

Intent

At St. James' Primary School we want our pupils to develop writing as a life-long skill. Children start making marks on paper at an early age and from this emergent writing we aim to foster and develop this skill, enabling our pupils to become confident and fluent writers.

Through our writing curriculum we want pupils to:

- Develop children into writers; understanding the relevance of writing to themselves and their lives.
- Deliver an engaging and exciting curriculum that helps develop a love of writing and inspires children to want to write.
- Provide children with an understanding of the writing process enabling them to make informed choices when writing, through the immersion in rich texts.
- Encourage children to be imaginative and creative; generating ideas and responses from what they have read, and bringing this to their writing.
- Develop understanding of the purpose, audience and forms of writing, encouraging children to be reflective about their writing; revisiting, editing and improving what they have written so that their writing has a strong impact on the reader when published.
- Provide children with essential skills in grammar, spelling, punctuation and composition that will be life-long.
- Develop strong oracy skills, enabling children to be articulate and confident communicators expressing their thoughts and ideas as a tool to support their writing, through immersion in language.
- Create a culture where children love to read and take pride in their writing, developing resilience as writers and celebrating their successes throughout the writing process and through publishing their work.

As a school we recognise that the writing process, when done well, is 'hard work'. Therefore, the writing journey is planned to develop writing stamina as well as accuracy and being purposeful for pupils.

Our approach to writing

At St. James' Primary School, we have created our own 'bespoke' writing curriculum, based on the core principles of the 'CLPE Power of Reading' and Pie Corbett's 'Talk for Writing' and supported by aspects of the EEF 'Craft of Writing'. Through our writing curriculum we immerse children in rich and varied texts in order to enable them to access a highly developed understanding of vocabulary, sentence type and genre/text-type features. This exposure to such texts will then increasingly enable children to write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences, selecting language that shows a good awareness of the reader, use a range of devices to build cohesion and select vocabulary and grammatical structures that reflect what the writing requires. This structure meets the requirements of the National Curriculum 2014, whilst working in line with its expectations, as it makes no reference to the different genres of writing, and states only that '*pupils will learn to write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their*

language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences'. Our aim is to develop a writing curriculum which provides pupils with opportunities to write for a real purpose and consider fully their audience; ensuring and supporting pupils development as creative and flexible writers.

An overview of text types for each year group, based on purposes for writing

	Fiction: Writing to Entertain	Non-fiction: Writing to Inform/persuade/discuss
Year 1	Narrative Description Poetry	Labels, lists and captions Simple Instruction writing Recount Non-chronological report
Year 2	Narrative Description Poetry	Instruction writing Recount Non-chronological report (compare and contrast) Explanation
Year 3	Narrative Description Poetry	Instruction writing Non-chronological report Journalistic writing Biographical Writing Advert/Poster
Year 4	Narrative Description Poetry	Non-chronological report Explanation Letter Biographical writing Persuasive writing (Debate)
Year 5	Narrative Description Poetry	Non-chronological report Biographical writing Persuasive writing (argument) Book/Film reviews Recount (subject, topic, personal experiences) Instruction writing (and test them) Argument
Year 6	Narrative Description Poetry	Utilising previously taught styles and purposes through writing lessons and cross curriculum writing

There is an expectation that all year groups will cover narrative writing, descriptive writing and poetry, frequently throughout the year and *with an assumed progression*. Each year group will also cover a variety of non-fiction text types or purposes, which will complement this writing and may be taught through a writing teaching sequence or foundation subjects. Where possible, non-fiction text types will fit within topic areas chosen for each year group to enable pupils writing outcomes to be purposeful and meaningful. These may be selected from the above guidance. These lists are advisory and not an exhaustive list from which to choose. A **non-chronological** text will be written by each year group to allow for analysis of progression.

The number of sequences year groups will cover each term may vary and is dependent on the length of each writing sequence; most sequences will last between two to three weeks. There is an expectation that at least two full writing sequences will be completed each short term, however Year 6 text studies may last for four weeks.

A suggested long-term overview for each year group can be seen below:



Although coverage of the different purposes for writing is expected, the order in which they are planned is up to teacher discretion, their knowledge of the curriculum approach and progress of children in their particular year group.

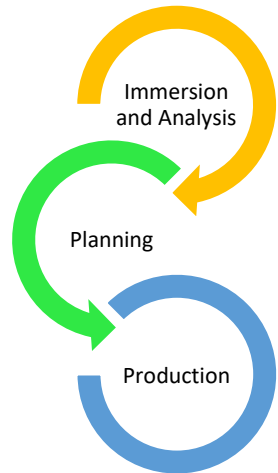
Teachers will show the order in which they teach the purposes and text types (identifying non-fiction text types chosen) in their Year group Long Term planning. There is an expectation that the writing curriculum will be planned fully, ensuring thoughtful and considered cross-curricular links where possible, where writing outcomes can be enhanced by a more purposeful and holistic approach to teaching and learning.

