

## Our vision for **Writing** at Birley Spa Primary Academy

### **Intent**

At Birley Spa Primary Academy, we believe that Writing is a fundamental skill, an essential form of communication, which enables children to access all areas of learning, ensuring they can make progress and succeed. Writing is a priority and is a key driver for our curriculum. We believe in guiding and nurturing each individual on their own personal journey to become successful writers.

Our aim is for children to view writing as an enjoyable and worthwhile activity and develop a love of writing. We want them to become competent and confident writers who can write in a range of fiction and non-fiction genres. We want them to write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.

Our curriculum is designed so that, alongside writing for real purposes, children develop the ability to use their writing skills to present new knowledge and understanding. We want to provide exciting writing opportunities and experiences that engage and enhance all pupils.

It is our intention is to ensure that by the end of their primary education, all pupils are able to write fluently, and with confidence, in any subject in their forthcoming secondary education. We want all children to acquire a wide vocabulary and to be able to spell new words by effectively applying the spelling patterns and rules they learn throughout their time in primary school. We therefore intend to encourage all pupils to read widely to develop knowledge of how different authors write and acquire new vocabulary. We believe that the teaching of writing is crucial to developing thinking and verbal skills. Before you write it, you must be able to say it, before you say it, you must be able to think it.

*“When you are teaching kids to write you are teaching them to think. Writing is the window through which all thinking starts” Sheryl Bloc.*

We are committed to systematically teaching the skills that underpin writing such as phonics, spelling, handwriting and grammar. We want every child to have a good knowledge of phonics to springboard children to becoming fluent writers. We want all children to have a solid understanding of grammar and apply it effectively to their writing.

We believe that all children should be encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their writing, in part by developing a legible, cursive, individual handwriting style by the time they move to secondary school.

We intend to plan a progressive curriculum to build upon previous teaching, with regular assessment to ensure each child’s needs are met in order to reach their full potential. We believe in close monitoring of the children’s progress in writing by setting clear achievable targets leads to success and challenge and thus motivates them to continue improve their writing.

Children are praised/rewarded for their efforts with writing (even when making mistakes) to boost their confidence and encourage risk taking.

### **Implementation**

Our classrooms are language-rich environments and through our curriculum, children are exposed and actively engaged with high quality language in meaningful, deliberate and engaging ways. At Birley Spa Primary Academy, writing is taught over five sessions per week across the whole school. Each class studies a different high-quality text, lasting from a few weeks to a whole term depending on text type, length and year group. These are selected for the opportunities they give to inspire the children to develop a love of reading, help them understand different times, locations and events around the world, challenge themselves and open up opportunities for children to write in different ways for different audiences and purposes.

Long, medium and short term planning and the use of progression maps ensure that a variety of genres are progressively taught and built upon both throughout the year and throughout the school.

Writing is also a key focus in the wider curriculum, especially in wider curriculum lessons. Children are given the opportunity to transfer and build upon their knowledge of a genre studied during English lessons and apply this learning to a subject-specific focus, such as a chronological report following a Science investigation, a persuasive leaflet for a coastal region in Geography or a diary entry to capture the thoughts/feelings of a person of historical importance.

Through our writing process, children will acquire and learn the skills to plan, draft, refine and publish their written work over time and are encouraged to develop independence in being able to identify their own areas for improvement in all pieces of writing as well as acting on feedback given.

Within each unit of work, sequenced lessons ensure that prior learning is checked and built upon and that National Curriculum objectives are taught through a combination of approaches. Intrinsic to our writing curriculum is the expectation that children acquire and utilise an ever increasing and complex vocabulary.

At Birley Spa Primary Academy, children:-

Have opportunities to participate in drama & spoken language activities

Explore the features of different text types and modelled examples (E.g. Spotting features in a WAGOLL – What A Good One Looks Like)

Have opportunities for handwriting practice.

Have opportunities for vocabulary practice.

Have opportunities to participate in shared writing (modelled expectations)

Follow a discrete Spelling programme (RWI spelling)

Follow a grammar programme (Active English)

Have opportunities for independent writing

Have opportunities for planning, drafting, editing, up-leveilling writing.

Have opportunities for publishing writing.

Have opportunities for writing across the curriculum. This includes writing to share information in foundation subjects and Science.  
Follow relevant writing interventions when necessary.

## **Handwriting**

It is paramount that children are rigorously taught correct letter formation from the very beginning of their time in school. At Birley Spa Academy we take a holistic view of teaching handwriting, developing both a child's Key Strengths (Gross & Fine Motor Skills) and Key Abilities (Knowledge). We have systematic, differentiated and progressive approach which supports children of all ability levels, as well as real-time interventions when children are displaying incorrect pencil grip or letter formation. This includes working closely with parents and carers to target intervention around certain letter patterns/joins through short bursts of practice at home.

