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Thomas Gray Primary School

Grammar and Punctuation Policy

There are four main purposes to this policy:

To establish an entitlement for all pupils;

To establish expectations for teachers of this policy;

To promote continuity and coherence across the school;

To state the school's approaches to this subject in order to promote public, and particularly parents' and carers', understanding of this subject.

Introduction

The importance of grammar and punctuation to the curriculum.

Grammar is concerned with the way in which sentences are used in spoken language, in reading and writing. Sentences are the construct which help give words their sense. The purpose of grammar teaching is to enable pupils to become conscious of patterns of language which they can apply in their own work to enhance meaning.

The purpose of punctuation is to clarify the meaning of texts. Readers use punctuation to help make sense of written texts while writers use punctuation to help communicate intended meaning to the reader.

Strategy for implementation

Entitlement and curriculum provision

Grammar and punctuation are taught as part of a planned whole-school programme, following the guidelines of the 2014 Primary Curriculum and the teaching overview for Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation.

The table within the curriculum sets out when concepts should first be introduced, not necessarily when they should be completely understood. It is important to recognise that having being "exposed" to a concept, children may still not understand that concept by the end of the academic year. It is therefore paramount that content in earlier years be revisited in subsequent years to consolidate knowledge and build on pupils' understanding. Teachers should also go beyond the content set out if, in their professional judgement, they feel it is appropriate.

1. Teaching and learning

To teach pupils about grammar and punctuation, the emphasis is on the close consideration of examples of language in use, including pupils' own writing and on the exploration of language as a system. The aim is to develop pupils' curiosity about language and their capacity to observe and reflect which will in turn enable them to develop more control and choice in their use of language.

Grammar and punctuation knowledge enables writers and readers to:

- Control and use language to meet the needs of purpose (genre) and audience
- Control sentence structure for impact through:
 - Construction
 - Expansion
 - Manipulation
 - Reduction
 - Transformation
- Proof read, edit and revise their writing

Children need to know:

- What a sentence is
- That they can't always write the way they speak
- That grammar and punctuation changes according to text type and purpose
- That grammar and punctuation can be manipulated for effect

2. Role of the Teacher

- To follow the school's grammar and punctuation policy enabling every child to develop as a confident and independent writer.
- To create a learning ethos and environment that promotes confidence.
- To provide direct teaching and accurate modelling of grammar and punctuation.
- To ensure that all pupils are suitably challenged and engaged in fun, fast paced, interactive learning.
- To ensure that children have the time to talk about and discuss language choices.
- To ensure that children can explain the choices they have made and how they impact upon the reader.
- To observe pupils, monitor and assess their progress and development, through questioning, differentiated tasks and regular developmental marking.

3. Continuity and Progression

Foundation Stage

In Reception, the accurate use of grammar in speech and writing is consistently modelled from the outset. Children learn the difference between numbers, letters and words. They learn what makes a simple 'sentence' and, through whole class and small group teaching, they are 'exposed' to a range of punctuation such as capital letters and full stops.

Key Stage 1

At Key Stage 1 the emphasis is on developing pupils' general awareness of language, both written and spoken. This is taught as part of the Read Write Inc programme. Pupils are encouraged to attempt more complex spoken language and to observe the use of punctuation in written texts as a pointer for pausing, intonation and as an aid to meaning. They recognise sentences, expect them to make sense and use basic sentence structure in their own writing. Some punctuation marks are used in context. More complex sentences are developed through the use of an increasing range of connectives; this is taught through the Read Write Inc programme and a weekly grammar session.

Key Stage 2

In Years 3 and 4 pupils continue with Read Write Inc Comprehension and Fresh Start. They are introduced to the grammatical functions of different types of word and they begin to explore how sentences are constructed. The emphasis here is not about grammatical labelling (the naming of parts of speech) but on discovering their function, i.e. what words can be made to do. Explicit teaching of a wider range of spelling, grammar and punctuation marks occurs in a weekly grammar session and this is reflected in pupils' writing.

In Years 5 and 6 this basic knowledge is extended through the close reading and discussion of carefully chosen examples from a range of text types for those children no longer on Ruth Miskin programmes. In their writing pupils are encouraged to draw on this understanding to develop a sense of style, to experiment with the construction of complex sentences and to restructure sentences for clarity and effect. This will necessitate the use of a wider range of punctuation marks, including punctuation within a sentence.

4. Planning

Following the 2014 Primary Curriculum (English) requirements, teachers identify and plan for grammar and punctuation teaching, using the following key principles:

- Exploration of and response to examples in texts used - considering the way writers use grammar and punctuation to impact (quality and purpose) on readers.
- Sentence games and word play activities to embed and play about with the language and feature.
- Use of examples as models to experiment with and provide initial scaffolds.
- Direct and explicit teaching of grammatical features relevant to the writing and introduced at the appropriate time.
- Consistent use of terminology - see 2014 Primary Curriculum (English) glossary p80-98
- Sufficient time to review and rework editing through improvement time.

The teaching of grammar and punctuation is taught and delivered using a "balanced approach" within the framework of Read Write Inc scheme.

5. Assessment

Teachers assess the development of the children's grammar and punctuation through observed application in their written work and speech. Often, success criteria within a literacy lesson will be grammar based, enabling teachers to formally assess whether children are successfully applying what they have been taught. Opportunities to address any problems or misconceptions are provided through regular development and AFL marking. We also use Rising Stars Grammar and Punctuation assessment and SPAG every term.

6. Inclusion

Where pupils make limited progress in their confidence and ability to correctly apply grammar and punctuation to their writing, intervention programmes may be set up, following Pupil Progress Meetings with the Head Teacher, and in consultation with the SENCO. Both class teachers and TAs lead these intervention groups, depending on the needs of the whole year group. Individual pupil English targets may cover grammar and punctuation concepts and these are planned for and set up for all children including EAL and SEN pupils.

7. The Learning Environment

Classrooms display wall charts, grammatical word collections and examples of pupils' investigations to stimulate, support and provide information. Pupils have good access to a range of appropriate dictionaries and thesauruses.