

St Mary's

Catholic Primary School



Writing Policy

Writing Policy

Our Intent

At St Mary's, Writing is the core of our curriculum. Across each stage of our education in school, pupils are provided with opportunities to develop and apply their spoken and written English within a balanced, inspiring and creative curriculum. We prioritise the development of writing to ensure that by the end of their primary education, all pupils who leave St Mary's are able to write with confidence, enabling them to be successful in their next stage of education and beyond. A key aim for our pupils is effective communication of ideas and emotions, both orally and in written form. Spoken language is paramount at St Mary's, forming foundations for reading and writing. We recognise the importance of nurturing a culture where children are excited to capture their ideas in the written form and take pride in their writing, can clearly and accurately, articulate and adapt their language and style for a range of contexts and genres. By immersing our pupils in high-quality texts and language-rich environments, we aim for our children to be able to describe their world, expressing their views and opinions articulately. We want our children to use discussion and debate to communicate and further their learning across the curriculum, elaborating and explaining their thinking and ideas. We strive to enable all pupils to develop a love of writing and the confidence to explore their imagination, nurturing our pupils' motivation to write with purpose and with pleasure. We believe that a secure knowledge of the English language is crucial to a high quality education and will give the children of St Mary's, the tools they need to contribute positively to the life of the school, their local community and the wider environment as a member of society.

Statutory Requirements:

The National Curriculum for Writing aims to ensure that all pupils:

- Read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- Acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- Appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- Use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- Are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

The school uses the 2014 National Curriculum as the basis of its curriculum planning. The long-term plan is bespoke to the children of St Mary's. The knowledge and skill content is outlined in our detailed long-term plan displayed on our school website for each year group. We aim to make use of local resources such as the Edlington Local Library.

Our curriculum planning is in three phases: long-term, medium-term and short-term.

Our long-term planning maps the National Curriculum statements studied in each year group into the following key areas:

- Speaking and Listening
- Spelling and Phonics
- Reading Key Performance Indicators
- Writing Non-Negotiables
- Writing Genres and Focus Texts (for each half term)

The Writing implementation leader devised this plan in conjunction with teaching colleagues in each year group.

Our medium-term plans give further details of objectives covered each week in each half term. Each class teacher is responsible for writing the medium plans for each Writing journey. These plans list the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes of each lesson. The subject leader reviews these plans. In this way, we ensure that children have complete coverage of the National Curriculum.

High quality fiction texts are assigned to each year group each half term throughout the year. These texts develop our children's bank of well-known authors and classic fiction, whilst keeping up to date with the ever-changing market for children's literature. Wherever possible, all selected texts are matched to support learning in the wider curriculum. Our non-fiction curriculum identifies a range of genres to be covered throughout the year, again with meaningful links between writing and the wider curriculum. Text selection is coherent and cumulative from entry to Year 6 and is consistently reviewed, taking into account the makeup of each class. Children of all abilities have the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge in all key areas through planned progression built into our long-term plan. We offer children increasing challenge as they move up our school.

Writing:

Writing in the Early Years Foundation Stage

In the Early Years, children are encouraged to attempt their own emergent writing and their efforts are valued and praised. As their phonic knowledge increases, this will be reflected in their writing. At the same time, their knowledge of key words is supported through reading and writing activities, including shared reading and writing. A wide variety of opportunities are provided for children to engage in writing activities. Amongst these are:

- Shared writing
- Role-play
- Labels
- Recipes
- Lists
- Making books
- Writing letters/cards
- Menus
- Instructions

Through engaging in these activities, children become aware that writing is used for a range of purposes. They distinguish it from drawing and learn the left to right convention of writing in English. A variety of resources are used to encourage the development of fine motor control which is essential for good handwriting. These include playdough, cutting, threading and tracing.

Within the Foundation Stage, both the indoor and outdoor environment include resources to support the children's mark making, drawing and writing. Staff involve themselves in the children's mark making by modelling the process and by helping to order the children's thoughts.

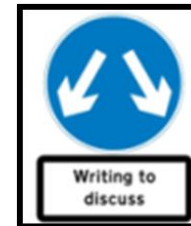
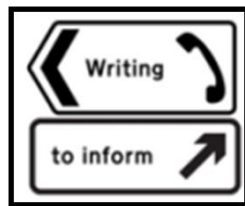
Writing can take place at any point in the day and in any area of the EYFS setting.

