

English Policy

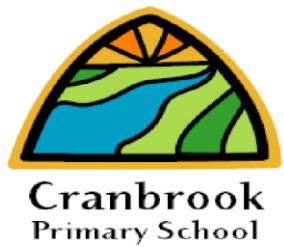


**Cranbrook
Primary School**

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Signed and dated by Chair of Governors:

Whole School English Policy



Rationale

Language is a fundamental life skill and central to living and learning. It is a right of all our children to have the opportunity to experience language as:

- A source of pleasure, enjoyment and richness.
- A key element in the development of critical thinking, creativity and imagination
- A means of partaking in a range of activities in public, cultural and working life.
- A sense of belonging and social identity

At Cranbrook, the staff are committed to promoting language development as one of the school's main priorities. Children bring with them to school a wide range of attitudes towards, understanding of, and experiences with language. This diversity in children's experiences, skills and understanding will be recognised by the staff, who will seek to work with the children and their families in the development of each individual as an able and enthusiastic language user.

Aims

- To provide a language rich environment that promotes a love for reading and writing.
- To develop pupils' writing through effective speaking.
- To ensure a solid grounding in spelling, handwriting and punctuation.
- To immerse children in the text and give them contextual experiences in which to learn.
- To create opportunities for developing the powers of imagination and creativity within a safe environment

Our Teaching

We believe that the strategies of 'Reciprocal Reading' and 'Talk for Writing' are excellent tools for enriching the language and deep level thinking skills of our pupils. In our school, we strive to have pupils immersed in a stimulating linguistic environment, where reading materials are presented in an inviting and attractive way and opportunities to infuse the pupils with language are fully utilised. We also believe that effective reading and speaking offer the foundation of effective writing.

The reading and writing processes outlined in this policy are applied across the curriculum as we believe that such skills are inherent across all subject areas and serve as a vehicle to pupils' learning in a range of contexts.

Closing the Gender Gap

For many years, national data has indicated that there is a significant difference between the performance of male and female pupils in English by the end of KS2. As a school, we are constantly searching for ways to address these issues and reduce the gender gap. This involves planning around texts which are engaging to both male and female pupils. Pupils are regularly consulted on the types of texts they would like to study and the writing responses they would like to produce via discussions, pupil surveys and class discussions. As a school, we also feel that the use of positive male role models is crucial in modelling a passion and enjoyment of reading and writing. We work with partnership secondary schools to provide peer mentors who work to support and guide our boys in their reading and writing journey.

Reciprocal Reading

The Reciprocal Reading Strategy uses books as the core of a teaching programme. Reciprocal Reading books have been chosen because they are powerful, well written books, likely to engage children, stir their ideas and feelings and involve them in discussion. The approach addresses the four comprehension strategies of prediction, questioning, clarifying and summarising via a carousel of activities. Children are encouraged to answer literal,

inference and evaluative questions using textual clues. They are expected to complete a pre-read task and respond to the text in written response tasks that may include comprehension or grammar in context activities.

Example of a weekly Reciprocal Reading Carousel:

Group	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	Pre Read	Guided Reading	Response	Independent Reading	Genre Focus/Grammar
2	Genre Focus/Grammar	Pre Read	Guided Reading	Response	Independent Reading
3	Independent Reading	Genre Focus/Grammar	Pre Read	Guided Reading	Response
4	Response	Independent Reading	Genre Focus/Grammar	Pre Read	Guided Reading
5	Guided Reading	Response	Independent Reading	Genre Focus/Grammar	Pre Read

Pre-read -An opportunity for the children to pre-read pages of a book, make predictions by looking at the picture or ask questions to their peers. Prediction activities can be recorded in scrapbooks or reciprocal reading activity books.

Guided Reading- Teacher Focus. This is when we discuss the storyline with the children and ask high level questions. Children may need to read at this point depending on ability and fluency.

Response- An activity based on what the children have read so far in their book. Response activities should be recorded in scrapbooks/ reciprocal reading activity books. These included predicting, questioning about characters and plot, answering LCT questions and writing book reviews.

Independent Reading- A reading session for the children to choose a book from the Reading Corner and read for pleasure. They may be encouraged to read books of a similar text type or theme as the RR guided text.

