

Writing Policy - Meadgate Primary School



Our Statement of Intent:

At Meadgate, we believe that the ability to write with confidence and accuracy is an essential life skill. Writing is a complex process that draws upon more than handwriting and spelling: it is the ability to effectively communicate ideas, information and opinions through the printed word in a wide range of contexts. Successful writers understand the social function and characteristics of writing in order to use different genres appropriately, matching it to audience and purpose. Writing also requires the writer to understand and accurately apply the conventions of syntax, spelling and punctuation. At Meadgate, we aim to equip children with the skills necessary to achieve this, throughout the curriculum.

The 2014 National Curriculum states “Effective composition involves articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting.” Our aims and objectives reflect this.

Aims:

We aim to develop writers who:

- write with confidence, clarity and for pleasure;
- are given the chance to participate in class writing sessions where literature is explored, discussed and linked to real life;
- understand and apply their knowledge of phonics and spelling;
- understand how to write in a range of text-types and genres (including fiction, non-fiction and poetry), using the appropriate style, structure and features;
- plan, draft, revise and edit their own work, and learn how to self- and peer-assess against success criteria;
- have an interest in words and their meanings and develop a wide vocabulary;
- develop a technical vocabulary through which to understand and discuss their writing;
- develop their imagination, creativity, expressive language and critical awareness through their writing.

Objectives:

In order to develop fluent, confident writers, teachers at Meadgate Primary School:

- discretely teach writing strategies through quality whole class direct teaching, guided group work and individual teaching as appropriate;
- actively promote and foster a love of writing by reading to their own class and discussing the author’s craft;
- further develop children’s vocabulary by “magpie-ing” during English lessons, other subjects and class reader sessions;
- make the link explicit between reading and writing;
- follow a systematic approach to the teaching of phonics via the Letters and Sounds programme and to the teaching of spelling (see Appendix i spelling policy and Appendix ii long term spelling plans for Years 1-6)

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- ensure that grammar and punctuation are taught within the context of genres and text-types so that children can see how these can enhance meaning;
- ensure that children develop legible, fluent handwriting which they can use at a reasonable speed (see handwriting policy).

Teaching Approaches

The 2014 Curriculum divides writing skills into two dimensions:

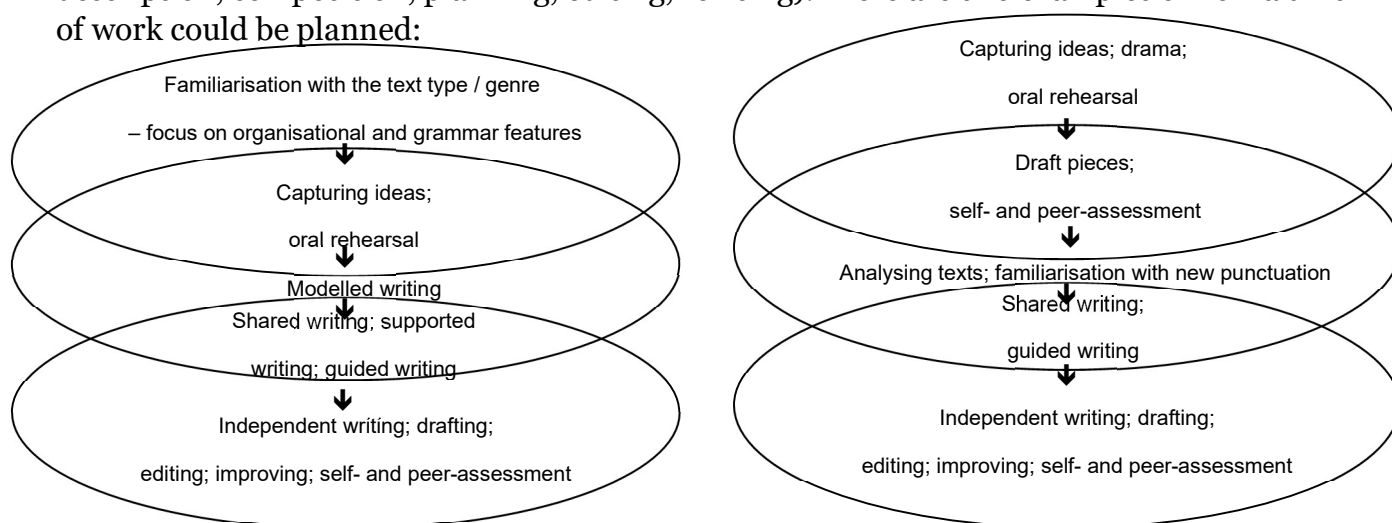
- Transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- Composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing)

We recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods. We acknowledge that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening and reading. We also understand that writing is a developmental process and part of life-long learning and we encourage and praise children at every stage of it.

Writing in School

Writing at Meadgate Primary School is taught daily across the school. We aim, wherever possible, to create cross-curricular writing opportunities, as we believe that in order for children to see themselves as successful writers they need to be involved in writing for a purpose. The National Curriculum 2014 outlines what should be taught in terms of spelling, grammar and punctuation in each year band. At Meadgate, genres and text-types are matched to topics to provide a relevance for writing, and grammar and punctuation objectives are mapped alongside to ensure coverage is met in context. This means that children are equipped with the skills and tools to write fluently for a range of meaningful purposes throughout the years. We use Jonathan Bond's Planning Kit as a basis for long, medium and short term planning. (See termly writing plans for Years 1-6.)