A Real Reason to Write: Purpose and Audience

We believe that consideration of purpose and audience is vital for effective writing. We strive to provide our children with real reasons to write with a clear purpose and audience across the curriculum. Our children write as scientists, geographers, artists, poets and themselves. We believe that when children have a real audience to write for, they develop pride in their work.

We follow the four main purposes of writing:

- To entertain
- To inform
- To persuade
- To discuss




Memorable experiences, such as trips out of the school or visitors to the school are used wherever possible to create a purpose for writing in line with our wider curriculum intent. By considering and selecting an audience, children learn to modify their writing by selecting an appropriate form or genre. Pupils learn the features and conventions of different genres to enable them to do this effectively. Exposure to a rich range of genres and identification of key features supports this.

The Writing Journey

Our writing journey is guided by the key components recommended in the EEF's Improving Literacy Guidance. Children are guided through the journey of writing and the writing process through careful modelling. The writing journey varies slightly in Key Stage 1 and 2. Over time, children are expected to take increased ownership of this writing journey; however, we recognise that the modelling process is not linear and children will require differentiated levels of support with the process.

Shared writing is essential in our writing journey. Teachers 'think aloud' and speak their internal writer's dialogue, making the decisions made as a writer explicit. Thoughts of the writing process are spoken aloud, posing questions to themselves. We aim to share our 'internal monologue' as a writer to support children's development of his or her own. We model writing 'live', sharing the frustrations and successes involved.

The Teaching Sequence for Writing

Teaching sequence		Teachers:	Pupils:
Immerse ↓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Real audience and purpose with a clear outcome. Broad, rich and engaging reading curriculum. Planned drama, speaking and listening opportunities. 	Establish clear purpose and audience. Choose quality challenging texts. Model reading strategies, i.e. searchlights, inference and deduction, writer's use of language. (Assessment focuses). Make links between shared, guided and independent work. Start to unpick the writer's craft. Begin to gather ideas for writing	Enjoy reading a range of quality texts. Ask questions. Link to own experience. Visualise. Evaluate. Identify audience and purpose. Talk about how they are thinking and learning. Role play, improvise.
Analyse ↓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define features and characteristics of text/genre. Agree and understand the success criteria. 	Are secure in knowledge and understanding of structure and language features of text type. Prioritise which features of text children need to learn – sentence, text, word. Provide interactive, investigate activities to meet learning intentions e.g. construct, classify	Identify key features of text type/genre and agree success criteria. Practise using different features e.g. paired work constructing and varying sentences through speaking and listening activities.
SPAG ↓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach the aspects of the success criteria that the pupils have not met or find challenging. Focus on grammar / punctuation / vocabulary. 	Are secure in the subject knowledge in order to deliver quality first teaching. Prioritise which features need to be specifically taught – differentiating where necessary e.g. past tense verbs / specific vocabulary	Investigate the skill needed for the specific text type. Practise writing / using the skill taught in order to be able to apply this in their main writing.
Plan ↓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the success criteria. Planned drama, speaking and listening opportunities. 	Provide stimulus for gathering ideas e.g. visual literacy, integrated technologies, drama activities.	Talk about ideas and begin to map them out on a plan e.g. writing skeleton, or story map. Refer to checklist of success criteria.
Write ↓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstration, teacher scribing and supported composition. Self and peer assessment. Use knowledge of reading to help compose and make informed choices in writing. Structured, visual and dynamic Literacy environment. 	Are secure in understanding and use of three shared writing techniques. Model the use of success criteria developed from analysis to inform and evaluate writing. Integrate word/sentence level with text level to exemplify their application. Provide stimuli and resources to support and enhance the writing process. Provide an element of choice.	Are fully aware of the purpose and audience and write accordingly. Develop a piece of writing over a number of sessions. Refer to success criteria, review their writing and edit in response. Respond to feedback.
Review ↓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear feedback linked to success criteria. Understand next steps in developing writing. Reflect on outcome against audience and purpose. 	Are effective in linking feedback to the success criteria. Are confident in identifying areas of success and those for development that will impact on raising the standard of writing, they can explain and set clear 'next steps'. Provide further opportunities to write in that particular genre setting up the audience and purpose.	Can reflect on their successes and areas for development. Can identify factors contributing to success and those causing barriers in their work. Are clear in their next steps in learning and engaged in addressing them. Are enthused by the challenge of using their knowledge to produce written work for a particular audience and purpose.