Genre Focus - An activity where the children can investigate different genre styles and types of writing. This can have SPAG links too.

WYSaR

We promote reading for pleasure by asking parents and carers to model an interest in reading a variety of books. WYSaR means Wear Your Slippers and Read. Children in Nursery, Reception and year 1 are encouraged to read with parents weekly or fortnightly wearing their slippers. This is an incentive for children to get cosy in class and read with their peers and family. Parents and carers are shown how to teach reading during the session as teachers lead a RR session. Staff model how to ask questions about books and encourage book talk e.g. likes, dislikes, what's puzzled you, what was surprising, any connections within books and make links with personal experiences.

Dear Time

Teachers promote a love of reading by having regular and consistent daily Dear time sessions. This stands for Drop Everything and Read. Teachers select books that are at a slightly higher reading level for the year group. This encourages reading for stamina, reading at length and reading over time and supports in the development of high order vocabulary. Children are encouraged to bring in books from home and make recommendations to each other.

Talk for Writing

'Talk for Writing' or Pie Corbett philosophy, is based on the premise that if pupils extend their language repertoire through speaking this will directly impact on the quality of their writing. It involves making explicit the language features in the text so that ultimately they can be internalised and applied by children in their own writing.

The writing sequence comprises of four key phases as illustrated below.

Independent writing opportunities and Self Evaluating through Editing - Ongoing			
Independent pieces of writing that link to the text e.g. character description, persuasive letter, or a postcard, diary entry, recount Children edit their work for improvement using their marking ladders throughout the journey. Children self-assess using WWW (what went well and Even Better If) in KS2 and 2 stars and a wish in KS1			
Phase 1: Cold Write/ Hook Book Talk	Phase 2 Imitation Toolkit Imitation Games Text Mapping	Phase 3 Innovation	Phase 4: Invention Publishing
Cold Write Children write a cold piece with a hook e.g. questions or a visual or a special object. Children are given a skills marking ladder for the unit. Book Talk Children respond to the book that is taught. They talk about their likes and dislikes, puzzles, and connections. Comprehension LCT Children are introduced to the exemplar text and show their understanding of plot, characters and events through RR style questioning.	Toolkit Children become familiar with the language and organisational features of the genre, by analysing the exemplar text. Imitation Games Children internalise the language features of the exemplar text through oral rehearsals, paired talk, story maps, drama, role-play and language games. Text mapping Children text map their journey using visuals drawings of key events. Teachers differentiate for SEN by providing a templates and visuals for children to sequence or a pre-made text map with missing pictures.	Once the children have internalised the text, they are then ready to start innovating on the pattern. The key activity in this stage is shared writing helping the children to write their own by 'doing one together first'. Using the exemplar text as a frame children build upon and extend their writing through the development of their own ideas and text innovation. Editing Editing is ongoing throughout the journey. It addresses any misconceptions that may have arisen, helping the children understand aspects that they were having difficulty with. This includes time for the children to have a go at altering their work (using their marking ladder) in the light of what they have just learnt so that they start to make progress. They use a green pen to show changes they have made.	Invention There are more opportunities for shared writing on a related topic and then the children can have a go themselves on a related topic. They use the internalised language features and apply them in a new context. They remember toolkit features and understand how to organise their writing. Publishing Children publish their final piece in their Hot Write books. They work on presentation and cursive handwriting. At the end they self-assess work by using their marking ladder to make judgements of their work.

Strategies used within the sequence

Exemplar Text

The exemplar text offers the framework and the skeletal structure upon which the pupils develop their writing. Here in Cranbrook School, we ensure that the grammatical features outlined in the New National Curriculum (2014) are incorporated into the exemplar text in order to increase pupils' familiarity and ultimate application into their own writing. The grammatical content is inherent in the exemplar text and its application by the pupils is featured in the final marking ladder.

Text Mapping

Story Mapping is the visual representation of the exemplar text. This is carried out by the pupils in order to support the imitation phase proceeding their independent writing. The imitation phase provides opportunities for pupils to internalise the language features of the exemplar text through speaking and oral rehearsals.