Long Term Planning will also identify Core texts and include aspects of SPAG coverage and progression for each Year group.

Poetry will be taught within its own learning sequences and, where appropriate, may be incorporated and embedded into sequences for other writing purposes to enrich and enhance learning in aspects such as language and vocabulary development and choices. (see Poetry progression document)

Learning sequences

Throughout a writing sequence, all pupils should have the opportunity to build competency through the following structured processes. This may be with the introduction of a new genre or text type within a purpose or when building on previous learning of a certain text type:



- Immersion – pupils will have the opportunity to be immersed in a vehicle text and also access a variety of texts for the writing purpose. They have opportunities to enjoy, explore and respond to the text type, identifying key features and associated word and sentence level structures
- Analysis – Familiarisation with text structures and language features, knowledge for the writer
- Planning – pupils then build on this knowledge from immersion activities and analysis of text structure and language features by planning their own texts linked to the core reading text. This will support their writing and development of a final piece
- Write: Production of a final outcome – with a clear knowledge base in place, pupils will now produce an extended/final piece of writing, including key features of the text type, and word, sentence and grammar structures previously explored. Within this stage of the writing sequence pupils will write independently, applying their knowledge and skills as writers. Pupils will draft, revise and edit their writing, suitable to age and stage. Final pieces will be published, ideally with the purpose driving how this is presented

This overarching sequence of learning follows a tried and tested model (UKLA and PNS 2004) and acknowledges the strong interrelationship between oracy, reading and writing.

All teaching of writing will begin with the expectation of the use of rich texts as a model to inspire and stimulate discussion and understanding. Teachers may use a hook or initial stimulus to engage and capture pupils' interest. The use of oracy and drama will also underpin all of the writing curriculum, particularly in narrative work.

Each term will have a focussed purpose for writing (e.g. to entertain, inform, persuade or discuss), and within that, different writing styles/structures will be taught or revisited to ensure that pupils fully understand the range of purposes that they will write for. It is understood, however, that within the sequence of teaching, particularly in KS2, pupils will have already covered a number of text types, so full deconstruction of a text is not always necessary. Use of prior assessment and knowledge of text type coverage in previous year groups is therefore crucial to pupils' progress.

We recognise that learning to write is not a linear process, and many aspects of the basic structure of a writing sequence will be revisited and built upon throughout a sequence, as pupils move through the school and their experience of writing is developed and refined. However, in the early stages of writing development, teaching sequences will follow a more basic approach, as children learn skills and are exposed to certain text types for the first time. Sequences will be written considering the age and stage of the pupils.

Planning a Writing Sequence


Writing sequence Must-Haves

- Built around a rich, high-quality text
- Clear progression and application of skills
- Application opportunities of skills to practise and showcase writing
- An extended, and completed write, including a range of text-types over different sequences
- Conscious build up to the extended write, including other writes/application opportunities throughout the sequence
- Active teaching of writing skills throughout the sequence, not confining this to the beginning of the sequence

All teachers will ensure that each writing sequence includes the key processes as described above – immersion, analysis, planning and production of a final outcome. The aspects within a sequence will include:



In order to ensure a shared understanding and commonality of language when describing features used within a writing sequence at St. James', a description of each element is given in the table below:

Deconstruct it	Having a model text/s which we analyse the features		Celebrate it  This could include sharing examples of work where features are shown
Deepen it	Looking at sentence structures, content, detail, word choice, tense, technical aspects (bullet points etc) Rhyme – repetition – rhythm Use of supplementary texts (to compliment core text or provide different/similar aspects to use as a comparison) Exploration of oracy and drama techniques to develop deeper understanding of aspects of the text e.g. character Honing in	Story/text mapping Oral rehearsal (internalisation of language features)	
Plan it – preparing to write	Capturing ideas Modelling Oral rehearsal Boxing up (as a planning tool) Creative experiment Oracy and drama techniques to support where appropriate		
Draft it	Getting ideas on the page, no need for an explicit focus on spelling or punctuation		
Revise it	Reading and making changes to content, including spelling		
Edit it	Grammatical changes		
Publish it	Final piece to be published, linking to a purpose e.g. competitions, posters for real events, letters to be sent etc. Reading aloud and sharing		

Learning walls

English learning walls are used across the school to record, visualise and assist learning in writing. They document the writing journey and are built up throughout the teaching sequence. They are used as an accessible way to document the key aspects of learning, exemplifying key skills that are being taught and the learning that is taking place. Learning walls are adapted for each age group, and are constructed with pupils and built on together. The model is flexible and it is down to the teacher to make it work in the way they feel is most effective for their class and their learners. In order to ensure consistency and to make learning walls as effective for learners as possible,

they may include aspects such as key vocabulary, word and sentence level work related to writing purpose, examples of high-quality model texts, deconstructed texts highlighting key features. This however, is not an exhaustive list.