Teachers are expected to model the school's handwriting style when marking children's work, writing on the board and on displays around the school.  
Please see our Handwriting policy for further details.

## **Spellings**

In EYFS and Year 1 children follow the phonics RWI programme. Children in years 2 to 4 may also follow the RWI phonics programme as a catch up provision if necessary. From Year 2, classes follow the RWI progressive spelling scheme. Through exploring spelling patterns and rules, we aim to create confident and proficient spellers using a discrete teaching approach underpinned by phonics.

Children are also taught to:-

Spell accurately and identify reasons for mis-spellings.

Practise how they think a word might be spelt and then underlining the choice in purple pen so it can then be checked later by the child and adult.

Proof-read their spellings

Recognise and use word origins, families and roots to build their skills

Use dictionaries, thesauruses and word mats.

## **Early Writing EYFS**

Themes in EYFS are supported by key texts, which provide a framework for all children to access learning around their knowledge and understanding of the world, as well as to support key learning in literacy. Adult-led activities, linked to the text, focus on repetitive reading of the story to explore rhythm, rhyme and alliteration. The story is explored further through mapping the story sequence so children can independently retell events, often using puppets and props.

Fiction and non-fiction books are used as an integral part of all provocations for curiosity and learning. Welcoming book areas are resourced with a wide variety of diverse and high-quality literature to encourage children to explore books independently or with an adult. In the Early years teachers follow the Helicopter stories programme along with the poetry basket programme.

In FS1 children are encouraged to explore mark making using a wide variety of tools and media and adults have a clear understanding of the progression of writing skills throughout the EYFS. Continuous provision provides meaningful opportunities for all children to develop mark making and writing skills in their play.

In FS2 children are specifically taught the skill of sentence construction once they get to red RWI books as part of the RWI programme with children practising holding a sentence 2 to 3 times each week. Once a week children take part in a guided writing session with an adult to develop their independence in applying phonic knowledge and structuring the sentences they want to write. Initially support is given through scribing by an adult. Shared writing allows children to develop their confidence and writing stamina as they take over more of the writing independently. Children have opportunity to write independently inside and outside in the rest of the EYFS setting.

All children in EYFS access phonics teaching in small groups daily. Children in FS1, and those in FS2 who are not yet secure in tuning in to sounds, enjoy active learning around the 7 aspects of Phase one phonics. All children in FS2 begin daily RWI phonics lessons from the beginning of the Autumn term. Groups are reorganised every 6 weeks so that children continue to access teaching linked to their individual phonic knowledge. Children in FS1 join these groups where appropriate, based on their individual stages of development.

Fine motor skills are practised daily through dough disco and pen disco sessions. Correct letter formation is taught as part of RWI sessions.

### Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2

Writing lessons cover knowledge and skills in:

Speaking and Listening

Reading

Writing

Spelling

Grammar and discussion. In Years 1 – 6 English lessons take place 5 times per week for 1 hour and are taught to the whole class by the class teacher. They are effectively differentiated to ensure that every child can be successful in their achievement of the learning objective, with high expectations for all learners.

Differentiated output is expected in lessons and is aimed at the level of challenge that day, which means that children can select the level of challenge they feel is suitable that day. This ensures that there is no ceiling on achievement, but that all children can achieve with different levels of support or scaffolding. The challenges are referred to as challenge 1, 2 and 3. Examples of good writing are shared with the children through WAGOLL's.

In addition to this, the classes are also taught Active English for grammar each day for 15 minutes. Active English sessions begin when children have mastered phonics and are at the end of the RWI scheme usually towards the end of year one. Active English has three 5 minutes elements these are:-

Recall and learn

Read and respond

Create

In Year 1 during the spring term children will be exposed to the recall and learn element of the programme alongside their phonics session. This can then be built up over time to accommodate the whole Active English programme.

### **Planning**

All Year Groups follow a **Long-Term Curriculum Map** outlining all of the subjects, skills and knowledge the year group will teach aligned to the National Curriculum.

**English Medium Term Planning pacing grid** looks at each term in more detail outlining the specific knowledge and skills from the English Programmes of Study that are to be taught and that are related to a particular genre of writing.

The Subject Leader has a long-term overview to ensure that there is equal coverage of different genres of writing across the school.

In writing a carefully selected text is chosen to link with the wider curriculum theme and to teach the skills in context. A sequence of learning is planned incorporating the relevant grammar skills that need to be taught and writing genres/purposes that the text best lends itself to. Audience and Purpose are planned to inspire and motivate the children with real reasons for writing.