Language games- Speaking and Listening

A very wide range of language games is used as a platform for internalising the key language and grammatical features of the exemplar text and as a way of developing pupils' own ideas around their writing. Some of the games used include 'Ping-Pong', 'Hot-Seating', 'X-Factor Panels', 'Freeze-Frames', 'Role Play', 'Debate Forum' and 'Speaking Triangles', 'Over the fence,' 'Gossiping phone call' and 'newspaper reporter.'

Toolkit

Writer's talk is used in order to articulate the writer's thinking process. For example, a writer would be paying particular attention to the sentence type for maximum impact so this would be demonstrated with 'thinking aloud' processes whilst writing such as, 'I wonder what type of sentence I use here could for maximum impact...'. Such a process could be shared by the pupils or demonstrated solely by the adult writer. The important thing is to demonstrate the thinking process behind the writing in order to facilitate pupil independence. Shared writing is also a powerful method for direct teaching of key skills and concepts needed in the writing process.

Editing

Editing is done in a guided group work session or whole class. Teachers work with small focus groups, to address the marking ladder and gaps in writing. Editing should be linked to targets and writing levels for each group. Editing writing enables teachers to support pupils in up-levelling their writing against their personal writing targets and the marking ladders. Children also become adept at editing continuously throughout their journey by using self-assessment tools such as WWW- What went well and EBI – Even better if in the upper key stage. In Key stage 1 children use 2 stars and a wish to up-level their work and then have a go to show this as a next step.

'Cold Task' to 'Hot Task'

Children are assessed at the onset of the writing unit in the form of a 'Cold Writing Task' and at the end of the unit in the form of a 'Hot Writing Task' in order to track progress within the unit.

An initial 'Cold Task' is completed independently by all children with minimal teacher input in order to ascertain a base line assessment. However they do have a stimulus like a short video or questions to engage the children. After teacher input and at the end of the writing journey pupils complete a 'Hot Writing Task' as a way of tracking pupils' progress within the given genre and the extent to which they have applied key features and grammatical structures. The assessment is carried out by pupils as well as teachers against the marking ladder.

Big Write

Once each term, we hold a Big Write week to promote independence in writing and application. This is a whole school initiative where all classes produce writing with a focus on a shared theme. This 'Big Write' provides opportunities for independent writing where pupils can demonstrate their understanding of grammatical features taught throughout their schooling. The week begins with a 'hook' which captures the children's imaginations and excites and engages pupils. This 'hook' then provides the inspiration for short writing tasks, leading on to a Big write by the end of the week. Teachers engage pupils in writing with the use of video clips, drama, music and text extracts which provide further stimulus for creative writing of different genres.

Phonics

We begin the process of learning to read in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where we believe that the systematic teaching of phonics is the fastest and most effective way of getting young children to start reading. In Nursery, the children have daily 10 minute phonics sessions to introduce them to initial letter sounds. By the end of Reception, it is our expectation that all children can blend sounds and that the vast majority will be reading simple books. In Early Years Foundation Stage, the focus of writing is using phonics to write simple sentences with basic punctuation.

Phonics are taught from Early Years right across the school up to the point where pupils are taught through bespoke spelling programmes. Our school uses a 'Letters and Sounds' approach where pupils are taught how to sound out as well as how to blend sounds. In KS 1 lessons are carried out on a daily basis and as from Year 3, group support is offered to the pupils who have not passed the KS1 phonics test. The key stage 1 phonics screening test is used to assess phonics knowledge on entry to year 3. Any pupils who passed the test in year 2 are grouped together to receive a phonics revision and key stage 1 catch up programme before moving on to key stage 2 spelling patterns.

SPAG

Spelling

Pupils are taught to use a variety of strategies when tackling a word they are unsure how to spell. This is in accordance with the whole school spelling guidance document. All year groups use the spelling list as set out by the department of education for their year group. They also devise lists considering the various units and topics they are exploring in all subjects, spelling patterns and any common errors that arise in class.

Punctuation and Grammar

The teaching of SPaG is delivered through a combination of discreet lessons as well as heavily integrated into the main body of the writing units. These are further embedded through guided writing sessions and homework giving the children ample opportunities to further consolidate their learning.

