

Sebert Wood Primary School

Writing Policy



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Approved by head teacher

The overarching aim for writing at Sebert Wood Primary School is to promote high standards of literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of written language, and to develop a knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of writing in different contexts.

We aim for children to:

- Develop a knowledge and understanding of a rich and varied range of text types.
- Understand grammatical and linguistic conventions of written and spoken language.
- Develop the essential skills they need to become effective writers.

Key statements central to the development of writing.

We believe that:

- Speaking and listening are significant factors in developing the acquisition of writing
- Reading and writing are closely connected and mutually supportive; we read as writers and write as readers.
- Writing is a craft and most children learn best through their own writing, rather than through exercises out of context.
- Writing is best framed within recognisable text-types or genres.
- Writing should be designed to meet the needs of real or imagined audiences.
- Writing tasks should be prepared through preliminary talk and teachers should model writing for their pupils when appropriate.
- Children should be given the opportunity to collaborate with other children both to compose and to revise their writing.
- Writing skills can be improved through reflection.
- Children should be closely involved in assessing their own development as writers.
- More effective writing is dependent upon increasingly informed grammatical and linguistic choices.
- The teacher's response to the child's composition (e.g. praising aspects of the content) is crucial in developing confidence and motivation.
- The skills of transcription (i.e. handwriting, punctuation and spelling) must be thoroughly planned for and taught.
- ICT can be used as an inspiring stimulus for writing and to enable children to author their own multimedia texts.

Contexts for the Teaching and Learning of writing

Writing is taught and learnt in specific meaningful and effective contexts. These include:

- Modelled and shared writing.
- Complementary sentence and word-level activities.
- Independent or paired writing.
- Sharing and reflecting on their writing.
- Cross-curricular writing tasks e.g. in project work or science.

Non-negotiables for each writing unit

We will:

- Provide frequent opportunities to write.
- Encourage children to write clearly, legibly and accurately with attention to punctuation, spelling and grammar.
- Promote an awareness of adults writing in a variety of contexts for many purposes.

- Provide regular modelling of the writing process.
- Provide regular modelling of making judgements about the style, format and choice of vocabulary, for a specific purpose, audience and genre.
- Provide regular modelling of drafting, revision and proof-reading.
- Provide time for children to reflect on the writing process and refine their work.
- Provide opportunities for children to produce independent writing.
- Provide opportunities for children to focus on specific targets through provision during 1:1/paired/group Guided writing sessions
- Provide children with opportunities to share their writing.
- Set individual targets for writing and assist children in reviewing their targets (and setting personal ones where appropriate)
- Encourage children to take responsibility for their own writing development and progress.
- Surround children with a print-rich environment that they have helped to create.
- Reward and celebrate children's efforts and achievements in writing.
- Teach ICT skills that support effective and efficient electronic communication.
- Provide opportunities for cross-curricular writing.
- Provide a wide variety of texts which cater for children's diverse interests and needs, and act as a stimulus to their own writing.

Writing in the Early Years Foundation Stage

A variety of resources are used to encourage the development of the fine motor skills, essential for pencil control and writing. These include play dough, cutting, threading and using a range of tools. The children are encouraged to mark make as they access a range of materials independently which are carefully planned to promote the development of writing skills.

A wide variety of opportunities are provided for children to engage in writing activities including:

- Shared writing
- Role-play (e.g. an office or restaurant)
- Labels
- Recipes
- Lists
- Making books
- Writing letters
- Menus

Their efforts at this emergent writing stage are valued and praised and as their phonic knowledge and handwriting skills increase, this will be reflected in their writing. During daily phonic sessions, children are taught how to write the corresponding grapheme (letter shape). At this stage, wide lined sheets are used to encourage correct letter formation and orientation and uniform letter size. Within the Foundation Stage, children have the opportunity to develop their writing skills in accordance with their development stage, ability and competence.

Writing in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2

Modelling writing to the class

Shared writing sessions are used flexibly to provide a bridge between shared and independent work. During these sessions the teacher or TA may scribe for specific children or support focus groups. Through shared writing the teacher demonstrates specific writing skills. The basics of how to form a letter, spell a word, leave a space or put in a full stop are demonstrated early on in KS1, followed later by the more sophisticated strategies of modelling the planning, drafting or proof-reading of writing. The teacher may also demonstrate writing in a particular genre.

Shared writing will include:

- Generating imaginative and informative ideas through discussion and questioning (verbalising), and recording these ideas in notes/ plans/ drafts

- Demonstrating planning strategies (e.g. brainstorming, concept maps, writing frames)
- Using a familiar text as a starting point for writing
- Playing with language and exploring different word choices
- Teaching the structural characteristics of a particular text type
- Developing specific word level skills of spelling, handwriting and punctuation
- Modelling higher level sentence construction (use of connectives, complex sentences)
- Demonstrating revision strategies (e.g. children checking for meaning, reordering to improve a sentence, rewriting to improve clarity or to enrich)
- Demonstrating editing strategies (checking punctuation and spelling)
- Refining writing to make it clearer and better suited to its audience and purpose
- Developing technical terms and vocabulary for understanding and discussing writing
- Publishing and presenting written texts for others to read and use

At times, there may be extended shared writing sessions, exploring the composition process together in some detail. However, it will often be most effective if shared writing is broken up into chunks and interspersed with opportunities for the children to apply the lessons immediately in their own writing. This approach can maximise learning opportunities, allow teachers to respond to children's misconceptions or difficulties, and avoid the risk of overloading the children.