Assessment for Learning

Dynamic and supportive writing environment

Talk

Empowering boys to become successful writers

1) Immerse

This is the first stage in our writing process. At this stage, children generate ideas prior to writing. Children are engaged in a range of pre-writing activities to generate ideas and vocabulary. Talk comes first! Pupils are provided with ample time to articulate ideas verbally before writing.

Reading plays an essential role at this stage in our writing journey. We select texts which provide rich language models and structures from which children can learn how writing works and the effect it can have on a reader. Vocabulary is gathered and displayed at every opportunity at this stage. Children will explore the focus genre in depth: real-life examples of writing are shared with the children – not just 'teacher-generated' models. Structure and style are discussed and children are encouraged to form their own opinions.

We use this important writing stage to fully excite and immerse our children in the genre they are about to write about, this could be through: reading, drama, trips, sense immersion etc.

2) Analyse/skills

From here, children develop the success criteria/ steps to success for the piece of writing ahead with support from the class teacher. Steps to success will be available to refer to throughout the journey, whether in a child's book or on a working wall.

The children analyse the skills that an author has used to write the 'WAGOLL' that we thoroughly investigate to discover the features of this genre.

At this stage, we focus on noting down key ideas in a 'first draft' format. We encourage children to write freely whilst setting out their writing in a logical order. Although accurate spelling, grammar and

handwriting are important, at this stage they are not our main focus. Focusing heavily on these elements prevents the natural flow of writing. Children will revise their writing at a later stage in the writing process.

3) Planning and writing

We encourage our children to share their work at every opportunity to provide them with ongoing feedback. We encourage partner work and take the time to allow pupils to share, read and edit each other's work. This process is modelled, providing initial support and gradually reducing, to increase the fluency of these skills. Our ultimate aim is for this ongoing process of sharing to become automatic.

Children are encouraged to check that the writing goals are being achieved throughout the process. This is done as children re-read their writing or through feedback from adults or peers. The success criteria should be referred to throughout the writing process.

4) Revising/ Editing

At this stage, spelling and grammar assume greater importance. Children make changes to ensure that the text is accurate and coherent. Changes are made to the writing in light of feedback and self-evaluation along with responding to marking and next steps provided by the class teacher. See marking policy for further details. Children each have a green editing pen, which is used to edit and revise all written work. We accept that at this stage, work may become untidy but this is part of the writing process. Resources are readily available to support this process in each classroom: word banks, dictionaries, thesauruses and working walls. Children are encouraged to use these resources as independently as possible.

5) Publishing

After work has been carefully edited and revised with consideration of purpose and audience, we publish our work: this is presenting our work for others to read and enjoy. Although not essential for all pieces of writing, we believe this is an important part of the writing process, providing a strong incentive for children to produce high quality writing. We display examples of writing around school to allow children to feel a real sense of pride in their achievements.

Assessment

Writing assessment is an ongoing process at St Mary's. We use a range of methods to support our assessment of children's writing:

- Use of writing success criteria
- Peer assessment
- Self-assessment
- Marking of work (refer to marking policy)
- Half-termly independent writing task linked with genres explored

Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation:

Quality of Teaching

We ensure that the teaching of phonics, grammar and spelling is embedded in context. By reading authentic texts aloud, children hear the patterns and types of language used for different forms and purposes and understand levels of formality appropriate to the intended audience. This teaches them

much about the language and grammar structures appropriate for different audiences, purposes and forms of writing.

We encourage our children to appreciate the 'craft' of an author, considering authorial choices and their impact. We provide a curriculum which is rich in rhyme, song and poetry to foster children's phonological development and use shared reading and writing to draw children's attention to the letters, sounds and spelling patterns within words.

