

# WRITING

(see also policies for spelling & grammar and punctuation)

## Introduction

### The importance of writing to the curriculum

Writing is a primary means of expression, both for personal cognitive purposes and for communicating meaning with others. Pupils should learn how to write with confidence, fluency, imagination and accuracy.

### Strategy for implementation

#### Entitlement and curriculum provision

The National Literacy Strategy Framework provides a detailed basis for implementing the statutory requirements for writing. Much of the programme of study can be delivered through the literacy hour, particularly during shared and guided writing sessions. However, time is required for sustained writing. This can be provided by using additional time for English during the school week or by exploiting the flexibility of the Literacy Hour, e.g. planning for writing during shared, guided and independent sessions over a number of days and then having a longer writing period at a particular point during the block of work.

#### Teaching and Learning

Writing is a complex process involving the control of many aspects of language. Pupils learn to make decisions at various stages in the writing process while using relevant knowledge and experience of the text type they are writing. This knowledge governs their choices about structure and organisation, sentence construction and vocabulary. They also learn control over the physical skills of handwriting (see handwriting policy) or word processing and the complex skills and knowledge of spelling (see spelling policy).

Teachers establish the purposes and audiences for writing and make teaching objectives explicit to pupils so they know why they are studying a particular text or text type, the kind of writing activities they need to undertake and the nature of proposed outcomes.

Subject-specific texts which link to work being undertaken in other subjects may also be used in literacy lessons to complement subject work; however the focus is on the structure, organisation and language features and how effectively the content is communicated. For some blocks of work an artefact, a piece of music or a painting might be used as an initial stimulus to provide a route into text. Opportunities are also provided for writing for pleasure, e.g. writing messages, labels and lists in the role play area, contributing to an on-going class story.

#### Continuity and Progression

##### Foundation Stage

As pupils in the early years work towards full participation in the Literacy Hour, they develop their understanding of print through teacher modelling during shared writing, and write themselves during guided and independent sessions. It is important that early writers do not do too much directed writing activity on their own until skill levels increase. Pupils need to have been through a process of familiarisation before moving to independent application. They have opportunities to write for a variety of purposes and audiences, and the links between spoken language, reading and writing are made explicit.

In the early years pupils have daily opportunities to experiment with different types of writing through play activities. At first they emulate adult writing, ascribing purposes to the marks they make on paper and developing awareness that print carries meaning. With time and appropriate teacher intervention they write their own names and, as their understanding of sound-symbol relationships grow, they begin to include recognisable letter shapes. They write simple sentence-like structures and attempt familiar forms of writing such as lists, labels, captions, recounts and the text types introduced by the teacher during shared reading and writing.

## Key Stage 1

At Key Stage 1 pupils become increasingly competent as writers. They write a range of text types (narrative and non-fiction) but their degree of control over these forms varies according to the complexity of the task. Purposes, audiences and appropriate forms are identified and, through shared and guided writing, the pupils have opportunities to plan, develop and review their writing both on paper and on screen.

They write stories of different types based on known texts, focusing on particular elements, e.g. building character profiles, ascribing appropriate dialogue to particular characters, creating recognisable settings. Poetry, rhyme and language play provide models for the pupils' own writing through adaptation, mimicry or substitution. Some of the organisational and linguistic features of non-fiction texts are evident in the pupils' own writing of recounts, reports, instructions and explanations.

## Key Stage 2

At Key Stage 2 pupils experience writing in different forms for a variety of audiences. They write for different purposes: to imagine and explore feelings and ideas, to inform and explain, to persuade and to review and comment. They also see how writing is concerned with process as well as product, being an aid to thinking, organisation and learning. They are taught to plan, draft, revise, proof read and present their writing on paper and on screen, and to discuss and evaluate their own writing and that of others. There is an emphasis on using real models for writing, e.g. newspaper reports, advertisements, websites.

The links between reading and writing in fiction and non-fiction continue to be made explicit. Pupils use their knowledge of texts they have studied to construct their own writing and have greater control over organisation, language features, vocabulary and spelling.

### **Inclusion**

Individual programmes for teaching and support are drawn up as appropriate by the teacher in consultation with the SEN co-ordinator. Individual targets for improving writing are set and, where appropriate, these may include targets at text, sentence or word level.

Alternative methods of recording, e.g. use of ICT, are provided to support pupils who experience extreme problems with handwriting or spelling to demonstrate their compositional skills and understanding of text.

### **The learning environment**

Pupils are given a range of informal opportunities to develop their skills as writers. Thought is given to the physical lay out of the classroom and the materials that are available to the pupils. These include a range of writing tools and papers, a variety of appropriate word sources for the age of the pupils (alphabet charts, word wheels, word banks, dictionaries, thesauruses, spellcheckers), magnetic boards and letters, whiteboards/easels, appropriate word processing programs for the computer, individual and group prompt cards, independent writing activities (story starter cards, pre-prepared blank books, instructions for making simple books).

### **The role of parents and carers**

The school informs parents and carers of the school's approach to writing through the school handbook.

### **Staffing (teaching and non-teaching)**

The role of teachers and, where appropriate, support staff and other adults:

- to follow the school policy with the aim of helping pupils to become independent writers;
- to provide modelling through shared writing and focused support through guided writing;
- to respond to pupils' writing in line with the school's marking policy;
- to provide explicit guidance for future development through monitoring and assessment.
- to make decisions about the selection and organisation of materials to support the teaching of writing.

## **Assessment and recording**

Assessment is used to inform planning and teaching. Teachers identify key learning outcomes from the linked teaching objectives for each block of work and identify appropriate assessment opportunities.

A piece of writing is undertaken on a regular basis as the key learning outcome and assessed by teachers.

The teachers pay particular attention to assessing the progress of pupils with IEPs where the targets relate to writing.

## **The contribution of writing to other aspects of the curriculum**

### **ICT**

Pupils develop their ideas, using ICT to amend and refine their work and enhance its quality in terms of content, presentation and accuracy. ICT is used to exchange and share information, e.g. through use of e-mail.

### **Spiritual Development**

Pupils develop a sense of awe and wonder, e.g. through the writing of poetry in response to a musical stimulus or a work of art. They can also use writing to describe what is meant by the spiritual, e.g. capturing a moment of special spiritual significance to an individual or a larger group such as the birth of a sibling, the death of a grandparent, the release from captivity of a hostage or prisoner of conscience.

### **Personal, Social and Health Education**

Writing offers pupils the opportunity to explore and reflect upon personal experience, e.g. in diaries or think books. Social education is supported through the use of writing to communicate for a range of purposes and audiences.

Pupils apply their developing writing skills in all aspects of the curriculum: for example, to express what they know and understand, to explore understanding further, and to make notes as they retrieve information from a variety of sources to learn about a particular aspect of a subject.