Learning walls are referred to in order to remind pupils of previous learning; encouraging pupils to become more independent in their learning by using them as a tool for their own writing. They are a constantly evolving and relevant resource, frequently changed and supportive of the task in hand. This means they will not look beautiful – they should be a functional tool (Alan Peat).

Spelling

Our aims for writing are to encourage our pupils to think and write creatively, be adventurous with their use of language and to write with clear purpose and for pleasure. In order for these aims to be realised, it is essential that our pupils learn to spell accurately. Children who can spell, feel confident and are able to write with enjoyment. We want our pupils to be equipped with a range of strategies for learning spelling and to be able to apply their strategies when spelling words in their independent writing. Our pupils are encouraged to enjoy exploring and investigating the patterns and contradictions of the English language.

As a school we have high expectation for spelling. If children have been taught a particular grapheme phoneme correspondence (GPC) or a certain spelling pattern, it is expected that pupils will use this correctly in their writing. Personal and group or class spelling tool kits are also made available to support this, and learning walls may/should also display aspects of recently taught spelling rules or patterns. Toolkits may look different dependent on age and stage.

Approaches to Teaching Spelling

Our focus on teaching spelling embraces the knowledge of spelling conventions, patterns and rules. Moreover, we promote the learning of spellings, through the use of multi-sensory strategies, including combining the teaching of spelling and handwriting. Our teaching of spelling includes common exception words, **harder to read and spell words**, statutory words and personal and topic spelling. **Our pupils use a Spelling Journal which provides the opportunity for pupils to record their learning and refer back to previous spellings.**

Applying the Learning

We teach our pupils a range of strategies to use when spelling words independently. These strategies include:

- Segmentation (using phonic knowledge)
- ‘Have-a-go’
- Personal spelling journal and tool kits
- Dictionaries

From September 2023, KS2 classes will be using 'The Spelling Shed' which provides a coherent system for teaching spelling consistently and supports pupils to define what it means to be an effective speller, and builds on the fundamentals of teaching spelling with strong phonics foundations. Each lesson has a main objective taken directly from the National Curriculum appendix for spelling. Weekly, a set of words will be provided with an example of the spelling pattern to be learnt, as well as a revision section for previous learning.

Lessons are split in to a cycle of teaching input, independent work and consolidation with lessons systematically building upon acquired knowledge. Challenge weeks include lists of words made up from the statutory words lists found in the National Curriculum and offer an opportunity for children to put their learning into practice on words that have unfamiliar or unusual spelling patterns.

Feedback and marking

Please see Feedback and marking policy.

Handwriting

Handwriting is a skill that affects written communication across the curriculum and is a movement skill which is best taught by demonstration, explanation and practise. At St. James', we encourage children to use the cursive script. This is a handwriting approach championed by a local educator and handwriting expert, Julie Palmer, in her book, The Write Path. This involves starting all letters from the same place, keeping them on the line and when mastered, joining them too. We begin by teaching children in Reception to lead out their letters and to also join their digraphs. Starting from the Early Years enables children to progress quickly through their handwriting journey and using the cursive script. As with all good handwriting teaching, it is important that children are taught to correctly grip their pencils and encouraged to sit using the correct posture.

The school's decision and rationale for not starting leader lines in Reception is based on research and also supported by the **DfE guidance regarding Validation of systematic synthetic phonics programmes: supporting documentation:**

At first, children should not be taught to join letters [footnote 3] or to start every letter 'on the line' with a 'lead-in', because these practices cause unnecessary difficulty for beginners. Children may be taught to join the letters in digraphs, but this is optional. (All resources designed for children to read should be in print).

- **Provision in EYFS – gross motor, mark making, finger gym, fine motor development**

In the EYFS, staff focus on getting children ready for handwriting by:

- Building the gross and fine motor skills needed for handwriting through structured games and activities, including finger gym



- Providing opportunities to mark make and write throughout the setting, ensuring adults are good role models for demonstrating the purpose of writing
- Developing the spatial awareness, visual and motor memory skills needed through non-pencil and pencil activities
- Supporting the children through the developmental pencil grip stages; including hand dominance identification
- Developing the children's ability to correctly push and pull the pencil to be able to form letters correctly, firstly through pre-handwriting patterns and then single letter formation.