Spelling forms a constant and frequent part of our practice. Spellings are taught according to the rules and words contained in Appendix 1 of the English National Curriculum. We use the National Curriculum as a guideline as to which spellings should be taught in which year group. In addition to this, Key Stage 1 focus on common exception words or phonetically grouped words. Children learn set spellings for a weekly spelling test. To ensure children think carefully about the meaning of a word, children write 'spelling sentences' as part of their weekly homework. Children are expected to write a sentence using each spelling word in context.

Grammar is not simply the naming of parts of speech or teaching the rules of English. It is strongly embedded in all classroom talk, reading and writing. Much about grammar is learnt naturally and implicitly. However, we teach discrete grammar lessons in addition to these experiences to provide our children with an in-depth knowledge, control and choice in the English language. Once pupils are familiar with a grammatical concept, they are encouraged to apply and explore this in their own speech and writing, recognising where others have used this feature. Grammatical rules and terminology are taught according to the grammar and punctuation set out in Appendix 2 of the Writing National Curriculum. Grammar lessons feed directly into the writing process, for example, the teaching of reported and direct speech when writing a newspaper report.

Our key principles:

1) Teach grammar in context.

By introducing children to grammatical features and language in context, children internalise these principles.

2) Read aloud and discuss how authors use grammar.

When reading aloud across the curriculum, examples of the particular grammar feature of interest are highlighted and discussed in high quality texts. Children's attention is drawn to real life examples whilst considering the impact on the reader.

3) Be systematic.

Grammar learning is cumulative. Teachers are responsible for establishing prior knowledge of children to ensure knowledge is built upon effectively. New learning is linked with prior knowledge. Elements of grammar are carefully selected to help children become more effective writers of the focus text type.



4) Make learning grammar fun.

Teaching grammar can involve investigation, problem solving and language play as part of developing children's awareness of and interest in how language works.

Assessment for learning

The assessment of Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation is ongoing and continually monitored through the marking of writing across the curriculum.

Teachers place an emphasis on the children responding to marking and children are directed towards minor spelling, punctuation and grammar errors and expected to correct these themselves using 'polishing pens'. If a sentence is grammatically incorrect, a child may be required to respond by re-drafting the sentence accurately. The amount of response work given is at the discretion of the teacher, taking into account the year group the child is in and the ability of the child. See marking policy for further details.

In addition to this, success criteria within a writing lesson will include an element of grammar, enabling teachers to assess whether children are successfully applying what they have been taught. Opportunities to address any problems or misconceptions are provided through regular development

We also use grammar assessments termly to allow children to apply skills out of context and assess the retention of knowledge.


Speaking and Listening:







Quality of Teaching

The development of speaking and listening skills is at the heart of everything we do. By taking the time to develop speaking and listening skills, we provide our pupils with a strong foundation for reading and writing, developing comprehension and essential skills for effective writing. Across the curriculum, we create and facilitate opportunities for conversation, discussion and talk around learning. We strongly encourage children to be inquisitive and to share their thoughts confidently in a supportive environment.

We encourage our children to be active listeners. By developing active listening skills, we aim for our children to fully concentrate on what is being said rather than passively 'hearing' the message of the speaker. Our children are taught and expected to listen using all the senses, giving full attention to the person speaking. We also aim to develop skilled speakers, modelling and encouraging children to pay attention to volume, pace and the needs of the listener. All children are reminded to speak in full sentences.

KS2

Skilled speaking	
	Think about what you are going to say.
	Wait until listeners are ready.
	Speak audibly and clearly.
	Speak in whole sentences and choose words carefully.
	Sit or stand smartly and look at your audience.
	Think, have your listeners understood. Let them ask questions.

<u>Active Listening</u> 	
	Not distracting people by moving or making noise.
	Listening to the teacher AND to other children.
	Thinking about what I am hearing.
	Making comments and asking questions.
	Say if I don't understand something, and say <u>why</u> .

