussion, inference.
- Analyse – High quality text examples, content and purpose of the text.
- Skill – Grammar, sentence strips, writing techniques relevant to the text type.
- Plan - Model the shape/features of the text type for children to follow. Together, create the success criteria for the written piece.
- Write – scaffold the children's writing process, apply skills and vocabulary developed through the unit.
- Review – Edit and review writing. Edit and improve own work/peer edit. Revise/Re-write/Re-imagine
- Publish – Children creatively publish their writing. Emphasis on beautifully published pieces of writing. Reminders about handwriting policy. Children take great pride in their published writing.
- Celebrate – Once a term, a chosen published piece is displayed outside each classroom and celebrated and shared with parents and the wider school community.

### **Handwriting:**

Handwriting is taught twice weekly. We use [www.teachhandwriting.com](http://www.teachhandwriting.com) Route C, Continuous Cursive version 3. We expect all staff to model the school handwriting at all times and also use handwriting on classroom displays. Our handwriting policy is displayed at the front of every classroom. By the end of Year 2 all children will be using pen. Any children struggling to meet expectations are quickly picked up and interventions are put into place.

### **Vocabulary:**

Greengate Lane Academy is a word – rich school where vocabulary acquisition and development is built into every lesson. New vocabulary is shared at the start of every unit. We also teach a vocabulary masterclass twice a week using direct vocabulary instruction. Direct Vocabulary Instruction is the planning and explicit teaching of specific and carefully-selected vocabulary. By doing this we: widen and deepen pupils' working vocabulary, target teaching of rich vocabulary for writing, preteach vocabulary for reading and enhance an understanding of the curriculum. To ensure pupils are exposed to Tier 2 words (and are given the means to internalise these words properly), at least one explicit Vocabulary Masterclass each week into the school timetable that focuses solely on explicitly teaching these words is crucial. This session is 10-15 minutes long and words to explore are taken from the Astrea mapped vocabulary resource. Revisiting and repeating words is also essential in embedding word knowledge over time and this is planned into this mapped resource, as the key within the resource itself shows. Information for teachers about each word listed on this resource is available in the accompanying Astrea mapped vocabulary teacher notes PowerPoints.

## **The Learning Environment**

Every classroom is a language-rich 'writerly' environment where there are high quality writing opportunities in provision and reading areas. Learning environments are developed and utilised to create a hook for the book at the beginning of a new unit. Every classroom has an English working wall which displays current topics of learning and resources to support children in independently applying their skills. Each working wall displays a clear 'S plan' to show the learning journey and intended outcomes as well as clearly displaying the audience and purpose of the text. There will also be a 'help desk' with resources available for children to access when needed. Copies of the text are available to children as well as dictionaries and thesauruses which pupils are confident at using independently.

## **Assessment:**

Teachers work relentlessly to ensure children are making progress with their learning throughout their English lessons. Every published piece of writing is assessed using the Astrea Assessment grids. During the drafting, editing and publishing process, evidence of teacher feedback and peer assessment to enhance the quality of outcome is seen in annotations on work and post its. Ongoing writing assessments using published writing and Literacy Tree evidence will support teacher judgements. Termly moderation of writing takes place in school and trust wide writing moderation for each year group takes place at different times during the year. Every year group takes part in the No More Marking writing assessment and all staff make the comparative judgements. These results support the school and trust moderation. Exemplification materials are available to every year group. Termly grammar assessments will support staff in determining the attainment and progress of pupils. Termly pupil progress meetings provide opportunities to discuss attainment and progress and plan appropriate additional support and interventions.

## **Recording and tracking progress:**

This supports teacher writing judgements and facilitates subject leader monitoring and moderation. Teacher Assessment is uploaded onto Bromcom termly. Termly pupil progress meetings with each class teacher ensures opportunities to discuss and track the progress and attainment of individual pupils and plan appropriate additional support and interventions.

## **Reporting to Parents/Carers**

The assessment process described above helps teachers report to parents/carers. Parent Consultation evenings happen twice yearly and an end of year report also states the attainment and progress of each child.

## **Monitoring and evaluation**

The English leader monitors delivery of the subject through observation and discussion with teaching staff, as well as discussions with children and scrutiny of their written work to ensure consistent and coherent curriculum provision.

Evaluation of the programme's effectiveness is conducted on the basis of:

- Pupil and teacher evaluation of the content and learning processes
- Staff meetings to review and share experience
- Monitoring of assessment to ensure progression throughout the school.

### **Involving parents and carers**

Parents and carers are/will be given the opportunity to find out about and discuss the writing process through:

- \* Response to comments on reports
- \* Curriculum newsletters
- \* Displays
- \* Homework tasks
- \* Website information
- \* Parent information sessions

### **Training and support for staff**

Opportunities are provided for staff to identify individual training needs on a yearly basis and relevant support is provided. Any new staff to school are provided with a full day of Literacy Tree training from the Literary Consultants.

In addition to this, support for teaching and understanding the literary curriculum is incorporated in our staff INSET programme, drawing on staff expertise and/or a range of external agencies. Astrea offer online and in-person training opportunities to address staff needs in particular areas. We also provide opportunities to work collaboratively across the trust with other schools also following the Literacy Tree.

### **Policy Review**

This policy is reviewed annually.