When children are ready, handwriting skills (listed below) are introduced using a single letter cursive font style.

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

- **Provision in Key Stage One**

In Key Stage One teaching is focused on:

- Continuing to build the gross and refine the fine motor skills through handwriting warm up exercises and PE warm up and cool down activities
- Supporting the children through the developmental pencil grip stages so that they can comfortably hold the pencil in a tripod pencil grip
- Reinforcing the correct sitting position and teaching the correct position, tilt and movement of the writing paper
- Year One teachers baseline children on entry with a view to moving towards using entry strokes for joining letters (continuous cursive font) by the end of Term 2.
- Refining the handwriting letter size and teaching the joining of letters to form words
- Ensuring that appropriate gaps are left between words
- Using the correct formation of capital letters and understanding the difference between upper and lower case in their handwriting

- **Provision in Key Stage Two**

In Key Stage Two teaching and learning is focussed on refining handwriting skills by:

- Continuing to build the gross and refine the fine motor skills through handwriting warm up exercises and PE warm up and cool down activities
- Revisiting sitting correctly, pencil grip and paper position and tilt if necessary
- Refining the handwriting letter size and teaching the joining of letters to form words
- Building speed and fluidity using dictation activities and sentences
- Practising consistency and fluency through focus on handwriting when publishing work
- Understanding what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes or a final handwritten version
- Learning when to use an un-joined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form

Use of Pen

Children will be introduced to using a handwriting pen when in UKS2. Initially, pen should only be used for handwriting practice and publishing work until children are able to write fluently, without the need for continual crossing out. Use of pen is at the teacher's discretion, but care should be taken to ensure that children who have difficulty with handwriting do not feel excluded. Maths work will continue to be done in pencil.

- **Left Handed Children**

We recognise that at least 10% of pupils are left handed. This means that we need to make specific provision in order for these children to achieve in line with their peers.

- Paper should be positioned correctly and at the most beneficial angle to make it comfortable for the writer
- Left handed pupils should be encouraged to grip the pencil in a way that does not obstruct their vision.
- Seating arrangements should be considered carefully to allow pupils the space to write effectively without being obstructed or obstructing others.
- Pupils may need support in practising left to right orientation of their writing.

- **Agreed script and progression/expectation and milestones for Year groups**

EYFS

- Engage in activities requiring hand-eye coordination.
- Use one-handed tools and equipment.
- Draw lines and circles using gross motor movement.
- Manipulate objects with increasing control.
- Begin to use anticlockwise movement and retrace vertical lines.
- Begin to form recognisable letters.
- Use a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.

Throughout the EYFS, children are provided with opportunities to develop:

- Physical control through large-scale movement such as outdoor play.
- Balancing, climbing, marching and moving to music.
- Manipulative skills such as using tools, cooking utensils and scissors.

- Fine motor control and hand-eye coordination, through activities such as jigsaws, threading, cutting and manipulating 'small world' equipment.

The key movements underpinning letter formation should be introduced through large-scale movements, from the shoulder.

In the earliest stages children should make the movements symmetrically using both arms. Once the movement is firmly established in kinaesthetic memory, it can be reduced in scale using activities such as sky writing, using sticks in sand etc. and then reduced further in art activities using felt tip pens, crayons and pencils.

(see additional guidance document for progression of HW skills in EYFS)

KS1

Year 1

- Sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.
- Begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place.
- Form capital letters correctly.
- Form digits 0-9 correctly.
- Understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these.
- Make links with phonics and spelling.

Year 2

- Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another.
- Start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left not joined.
- Write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters.
- Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

KS2

Year 3 & 4

- Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left not joined

Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting, e.g. by ensuring that the down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.

Year 5 & 6

Write legibly, fluently, with increasing speed and personal style by:

Choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding, as part of their personal style, whether or not to join specific letters.

Choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task (e.g. quick notes, letters).

Handwriting progression is also outlined by the National Curriculum (see progression document).

Writing café

Writing café provides children with an opportunity to have ownership of their writing; to write for pleasure; be creative; and to freely experiment with written language, applying skills and aspects of writing they have previously been taught. The prime purpose of Writing Café is to promote children's enjoyment of writing and also to increase their stamina to sustain writing. Pieces of work created during Writing Café sessions are read and enjoyed by teachers, but not marked.