Teachers then map the learning intentions towards the writing outcome on a **pacing grid** using the **medium term plans under the headings immersion, analysis, SPAG, plan/write and publish**. Each writing sequence runs for approximately a three week period.

**Week 1 – Immersion week into chosen text or other stimulus for writing.**

**Week 2 – Guided write and publish**

**Week 3 – Independent write and publish**

Further guidance for teachers is given in the form of **English Planning Guidance Document** to ensure an effective sequence of learning for each unit of work.

Different approaches to guiding and supporting children's writing during the writing sequence are adopted by teachers and teaching assistants. These may include:-

### **Modelled Writing**

Children learn by watching and copying models. It is vital therefore that they see models of how to write well. This starts in the Early Years when children see adults writing for different purposes. It progresses as the children learn phonics and adults show children how to apply this knowledge to writing to write words, phrases and captions. Adults then model sentence writing, and so on.

"Thinking Aloud" enables teachers to make each stage of writing explicit by sharing their thought processes with the children as they model to them. This may be how you find the grapheme for a sound you want to use or thinking through your word/grammar choices modelling how an author works.

### **Shared Writing**

Children share their ideas to create writing either 1:1 with an adult or as a small group. This takes the pressure off the child who may be struggling with the mechanics of writing i.e. applying sounds/sight words, or with handwriting difficulties. The teacher uses "Think aloud"

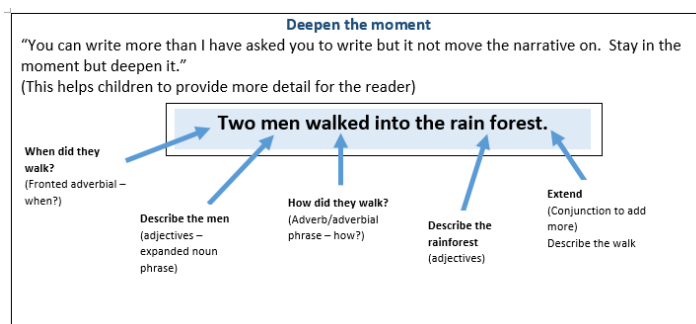
as above as well as modelling how important it is to re-read what you have written before you move on using the phrase think it, say it, write it, check it.

### Modelled Proof Reading and Editing

It is important that from the outset children are shown and taught the importance of re-reading their writing to check it makes sense (Dr Sense – Active English symbol) and is accurate i.e. it says what they wanted it to say. Think it, say it, write it, check It)

Children should also be taught to proof-read their work for spelling and punctuation errors and correct them. At Birley Spa the children do this using their purple pen. Editing stations or proof-reading stations with guidance are provided.

Editing is a higher order skill. Children are encouraged to re-read and re-organise or re-word/re-phrase aspects of their writing to improve them, this is modelled by the teacher and the children may focus on one line or paragraph initially to become skilled at editing i.e. an area indicated by the teacher. For example – to “deepen the moment”.



(See Progression in Proof-Reading and Editing)

### Independent write

Each unit of writing ends with an independent piece of writing. This is where children are demonstrating their ability **to write at length** on a **genre** they have been **previously taught**. These genres link directly with the writing sequence.

### The Writing Environment

Children will be provided with prompts and resources, as required, to support them in their writing.