Throughout each unit of work, the links between reading and writing are made explicit – we read as writers and we write as readers. The progress throughout each unit of work shows the transition between reading as writers (for example, focusing on structure, characterisation, and language features) to writing as readers (for example, word play, description, composition, planning, editing, revising). Here are two examples of how a unit of work could be planned:



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Writing is taught in a range of ways:

Modelled Writing

Teachers talk aloud the thought processes as a writer. They model strategies in front of the children, communicating the strategies being used. Teachers may model writing skills such as punctuation, rehearsal, word selection, sentence construction, paragraphing, proof reading and editing.

Shared Writing

This is a collaborative approach in which the pupils contribute their ideas and thoughts for the teacher to write. The teacher models and teaches specific writing skills and there is the opportunity for discussion to choose the most effective or suitable ideas or vocabulary.

Supported Composition

The children work in pairs to provide the next sentence of the text. This may follow from the modelled or the shared writing process.

Guided Writing

Pupils are grouped by writing ability. The teacher or other adult works with the group on a carefully selected task appropriate to that group's needs and targets. This will focus on a particular aspect of the writing process rather than writing a complete piece.

Independent Writing

Children are given regular opportunities to apply their understanding of the text type in their own writing. They are encouraged to plan, draft, write, edit and assess their work, applying the skills they have learnt throughout the unit of work on that particular genre.

Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation is planned and taught as an integral part of each unit of work. The objectives are carefully matched to the unit of work to enable them to be taught and learnt within a meaningful context. We use Rising Stars Skills Builders text books to practise these skills.

Throughout the school teaching is:

- discursive – characterised by high quality oral work
- interactive – pupils' contributions are encouraged, expected and extended
- well-paced – driven by the need to make progress and succeed
- confident – teachers have a clear understanding of the objectives
- ambitious – high expectations of success

Writing at home

Parents and carers are strongly encouraged to be actively involved in their children's writing at all ages, by encouraging them to write for a range of purposes such as shopping lists, diaries, notes, letters, cards, stories. Homework tasks in each year group involve writing

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across the curriculum for a range of purposes. (See spelling policy for individualised homework spelling programme.)

Assessment (See also Marking and Feedback policy)

Teachers use daily formative assessment strategies to ensure that all teaching is accurately pitched and challenging. Ongoing teacher assessment of writing informs individual, group and sometimes class writing targets.

During writing units, success criteria created by the teacher and the children are used to self- and peer-assess. When assessing and responding to work on a daily basis, the following principles are applied: Responses should:

- enhance pupil confidence and to celebrate good use of literacy skills;
- provide opportunities for children to reflect on their own work;
- provide support with targets for improving the writing through feed-forward 'blue-to-improve' comments which children respond to in their writing books;
- show tolerance of errors (marking to the objective, not all errors will be signalled)

A record of achievement is used to track writing in Reception. This is a collection of evidence and assessment data that documents a child's progress in early literacy and motor skills throughout their foundation year. It serves as a cumulative portfolio, often including samples of independent writing, observations, and photos of mark-making, which help teachers complete the end-of-year EYFS Profile. Y1 to Y6 pupils are assessed using targets from Jonathan Bond's Assessment Ki on Termly English Assessment sheets and these are annotated regularly. Teachers in Yrs 1-5 use Quantum Academy evidence gathering grid to track progress over the year. Pupils in Y6 currently have annotated copies of the **statutory Key Stage 2 Teacher Assessment Framework (TAF)** for English writing inside their writing books to track their transcription skills. At KS2, the SWST (Single Word Spelling Test) is used twice yearly to ascertain each child's spelling age and ensure progress is being made.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

We aim to give all our pupils the opportunity to succeed and reach the highest level of personal achievement and to promote the individuality of all our pupils, irrespective of ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background.

The ability to write is fundamental to children's development as independent learners. We believe that all children are entitled to high quality teaching and learning and we embrace the philosophy of inclusion. All children at Meadgate Primary have the opportunity to develop writing skills at an appropriate level through the provision of carefully planned, targeted work in their English lessons and within the wider curriculum.

Writing support is carefully chosen to meet the needs of all children, particularly those who need extra support or challenge. These include 1:1 sessions, small writing groups and phonics intervention groups. Children who struggle to spell continue to follow the ELS phonics programme until they possess the skills to move on. The needs of children on the SEND register are planned for as necessary and detailed on their Individual Provision Maps

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and a variety of teaching methods, including those which are Dyslexia-friendly, are used to support the learning styles of different children. In this way, no child will be excluded from participating in writing activities. Extra resources may also be used, such as scaffolded writing frames and talking postcards for children to verbally record their sentences before writing. The progress of these pupils is discussed with the SENCo and/or during SEND reviews and Pupil Progress meetings.

We celebrate diversity through recognising our children's skills and knowledge and by the study of material from a variety of cultures. Texts used in writing lessons represent all cultures in a positive light and show both genders in a range of roles. The interests of both boys and girls are taken into account in the selection of materials to support the development of writing skills.

Monitoring

Writing throughout the school and how it reflects this policy will be reviewed in the following ways:

- SLT/subject leader book scrutinies;
- EYFS/KS2 external moderation;
- All year groups - internal moderation across the MAT;
- Y6 SATs
- learning walks and observations;
- staff and pupil perception surveys.

The English subject leader, in consultation with the SLT, monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of the teaching and learning of reading. In discussion with the governors, areas for development and resource needs are identified.