Independent Writing

Children will be given frequent opportunities to write independently so that the skills demonstrated during shared writing and supported during guided writing will be transferred into their own writing. Since accurate, fluent and independent writing is dependent on a secure grasp of phonics, a high priority is placed throughout EYFS and KS1 on daily systematic phonics teaching. This gives children the strong and essential foundation upon which all their future development as writers will be built. During independent writing the children compose without direct teacher support.

As children move through KS2, they will be expected to write at increasingly greater length, developing crucial writing stamina alongside other skills.

Independent writing, both within Literacy lessons and across the curriculum will involve:

- Collaboration and Talk for Writing
- Using the imagination and expressing ideas
- Applying skills learned in shared writing and guided writing
- Focusing on individual writing targets
- Revising work in the light of feedback from teachers or peers
- Commenting constructively on other children's writing
- Editing and proof-reading to improve transcriptional features
- Preparing work for presentation

Guided Writing

Guided writing will be carried out during provision sessions by a teaching assistant or the class teacher. This provides key time with a child to help develop their understanding and skills in areas they need to improve.

During guided writing the teacher as 'expert' guides learners at an appropriate level by:

- Giving feedback on previously composed independent writing
- Modelling how to use individual writing targets or comment constructively on another writer's work
- Demonstrating a specific stage in the writing process
- Developing or reinforcing skills taught in shared writing

Teachers will plan guided writing sessions flexibly, where they feel they will best meet the needs of their class. At other times, teachers and teaching assistants may instead support children individually during their independent writing.

Grammar and Punctuation

Throughout the school, grammar and punctuation are given high priority.

Aspects of grammar and punctuation are best taught in the context of real reading and writing activities, rather than through isolated exercises. This gives children the opportunity to see the relevance of sentence-level work and how real writers make such choices to help them communicate clearly.

Sentence-level teaching is most effective when it is short, sharp and frequent, incorporated perhaps as a lesson starter or in the context of shared writing.

Word and sentence games may encourage children to enjoy playing with language and to experiment with different constructions that they may then apply in their independent writing.

Accuracy in basic punctuation (capital letters and full stops) is given a high priority throughout the school, until it becomes completely automatic.

Explicit teaching may be needed, even for older children, on what a sentence is and how to punctuate it accurately.

Spelling

Through regular, focused teaching of spelling, children will be taught to become confident and competent spellers.

They will:

- Identify sounds in spoken words (phonological awareness)
- Recognise the common spellings for each phoneme (phoneme/ grapheme correspondence)
- Blend phonemes into words for reading
- Segment words into phonemes for spelling
- Acquire a knowledge of high frequency 'tricky' words
- Identify onsets and rimes as an aid to spelling
- Investigate and learn spelling conventions and rules
- Identify spelling mistakes in their own writing
- Develop and use independent spelling strategies
- Use a variety of dictionaries and thesauruses to support their work
- Practise spellings for a weekly test In the Foundation Stage, children are encouraged to make their own marks as the beginning of learning to write and spell.

Please also refer to the school's phonics and spelling policies.

Planning for writing

Teachers plan units of work using the National Curriculum objectives. In order to teach the required skills we use a variety of texts as writing stimuli. Some units are linked to the year group's topic for the term and others are linked to individual texts or text types. The priorities in lesson planning are a careful build-up of general writing skills and the development of an understanding of different text types. Each term fiction, non-fiction and poetry will be covered. See the progression of text types for details of lesson objectives.

As part of the planning process the objectives identified as key barriers to the year group reaching Age Related Expectations will be addressed frequently and rigorously. Teachers will use the formative assessments gathered through their "tick lists" to plan and adjust each unit of work. These tick lists are statements agreed by Bury Schools Partnership Writing Group for pupils to be attaining the expected standard, so teachers will also refer to the National Curriculum to ensure full coverage of objectives.

Assessment of Writing

Teachers use formative assessment to plan next steps in learning each time they review a pupil's writing. Records are kept using the "tick lists" of statements for Expected Standard. In addition, the teacher will keep records of pupils' success with all the statements in the National Curriculum, especially for those pupils working at Greater Depth.

Summative assessments are made at the end of each term, using the pieces of independent writing from the term in all subject areas. The end of term grammar and spelling tests are used to inform the judgements made. Those pupils working well below the expectations for their year group will be assessed against the criteria of previous years or using the *Pathway* objectives.