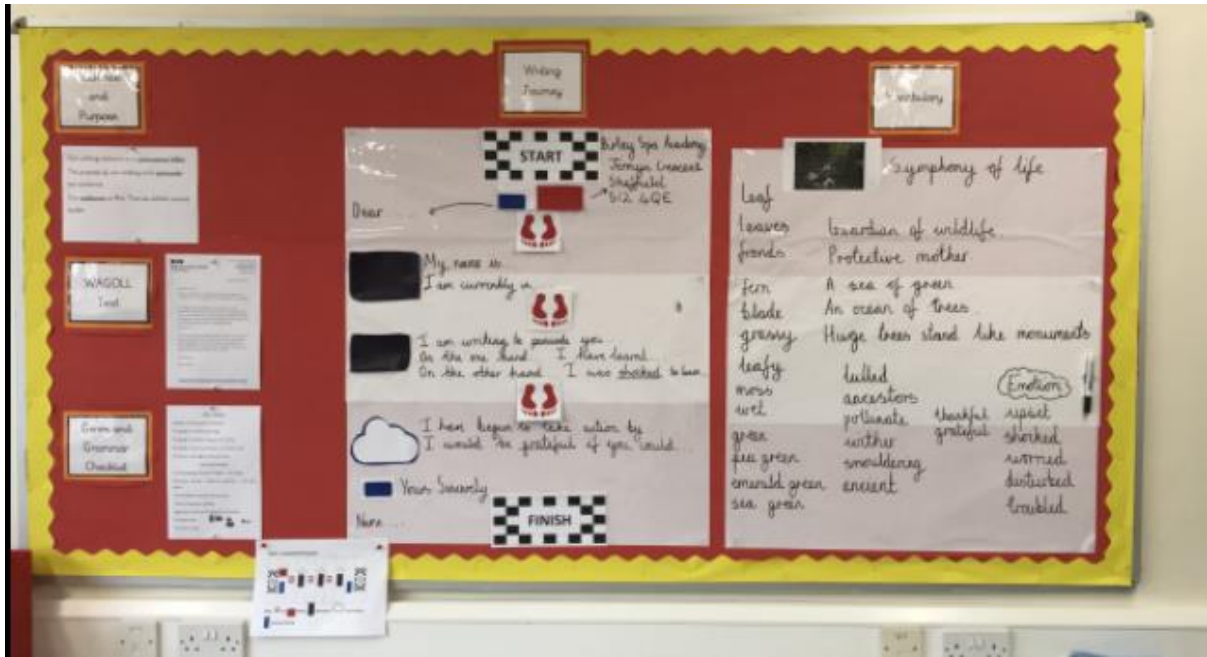
Each classroom has a **Working Wall** where current teaching is displayed for children to refer to and make use of. The Working Wall will indicate the current outcome the children are working towards with the **audience and purpose and an exemplar piece** (WAGOLL) at the heart of this.

They will then add the success criteria **e.g a Genre and SPAG checklists** they have been learning about each day that will help them to build to the final piece.

**Vocabulary and key phrases** together with examples **of grammar features with reference to Active English visuals** will also be displayed.

A writing journey/shape will be central to the working wall which exemplifies how a piece of writing needs to be structured.

Some children may require to have additional learning supports to be closer i.e. on their tables to refer to, but generally children should be encouraged to make good use of the working wall. The teacher should add to and refer to the working wall throughout the unit of work.



Writing Working wall example:

### Presentation expectations (separate guidance).

It is the expectation that children use a writing book that matches the stage of their handwriting stage of development. These may range from no lines in EYFS to lined books in Year 6 with exceptions being made in each year group based on a child's stage of development.

In Years 1 to 2 the long date and learning objective is stuck in by the children and generated by the teacher. From Year 3 upwards children should record the long date and learning objective underlined with a ruler neatly in books. Exceptions can be made based on the stage of development of the child. For example a child in Year 3 may be sticking in the long date and learning objective rather than writing it down. Children should be encouraged to record any Active English written work in books under the heading **Active English**. Any written tasks that that happened during the teaching part of the session (e.g. vocabulary collection, sentence uplevelling etc.) should be written under the heading **draft**. These might include **key vocabulary** for example.

### Inclusion

#### Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Some children experience learning difficulties, which affect their progress in writing. Class teachers inform the SEND coordinator if they are concerned that a child may have underlying learning difficulties. Some children then receive SEND support. This may include:

- Small group handwriting sessions
- Fine motor skills interventions (funky fingers)
- Booster classes
- Lexia core 5
- Individual targets
- Resources to use for practice at home
- Enlarged print texts

- Talking tins to support language development and independence

### **More able learners**

Children who have the potential to achieve highly in writing will be supported and given opportunities to showcase and deepen their knowledge and skills through writing groups and differentiation. The success criteria (challenge 3) for the lesson also indicates how greater depth has been taught within the context of the lesson and how this can be demonstrated by the child in outcomes of work.

### **Marking**

Children will be given self-improvement targets to work on and demonstrate in their writing. Targets written in the childrens books by the class teacher and shared with the child. As well as ensuring the ARE for the year group are taught, teachers will also regularly refer back to previous Year Group expectations (English Appendix 2) to ensure children are enabled to meet ARE and GDS at the end of the Key Stage.

Please see Birley Spa Academy Marking and Feedback policy for more information.

Core Principles in marking include:

Teachers marking in pink to show positivity and green to show next steps. Children respond in purple.

Examples of developmental marking could be:

#### **In Key Stage 1**

Now rewrite this sentence\* to make the monster sound friendly.

#### **In Key Stage 2**

Now rewrite this sentence\* to start with an adverb to build suspense.

Teachers will:

Underline incorrect spelling and children correct in purple pen.

Give children verbal feedback and use VF to show where they have intervened during the lesson.