Examples of teaching and learning strategies used to support speaking and listening:

- Setting ground rules for speaking and listening in class
- Use of questioning
- Use of talk partners
- Collaborative work and reporting back following group work
- Structured class discussions and debates
- Expressing opinions and justifying ideas
- Retelling stories
- Listening to and participating in stories, poems, rhymes and songs
- Exploring texts through performance
- Verbally articulate ideas before writing
- Performance poetry
- Role play and drama (conscience alley, hot-seating etc.)
- Presenting in front of an audience
- Taking part in school performances and class assemblies
- Visiting speakers
- School council meetings
- Circle times

Vocabulary Development

We believe that speaking and listening activities are crucial in developing pupil's vocabulary with repeated exposure to new words. We expose our children to a rich language environment with opportunities to hear and confidently experiment with new words. We aim to develop vocabulary in the following ways:

1) We promote and scaffold high quality talk

Adults in school have the responsibility of modelling and promoting high standards of literacy, speaking articulately and modelling the correct use of Standard Writing at all times. Strategies we use to scaffold high quality talk include rewording children's speech and responses, asking children to expand and elaborate on their answers, and encouraging children to be skilled speakers and active listeners at all times.

We use 'sentence stems' across the curriculum. We want our children to speak like experts in each subject area using subject specific vocabulary (Tier 3). We achieve this by modelling academic talk and sophisticated language.

2) We provide well-planned reading opportunities

At St Mary's, small, daily acts of reading matter. Children have easy access to high quality texts both in the classroom and in the school library. We have a well-resourced and organised reading environment and we seize every opportunity to cultivate a love of reading.

We consider carefully the 'readability' of our chosen texts and the fiction/non-fiction balance across school. We select rich texts to read and share with pupils to introduce new and challenging vocabulary in context. Teachers will read a text before sharing with children and carefully select Tier 2 vocabulary to pre-teach.

See 'Reading Policy' for further details.

3) We teach academic vocabulary explicitly

Although a great deal of vocabulary is learned indirectly, we believe that it is essential to teach some vocabulary explicitly and directly. We achieve this by following Alex Quigley's principals for teaching a new word set out in the SEEC model once a week in each year group. This can take place at any time during the week.



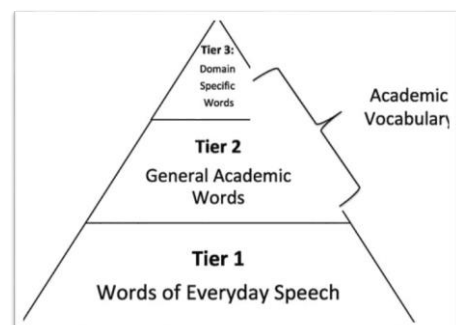
We consider the following questions very carefully before selecting which word to teach:

- Which words are most important to understand the text or topic?
- Which words are unlikely to be part of a child's prior knowledge?
- Which words appear repeatedly in a text or topic?
- Which words are frequently encountered across the curriculum (Tier 2 words)?

We provide a language rich classroom environment

We believe that the classroom environment has the potential to be the biggest resource in vocabulary development and creating a love of words in our children. Our classroom environments are crucial in supporting vocabulary development and independence.

All displays are current, relevant, updated and referred to. Each display includes key vocabulary for the topic (Tier 2 and Tier 3 words) to support the retention of new vocabulary. New vocabulary is gathered and recorded in each classroom in a range of ways:



- Vocabulary books
- Reading journals
- Word walls
- Word pots
- Class dictionaries

Inclusion:

At our school, we teach writing to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. Writing forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our Writing teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. For further details see individual whole-school policies: Special Educational Needs; Disability Non-discrimination; Gifted and Talented; English as an Additional Language (EAL).

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, and differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels. This helps ensure that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

Intervention through School Action and School Action Plus will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs. The IEP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to maths.

Training and CPD:

A range of CPD models are used including whole staff/phase meetings, peer to peer coaching and individual development. Teachers are expected to keep up to date with subject knowledge and use current materials that are available in school or on educational websites. Training needs are identified as a result of whole school monitoring and evaluation, performance management and through induction programmes. The Writing Leadership Team will arrange for relevant advice and information, such as feedback from courses or newsletters, to be disseminated. Where necessary the Writing strategic leaders organise school-based training.

Monitoring and Review:

The monitoring of the standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching in Writing is the responsibility of the subject leader. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in their teaching, being informed about current developments in Writing and providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject in the school. The subject leader reviews and evaluates the action plan, budget and planning annually. It involves creation of a plan of implementation with regular review.

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.