Peer Learning

At Cranbrook we believe peer learning is a very powerful tool that can be utilised within the classroom. We promote peer to peer learning with our Grammar Gurus and Reading Rockstars. These are pupils are usually HAPs who have been identified as showing a gift in these focus areas and act as mentors to pupils who require help either in lessons or with homework. The pupils work well to support one another and teach concepts in a way that is child friendly and accessible.

Handwriting

Pupils are supported with their handwriting skills through a cursive handwriting programme. Handwriting sessions are included in all year group timetables but the main expectation is that all pupils apply joined up writing by the end of Year2. Teachers follow the handwriting guidelines as set out by the National Curriculum 2014 and the school's handwriting guidance document. Pupils are constantly reminded that legibility and presentation are of extremely high priority. The use of erasers is permitted, although children are encouraged to use these within reason. A pen licence is awarded to children who are consistently writing in cursive neatly. Children showcase their best handwriting in their publishing books at the end of the Hot write unit.

Writing across the curriculum

At Cranbrook we believe that high expectations of writing should also be visible in all subjects. Teachers incorporate writing at length in foundation subjects and expect children to include the same level of grammar competency across these subjects. Children are given opportunities to write from first hand experiences, such as letters, reports, recounts after field trips, or instructions of keeping pet snails in science.

Celebrating Reading and Writing

All year groups celebrate reading with an interesting and engaging reading corner. They monitor home reading and reward children if they are keeping a reading log and it is acknowledged (signed) by parents. The school incorporates whole school reading initiatives like sponsor reading and summer reading challenges with the local libraries. At Cranbrook we also celebrate worldwide events such as World Book Day.

Writing is celebrated across the school and each year group has a 'Celebrating Writing' board inside the classroom and outside their corridor. English leaders promote writing progression across the whole school on a centrally based display board in the main entrance. This showcases high writing standards and expectations across the school. High expectations and the writing journey is visible on English working walls for children to access daily. National writing competitions and winning entries are celebrated on the school homepage. Teachers select one child weekly to be nominated as the writer of the week- whose name appears on the school newsletter for all the school community to see.

Assessment

Coverage

In order to ensure thorough coverage and progression, year groups map out their ‘Learning Journeys’ and ‘Overviews’ for each genre unit. Statutory SPaG elements (DfE, 2014) feature as an integral element to each unit. This is re-enforced through the usage of the statutory SPaG and reading guidelines as set out in the National curriculum by the Department for Education.

Pupils’ reading and writing is assessed according to most recent government guidelines outlined in the TAF and Teacher Assessment exemplifications for KS1 and KS2

TAF- 2017-18

https://www.primarysupportteam.co.uk/files/2017_to_2018_teacher_assessment_frameworks_at_the_end_of_key_stage_1_pdfa.pdf

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/647107/2017_to_2018_teacher_assessment_frameworks_at_the_end_of_key_stage_2_PDFA.pdf

Exemplifications 2017-18

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2018-teacher-assessment-exemplification-ks1-english-writing>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2018-teacher-assessment-exemplification-ks2-english-writing>

Marking Ladders and Assessment for Learning

Teachers use AFL to generate a marking ladder for each unit. These will be reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis. The skill specific grammar targets are discussed at length with the pupils. Personal targets are also used and incorporated within personalised marking ladders especially in the case of most able pupils. Self-assessment against personal writing targets is encouraged as a way of developing pupils’ independence and ownership over their learning. Pupils can self-assess and peer-assess according to their marking ladders. Children underline the grammar features in the text and identify any gaps. They are supported to up-level their work using the ladders and editing codes WWW and EBI or 2 stars and a wish. Once the class teacher is satisfied that there is sufficient evidence of targets being met in pupils’ writing, then the level is uploaded on the school’s electronic tracking system of Target Tracker. Where gaps in learning are identified, these are addressed through guided writing groups, re-visiting skills and teacher pupil consultations.

Teacher Assessment Framework – TAF

Teachers in Year 2 and Year 6 use the TAF to ensure that the children are meeting the required standards in reading and writing. They moderate writing within year groups, phases and also across schools the borough to make accurate judgements in reading and writing. They use Target Tracker as an assessment tool to inform planning and reduce gaps in learning.