### **Writing rewards**

In class rewards to encourage good writing such as house points and learners code points.

Hand writer of the week

Published work wall.

Time to Shine certificates linked to school values and achievement in writing.

### **Equal opportunities**

All pupils are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum and have equal access. (See Equal Opportunities Policy) All children have equal access to the curriculum regardless of their gender, race, sexuality or religion. This is monitored by analysing pupil performance throughout the academy.

Children who are eligible for pupil premium funding possibly may have less life experience and therefore may have less content for their writing. Teachers will try to counteract the lack



of an experience by, for example before writing about ocean creatures, sharing a range of clips, sounds, etc. to promote imaginative ideas.

## Parents

The academy aims to involve parents/carers in their children's learning as much as possible and to inform them regularly of their child's progress in writing. Parents/carers have the opportunity to meet with child's class teacher at least twice a year at Parent Consultation Meetings and receive written reports during the year. Parents/carers are encouraged to speak to their child's teacher at any point during the year, either informally or by making a specific appointment to discuss anything to further support them at home. Information about their child's standards, achievements and future targets in writing is shared with parents/carers at these times and also ways that parents/carers may be able to assist with their child's learning. Parents/carers are encouraged to support their children with homework.

## Impact

As a result of our writing curriculum, our children know more, do more and remember more, year after year. Our aim is that, by the end of Key Stage 1, children can meet all the expectations for writing for that Key Stage enabling them to fully access learning at Key Stage 2 and beyond. Writing is assessed in the following ways:

Impact is judged in several ways, all using the end of year expectations for writing.

i)

### Statutory Assessment

EYFS assessment of the Early Learning Goals.

Year 2: Children are assessed in Writing as part of the end of Key Stage 1 SATs.

Year 6: Children are assessed in Writing as part of the end of Key Stage 2 SATs.

All of these judgements are subject to Local Authority moderation for consistency of standards, which can take place at the end of any school year.

ii)

### In School Assessment of Writing

Teachers will assess children's writing using the appropriate Milestones for the child twice per half term. There will be a minimum of 12 assessed pieces per year.

Each child will have a named Milestones document that will be kept in a Writing Assessment Folder (Red)

Following an Independent write (week 3 of pacing grid) the teacher will add the date and genre of the writing.

Teachers will indicate the evidence the child is demonstrating against the statements on the Milestone document.

The writing in the child's book will be identified as Independent Assessed Writing. A target for next steps improvement will be written in the child's book dated with a tab. Evidence for this will be sought at the next independent assessed write.

Year 2 and Year 6 from the Spring Term make use of the end of KS Evidence check from the End of Key Stage Teacher Assessment Frameworks. Taking a sample of up to six children, per class to demonstrate sound assessment and moderation practice.

The Writing Tracker is updated termly collating the evidence from the Milestones document in order to justify teacher assessment judgements.

Teacher judgment levels for writing are made using the information from the tracker and updated on DC Pro each half term. Teachers use this information to set new writing targets for individual, group and whole class writing and to inform future planning.

iii)

#### Informal assessments

Teachers continuously assess children's attainment and progress during individual and whole class writing sessions. Writing targets are continually referred to by teachers and children and new ones are assigned as soon as the current one is achieved. Pupil voice is used to assess attitudes towards writing, learning and the curriculum.

The impact on our children is that they have the knowledge and skills to be able to write successfully for a range of purposes and audiences. With the implementation of the writing sequence being established and taught in both key stages, children are becoming more confident writers and have the ability to plan, draft and edit their own work. By the end of key stage 2, children have developed a writer's craft, they enjoy sustained writing and can manipulate language, grammar and punctuation to create effect. As all aspects of English are an integral part of the curriculum, cross curricular writing standards have also improved and skills taught in the English lesson are transferred into other subjects; this shows consolidation of skills and a deeper understanding of how and when to use specific language, grammar and punctuation.

Within each unit of writing children are able to:

- Identify genre-specific features needed to successfully write for different purposes/audiences.
- Re-read and identify areas for improvement in their own work and that of a partner.

#### **Further evidence for writing assessment may include:-**

Cross curricular independent writing.

Teacher's marking and observations

NFER -Spelling Punctuation and Grammar Tests – termly

Homework

Active English independent work

#### **Appendices**

Example Long Term English Plans

Example Medium Term English Plans ( Pacing grid)

Example English Planning Flip chart

#### **Other linked documents**

Birley Spa Writing Planning guidance

Birley Spa Writing Progression document

Birley Spa handwriting policy.

Birley Spa handwriting progression document.

Birley Spa marking and feedback policy.  
Birley Spa reading policy.